



Arthur Jackson

D. P. Jones



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ANNOTATIONS

2#

Upon

The five Books, immediately following the Historicall Part of the

OLD TESTAMENT,

(Commonly called the five Doctrinall, or Poeticall Books.)

To wit,

The Book of *Iob*, the *Psalms*, the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and the Song of *Solomon*.

W H E R E I N

First, all such passages in the Text are explained, as were thought likely to be questioned by any Reader of ordinary capacity: Secondly, in many places the grounds of divers Scripture-expressions are set forth, and other things noted, needfull to be known, that are not so easily at the first reading observed: And thirdly, many places, that might at first seem to contradict one another, are reconciled.

Intended chiefly

For the Assistance and Information of those, that use constantly every day to read some part of the Bible, and would gladly alwaies understand what they read, if they had some man to help them.

The third Part.

By ARTHUR JACKSON, Preacher of Gods Word
at Faiths under Pauls.

Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5.

*If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding.
If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her, as for hid treasures;
Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.*

Chrysost. Homil. 13. in Genesin.

Sicut aromata quanto magis digitis teruntur, tanto maiorem natura sua fragrantiam reddunt, ita et Scripturis usa venit, ut quanto quis illis est familiarior, tanto magis videre possit latentem in illis thesaurum, pluresque percipere infallibilium divitiarum fructus.

June 25 L O N D O N,

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A. M. O. T. O. M. A.

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OLD TESTAMENT

Containing the Hebrew Text, with the Latin Vulgate, and the English Version.

Vol. I.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

With a Commentary by J. G. Smith.



Printed 25 June 1841

By J. G. Smith, at the Press of the British Museum, Strand.



To my loving and dearly Beloved neighbours
and friends, the Inhabitants of the Parish
of *Faiths* under *Pauls*.

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

HAd there been nothing else to have put me upon this Dedication, but the great respect which you shewed to my Predecessour, Reverend Mr. *Geree*, that alone had been abundantly enough to have commanded this Respect from me to you. The contributing of 30^l. *per annum* to his widow so long as she lived, and the raising of a considerable portion of money for one of his children, after her decease, that was left without any provision, was such a Testimony of the high esteem you had of that your pious Pastor, as is not I think to be paralleled by that which hath been done by any other Congregation. And I have purposely made this honourable mention of it, that when there is the like occasion, it may be an example to many others.

But I have other inducements to move me to what I here now doe. The greatest part of this Work, such as it is, hath gone through my hands, since I was called by you to undertake the charge of your souls: and therefore, by reason of the speciall Interest you now have in me, I know none that may challenge a more speciall Interest in these my poor labours then you may do. The design indeed of the Work looks farther then you, even to the common good of all, that shall seek for some help herein for the understanding of this part of the Holy Scripture. But yet because the support the Author hath of late years received from you hath contributed so much to the carrying on of the Work, he cannot but think it most equall, that it should tender its first service to you; and that too the rather, because many of you, by reason of your calling, are like to be very instrumentall in spreading it abroad into the hands of others. To you therefore,

my dear Brethren, together with as many affectionate desires of your spirituall good as my poor heart can hold, do I here present this 3. part of my Annotations; and do indeed own it as a speciall mercy of divine Providence to me, considering how far my daies were declined ere I was called to dispense the word of Grace amongst you, that the thrid of my life should be drawn out so far beyond mine own expectation, that I should now have the opportunity of leaving behind me this pledge and memoriall of my thankfull acknowledgement of your love and kind respects to me, (in the extent whereof amongst you I think I may glory as much, as can well be expected in these broken times) as likewise of the tender affection, which I bear to *you all*, and that continually *I have you in my heart* (to use the Apostles expression Phil. 1. 7.) that I may by all possible means to the utmost of my power advance the spirituall and eternall good of your souls.

Only now, I beseech you, let me close this tender of my service herein with this Request, that you would not by looking on this Dedication, and minding the Book no farther, make that a vain and empty complement, which I present unto you with a reall desire of advancing the stock of your saving knowledge in the great things of Gods law, and which I hope through Gods Blessing may turn to profit in this regard, if you will be pleased attentively to read over these Notes together with these Scriptures, which their design is to unfold.

Oh, my Brethren, as you desire to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ*, be much in reading the Scriptures, *the Oracles of God*. Hearing hath the preheminence for awakening Conscience. But Reading (in my poor judgement) carries with it some kind of peculiar advantage for the edifying and establishing of the minds of Christians in point of solid knowledge.

As for these particular Books, which are here explained, I think I may safely say, without any blame-worthy reflection upon the rest of the Scripture, that they are the choicest pieces of the Old Testament. The Scripture is the Paradise, the garden of God upon earth: and these Poeticall Books are (as I may say) as so many goodly knots in the midst of this garden; wherein the discoveries that are made of divine truths are set forth with the intricacies and elegancies of many florid figurative expressions, purposely to render them the more delightfull to us. Solomon himself saith as much in expresse terms concerning his Books, Eccles. 12. 10. *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words; or, as it is in the Hebrew, words of delight.* And this may well invite you with strong affectionate desires

desires to search into those treasures of wisdom, which are therein so pleasingly conveyed to us.

And now, my dear Friends, I have nothing farther to adde, but my prayers for you, that you may be still united more and more in the way of truth, and in the bond of Christian love and peace; and withall earnestly to begge your daily prayers for me, that I may be still enabled through grace so to hold forth the Word of life unto you, *that I may rejoyce in the day of Christ*, that, even to you-ward, *I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain*; which I hope you will not fail to doe for

April 21. 1658.

Your servant in the work of the Lord,

ARTHUR JACKSON.



A Preface or Advertisement
To the
R E A D E R.

Reader, when I first undertook this Work of writing these Annotations upon the Scripture, there was not, as I remember, any piece of this kind extant in English, save only the Geneva marginall Notes. But since that time (blessed be God, the father of lights) abundance of help hath come flowing in by more able Hands. Besides the two volumes of the Annotations of our English Divines, and the Translation of the Dutch Notes, (more lately published) much hath been done in this very way, for the clearing of the difficulties in severall Books of the Scripture, by many particular men. Yea upon two of the Books, which here I have undertaken to explain, so much hath been done, I mean by Mr. Caryl in his elaborate Comments upon Iob (so far as he hath gone) and by Dr. Reynolds in that choice piece of his upon Ecclesiastes, which we have in the great English Annotations, that they may well give abundant satisfaction to those that read them.

But why then do I proceed in this Work? especially considering that Item given by Solomon in one of these Books, that of making many Books there is no end, and much reading is a wearinesse of the flesh? I answer truly and briefly; first, that I have found so much sweet content and delight in this study, that I can hardly perswade myself to give it over. Secondly, that the reiterated perswasions of many of my Reverend Brethren that I would go on in this work hath been a very great encouragement therein to me; and thirdly, that I cannot but hope that the plainnesse of the Expositions (if nothing else) will make them accepted by many.

The greatest thing that hath troubled me in this work was, that when I came to commit it to the Presse, I found it rise to so far greater a bulk then either of my two former Volumes. But for this I desire the Reader would consider. First, that the stile and expressions of these Poeticall Books are farre more
dark

dark and difficult, and fuller of many knotty intricacies, then those books that were the subject of the former Volumes; and likewise that the clearing of the scope and dependance of many passages herein is a work of much labour (as will be most especially found in the books of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon) both which must needs make the Annotations the larger. Secondly, that in this Volume I have undertaken to open, together with the Translation of the Text which we have in our Bibles, the different Translations that are put in the margin, (because I found many of them judged most agreeable to the Originall) which I seldome did in the other Volumes. And this also hath much lengthened the Notes. and thirdly, that to shorten the work, I have, as often as I could, referred the Reader to the Exposition of the like passages and expressions in other places; the frequency whereof therefore I hope will be no occasion of dislike to any. Yea in some places I have been forced to leave the Reader of himself to have recourse to former Expositions: for, as for Instance, for the word Selah, and many other words frequently found in the Titles of the Psalms, should I have inserted a severall Reference, even these, with others of the like nature, would very much have swelled the book.

In a word, though the work be larger then I intended, yet I hope it will be the more profitable: I studied brevity, so far as it might not prejudice the perspicuity of the Notes. The good Lord command a blessing upon it, where ever it goeth; and if thou, Reader, findest it so with thee, I know I shall have thy prayers, which I shall account a great return of Christian love to him, who is,

Thine in the Lord Iesus,

ARTHUR JACKSON.

ERRATA.

Pag. 40. line 31. for overturns read indangers. p. 57. l. 6. for to overwhelm r. so-overwhelm. p. 69. l. 3. for whose troopes r. whole troops. p. 70. l. 19. for as is. r. as it is. p. 80. l. 43. for nor r. not. p. 88. l. ult. for escretly r. secretly. p. 194. l. 10. r. or 3ly l. 13. r. or 4ly. p. 196. l. 7. dele spoken p. 209. l. 2. for stone r. brasie. p. 221. l. 23. dele more. p. 393. l. 9. for work r. word. p. 432. l. 15. for Chro. r. 1 Chro. p. 779. l. 1. for effect r. affect. p. 844. l. 3. for see the Note. 2 Cor. 12. 8, r. See 2 Cor. 8. 12. p. 850. l. 39. for anger r. danger. p. 869. l. 36. for forget r. forgoe. p. 878. l. 13. for better r. bitter. p. 879. for 23. r. 29. p. 869. l. 36. for were their r. were not their. p. 919. l. 23. for worldly men r. worldly wise men. Ecclef. & Cant.

P. 35. l. 33. for ver. 15. r. ver. 5. p. 41. l. 30. they premote r. they may promote. p. 103. l. 43. for retained r. returned. p. 130. l. 42. for into r. in to. p. 149. l. 10. for but when, &c. r. and when by faith we do open to him, yet because, &c. p. 168. l. 38. for people r. gospel. p. 188. l. 25. and according dele and. p. 206. l. 9. for The last r. In the last. p. 218. l. 38. for if the word comes r. if they come. p. 225. l. 12. for given the, r. given from the.



ANNOTATIONS

Upon the Book of J O B.

CHAP. I.



Here was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Iob, &c.] That this book was written by some of those holy men of God, that wrote by the inspiration of the holy Ghost, cannot be doubted. For we see that this history is spoken of as a part of the Oracles of God, committed to the Jews. *Iam. 5. 11. you have heard of the patience of Iob, and have seen the end of the Lord;* and by the Apostle Paul a passage of it, to wit, that chap. 11. 13. is cited in 1 Cor. 3. 19. *It is written, he taketh the wife in their own craftinesse.* Indeed who it was that wrote this book is altogether uncertain: only we may say that they build upon the fairest conjectures, that hold Moses was the writer of it, & that it was the first scripture that was written. As for these first words, *There was a man in the land of Uz, &c.* It is hard to say what the land of Uz was, where Iob dwelt, and of whom it was so called, whether of Uz, the son of Arum, the son of Shem, Gen. 10. 23. or of Huz, the son of Nahor, Abrahams brother. Gen. 22. 25. or of Uz the grandchild of Seir. Gen. 36. 28. That it lay Eastward of Canaan, and bordered upon the Sabæans and Chaldæans is evident in the story: and the most probable opinion seems to be, that it was Uz in the land of Edom, or whereof the land of Edom was a part. Lam. 4. 21. *Rejoyce and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz,* and the rather because Teman also, the country of Eliphaz, one of Iobs friends and neighbours. Chap. 2. 11. either was in Idumea, or bordered upon it. See Ier. 49. 7. Amos. 1. 11, 12. Obad. 8. 9. and that the place of his dwelling is thus expressed, as a proof of his singular piety, in that though he were not of the seed of Abraham, but lived amongst those nations, that were much degenerated from the piety of the holy Patriarchs, yet he was a man of eminent holinesse and righteousness. For the time when he lived, that likewise is uncertain; yet it is most likely that he lived in the daies of the Patriarks before Moses. 1. because in his time it seems Religion was not wholly decayed amongst those Eastern nations, nor was the true God only worshipped as yet amongst Abrahams posterity: 2. because he lived after his afflictions were ended 140 years. Chap. 42. 16. and by that which

is said of his first children, it is evident that they were house keepers, and therefore that he was of good years before he was afflicted; whereas after the age of the Patriarks men seldome lived so long. Psal. 90. 10. 3. Because after the giving of the law, it was not lawfull to sacrifice, save in the place which God had chosen, the tabernacle and temple: whereas we see ver. 5. that Iob sacrificed in the land of Uz. and 4. Because there is not the least mention in this book of any thing concerning the common-wealth of Israel, or of any of the glorious works that God wrought for them in Egypt, the wildernesse or the land of Canaan: which we can hardly say of any book of Scripture besides, because they were written after Moses. However, that in after times the story and name of Iob was famous amongst the Iews, is evident. Ezek, 14. 14. *Though these three men Noah, Daniel and Iob were in it, they should deliver but their own souls.*

And that man was perfect and upright, &c.] to wit, therefore perfect, because upright, or, he was a man of a sincere heart, and just conversation. His eminent piety is here first related, because this is one of those things, which chiefly in this history is recommended to our observation that being a man of such rare piety, he notwithstanding underwent such heavy afflictions.

Verf. 3. *His substance also was seven thousand sheep, &c.*] The great wealth of Iob is thus particularly expressed, both because this added much to his commendation, that he was not corrupted with his prosperity and wealth, as most men are; and likewise because his patience was herein the more to be admired, that being spoyled of so great riches he bore it as quietly, as if it had been a matter of nothing which he had lost.

So that this man was the greatest of all the men in the East) that is, in wealth, honour, credit and esteem; yet the comparison must be understood with reference to others of the same quality and condition: for that he should be a King (as some conceive) yea the greatest King in those parts of the world is altogether improbable, and his own words of himself do plainly import the contrary Chap. 29. 25. *I chose out their way, and sate chief, and dwelt as a King in the army, &c.*

Verf. 4. *And his sons went and feasted in their houses every one his day, &c.*] That is, his sons used ever and anon to feast one another, each one in his day, though not for seven daies together without intermission (for it is said that each of them sent and invited their sisters to be with them). And this is expressed, 1. Because it was the occasion of that miserable end that befell his children. ver. 18, 19. when being met together in their eldest brothers house according to their custome, the house fell upon them. 2. To shew how lovingly they agreed and lived together, this being doubtlesse a great aggravation of his grief, when tydings were brought him of their sudden death. 3. To prove the singular piety of this man (so sorely afterward afflicted) by this particular of his sollicitous care for his children, when they were feasting together.

Verf. 5. *And it was so when the daies of their feasting were gone about, that Iob sent and sanctified them, &c.*) That is, he sent and appointed them to sanctifie and prepare themselves for the sacrifices which the next morning he meant to offer

up to God in their behalf; and this they were to do partly by such outward rites of purifying as were used in those times, partly by spirituall means, as by holy meditations, prayer, mortification, repentance, &c.

For Iob said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.] That is, it being so usuall with men in times of feasting to forget themselves and many severall waies to sin against God, thus it may well be it hath been with my children, perhaps by some more hainous sin they have provoked God to anger against them and that out of some secret prophaneesse and contempt of God in their hearts, which because it tends to the vilifying and dishonouring of God is indeed no better then a cursing of God in their hearts. This I conceive is the meaning of those words, as not judging it so probable, either that Iob made a doubt whether his sons had in the least degree swerved from the rule of Gods law, or that he suspected in them the horrid sin of direct blaspheming and cursing of God, no not in their hearts.

Thus did Iob continually.] That is, so often as his sons did thus feast one another, each in his course, which it seems they did frequently.

Verf. 6. Now there was a day when the sons of God, &c.] By the sons of God here are meant the holy Angels, as again chap. 38. 7. who are so called, first, because they do in a speciall manner bear in themselves the image of God, to wit, in their singular wisdom and knowledge, their unspotted purity and holinesse, their admirable power and might and in the majesty and glory of their spirituall essence. 2. Because all these excellencies wherewith they are endued they have them from God, the fountain from whence they flow, in regard whereof, when they stand before God they are as so many beams of his inaccessible light. 3. Because they serve God as sons their father, with all chearfulnesse and willingnesse. and 4. Because as sons they are alwaies in Gods presence and see his face, and of these it is said that on a certain day they came and presented themselves before the Lord, Satan being also amongst them, &c. Which must not be literally understood, as if God had certaine dayes wherein he called together the Angels to attend him, (for the holy Angels are continually in his presence, Mat, 18. 10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do alwaies behold the face of my Father.*) Or, as if any such speeches passed betwixt God and the Devil as here are recorded. It is only a figurative expression of this truth, that both the good and evil spirits are alwaies in his eye, and under his command, and do nothing but what he will have them, and that it was therefore of God that the Devil was suffered to tempt Iob and try him as he did; for because of our weaknesse the Lord doth herein, as it were, stoop to our capacity, and speaks of himself after the manner of earthly Princes, that we might the better conceive him, in a manner of speech which we call a Prosopopeia, not much unlike that in 2 Kings 22. 19. *I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left, and the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead, &c.*

Verf. 7. Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth; &c.] By this walking of Satan to and fro in the earth is only figuratively im-

ed, that those evil spirits are every where throughout the whole world, seeking diligently to seduce men and to execute Gods vengeance on them, and to do all the mischief they possibly can.

Verf. 8. *Hast thou considered my servant Iob, &c.*] By this the Lords boasting of Iobs piety and righteousness is signified, that where the Lord by his spirit enables his servants to frame their lives according to his will, God in them is glorified, not without the confusion of Satan, who though he observes with envy and vexation enough the uprightness of their waies, yet he is not able to subdue and corrupt them, and so God in them doth as it were triumph over Satan, and they through Gods assistance are more then conquerours.

Verf. 9. *Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Iob fear God for nought?*] By this answer of Satan is only implied, that he is the accuser of the children of God, and is still ready to judge, that in prosperity we only serve God for the good things he bestows upon us, and endeavours therefore by troubles and afflictions to draw us off from the service of God.

Verf. 10. *Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house?*] that is, his children and family: and hereby is implied that Satan is vexed, that the Lord by his speciall protection doth keep him off from doing that mischief to the righteous that he desires to do.

Verf. 11. *But put forth thine hand now and touch all that he hath.*] That is, destroy or take from him, not some part of his estate only (for that may be done and yet a sufficiency be left him) but all that he hath, and then he will discover himself otherwise then he hath hitherto done. By touching is usually meant in the Scriptures hurting, afflicting or destroying, as Ruth 2. 9. *Have I not charged the young men, that they should not touch thee?* Zach. 2. 8. *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* Psal. 105. 15. *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* And so it is taken here: and this word (*now*) is added to imply that Satan desired to have it done presently; he was eager to destroy him, and thought long to see Iob in misery.

And he will curse thee to thy face.] That is, he will openly and impudently blaspheme thy name; and hereby is meant not only expresse execrations cast upon God, but also whatever may tend to the reproach of the Almighty, his goodness and providence.

Verf. 12. *And the Lord said unto Satan, behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand.*] Hereby is implied. 1. That Satan is continually desirous to afflict our bodies. 2. That the Devil cannot stir an inch farther in afflicting us, then God gives him leave. 3. That the Lord is carefull that his servants should not be overpressed, and therefore usually affords them some breathing time, as here, though he intended afterwards to give Satan power to afflict his body, yet a while he restrained him from that.

So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.] The meaning of this is only to imply, that the Devill is speedily ready to do all the mischief he can to Gods people, if the Lord have once let loose his chain.

Verf. 13. *And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating, &c.*] This

This time and this manner of destroying Iobs children is expressed, as again afterward vers. 18. because this must needs much aggravate Iobs sorrow, that they should be fetched in together by the providence of God, as it were into a net, to the end they might all be destroyed together and not one of them escape, as likewise that they should be thus suddenly in a fearfull manner cut off, which alwaies hath an impression of wrath upon it, when they were thus lovingly rejoycing together: and that in their eldest brothers house, who having the largest portion of estate was like to make the fullest and most solemn feast. He alwaies was affraid least they should sin in their feasting; so that having their brains thus suddenly beaten out whilst they were eating and drinking together, this might make him fear least they died with sin upon them unrepented of.

Vers. 15. *And the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away, &c.*] The Sabeans were a people (as most interpreters hold) inhabiting *Arabia felix* bordering upon the land of Uz where Iob dwelt, a people that lived by pillaging and plundering their neighbours, and so easily wonne, by a suggestion of Satans at this time, to break out upon Iobs cattle and drive them away. And observable it is, that though Satan could many waies have destroyed Iobs oxen and asses, and the servants that were with them more immediately by himself, yet he chose rather to make use of the Sabeans, as delighting not only in the misery of Iob, but also in the sin of these his wretched instruments.

And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.] The same is said by all the severall messengers that brought Iob the sad tydings of the severall calamities that befell him, vers. 16, 17, 19. So that it was doubtlesse a piece of Satans policy that still one servant escaped to bring Iob the relation of these grievous losses; and two reasons may be given for it, to wit, 1. That the relation of these afflictions might come suddenly to him; his servants escaping out of such desperate dangers would be sure to fly home with all the speed they were able; and 2. That he might not question the certainty of what was told him. Had there been any colour of doubting the truth of these relations, that might have abated his sorrow for the present, and then recollecting his spirits in the interim when he came to know the certainty of it, he might then have been the better able to bear it; but having the report of these things from his own servants, that were eye witnesses of what they spake, he could have no ground of questioning whether that they spake were true or no, and so these heavy tydings must needs presently fall upon him with their full weight.

Vers. 16. *While he was yet speaking there came also another.*] The immediate report of these ill tydings one in the neck of another (which is here noted, as also again vers. 17 and 18) was purposely no doubt effected by Satan, that he might not have any breathing time, any leasure to call to mind any thought that might support him, or allay any whit the bitterness of the former sorrow.

The fire of God is fallen from heaven, &c.] That is, a strange and extraordinary lightening from heaven hath consumed them; And remarkable is the cunning of Satan, who destroyed not these, as he did the other, by making use of wicked men, but by fire from heaven, that for his greater astonishment, Iob might the

more assuredly believe, that not men only, but even God himself did fight against him, and so might not fly to God for comfort, but rather in the vexation of his spirit might blaspheme God.

Verf. 18. *Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking, &c.*] This message was by the cunning of Satan reserved to the last place, because the tydings of the losse of his goods would not have been so terrible, had he known of his childrens death, to whom he hoped to have left them; and indeed when a man lies under a great affliction, a lesse is not minded, and 2. Because when he was already sorely distressed with the former sad tydings, he would be the more unable to bear this dolefull message, and the more likely to sink down under it, and break forth into impatience and blasphemy against God.

Verf. 19. *There came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, &c.*] Either this must be meant of a whirlwind, that did together strike the four corners of the house, or else the wind from the wilderness did with its violence shake the four corners of the house, so that at length the house fell upon them.

Verf. 20. *Then Iob arose and rent his mantle, &c.*] That is, having hitherto sat still and heard these sad tydings, now he presently arose (as one that yet sunk not under these afflictions) *and rent his mantle and shaved his head, &c.* And this he did, partly that he might moderately bewail these afflictions and specially the death of his children, and partly, thereby to testify his deep humiliation under the hand of God, with repentance for all his sins; to which some adde also, that he did it out of detestation of those blasphemous temptations which Satan at this time did suggest to him. As for these outward rites of rending their garments and shaving their heads, which they used in those times and countries: for the first see the note Gen. 37. 29. and for the second, the shaving of the head, that this also was used in times of great affliction and sorrow of mind is evident in those places. Isa. 22. 12. *In that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldnesse,* and Ier. 7. 29. *Cut off thine hair O Ierusalem and cast it away, and take up a lamentation.* And then doubtlesse it was used to signify, that their condition was such, that they had good cause to lay by all ornaments whatsoever, hair being given for comelinesse and ornament.

Verf. 21. *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither:]* Some expositours conceive that the word (*thither*) in this clause is not used in reference to his mothers womb, but in reference to the earth; and that, because when he spake these words, by way of adoration he cast or bowed down his body to the earth, as it is in the former verse. Others conceive it is the earth, which Iob here calls his mothers womb, and that because the earth is the common mother of us all, since out of it in Adam we were all taken. Gen. 2. 19. But last of all, others, and with better reason, acknowledge, that Iob means indeed his mothers womb in the first clause, and then in the next clause adds, that he shall naked return thither, only in reference to a returning to an estate like that of his mothers womb, to wit, that as there he was shut up naked in the streights and darknesse of earth (so David calls his mothers womb. Psal. 139. 15. *I was made*
in

in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.) waiting thence to be delivered in due time, so he should be again shut up naked in the bowels of the earth, the grave, as seed sown in the ground, waiting for a resurrection to a better life. However the drift of these words was doubtlesse to shew, that if God should strip him of all he enjoyed, he should have no cause to complain, both because he brought not these things into the world with him; God had given them and might, when he pleased, take them away, and because they were given as temporall blessings, which he could not hope alwaies to enjoy, but must part with them at the time of his death. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.* 1 Tim. 6. 7.

Verf. 21. *Blessed be the name of the Lord.*] So far was Satan disappointed of his hopes, that in stead of cursing God, Iob blessed him, both for suffering him to enjoy his good blessings so long, and for his present afflictions, wherein he knew the Lord might shew his goodnesse and mercy to him, as well as in his former bounty; and this doubtlesse did more deeply wound Satan, then all Iobs afflictions had wounded him.

Verf. 22. *In all this Iob sinned not.*] That is, in all this that Iob spake and did, there was not any thing that was materially sinfull. No man can do any one act that is purely pure, free from the least stain or tincture of sin; *Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* chap. 14. 4. But there is a great deal of difference between a sinfull action and sin in an action; Satan had said that Iob would curse God; but when it came to proof, there was no such thing, he neither spake nor did any thing that was materially evil.

C H A P. II.

Verf. 1. *Again there was a day, &c.*] See chap. i. verf. 6. How long it was after those former losses, ere God gave Satan liberty to afflict him in his body, we cannot say; only it is probable, that there was such a distance of time between these two afflictions, as might serve for a full discovery of Iobs Spirit under the first.

Verf. 2. *From going to and fro in the earth.*] See chap. 1. verf. 7.

Verf. 3. *Hast thou considered my servant Iob?*] See chap. 1. verf. 8.

And still he holdeth fast his integrity.] This is added to imply, that God is in a speciall manner glorified and Satan confounded by the Saints perseverance in piety in the time of affliction; for hence the Lord is here set forth, as it were triumphing in this over Satan.

Although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause.] In this, as formerly, God stooping to our capacity speaks of himself still after the manner of men. He was not moved by any perswasions of Satan to afflict Iob, nor did it to gratifie him; only because the Lord did it to manifest, that Iob did not serve God only for the blessings he bestowed upon him, as Satan judged, therefore the Lord saith here, that Satan moved him against him to destroy him, and that, *without cause*, since the Devil could not effect what he aimed at, but still Iob continued the same he was before.

Verf. 4

Verf. 4. *And Satan answered the Lord and said, skin for skin, &c.*] See chap. 1. ver. 9. Some expound this proverbiall speech *skin for skin, &c.* thus, that as willingly as men exchange one skin for another, they will part with all that they have to save their life. And indeed the like manner of speech we may observe in other Proverbs. Prov. 25. 3. *The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of Kings is unsearchable.* and verf. 25. *As cold waters to a thirsty soul: so is good news from a far country.* But the most generally received exposition is this, that as men would expose their hands to danger of a blow that is coming, to save their heads, or any other place where the blow might prove mortall, or suffer their cattle or other goods, yea their children to perish, so themselves might sleep in a whole skin, so it was with Iob, he had hitherto forbore to curse God, not out of any true piety and sincerity of heart, but only out of a base fear least he should be smitten in his own body, as would soon be discovered, if his body were smitten too, and for the better warranting of this exposition, it is said, that in those times, partly because their substance consisted chiefly in cattell, and partly because their mony was made of skins, it was usuall to expresse a mans whole estate by the word skin; so that the meaning of this proverbiall speech *skin for skin* was usually this, that there was no man but would give all his outward estate for the saving of his skin upon his back, that is, for the saving of his life.

Verf. 5. *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, &c.*] That is, afflict him in his body also, and that not lightly, but in some heavy manner, that not his flesh only, but his very bones may be sensible thereof, that the pain and distemper may pierce even to his very bones and marrow, that so his whole body may be both pained and weakned, to the manifest endangering of his life, and then he will curse thee to thy face. See chap. 1. verf. 11.

Verf. 6. *Behold he is in thine hand, but save his life.*] See chap. 1. verf. 12.

Verf. 7. *So Satan went forth, &c.*] See again chap. 1. 12.

And smote Iob with sore boiles, from the sole of his foot unto his crown.] And thus, besides the inward tortures and sicknesse he endured, which consumed his flesh and strength, and made him hopelesse of his life. [chap. 17. 1. *My breath is corrupt my daies are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*] He became in outward appearance a fearfull spectacle of Gods fiery indignation, insomuch that his nearest friends loathed almost to behold him and were affraid to come near him. chap. 19. verf. 13. *He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.* and again verf. 19. *All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.*

Verf. 8. *And he took him a potsheard to scrape himself withall; &c.*] It seems that this scraping himself with a potsheard was whilst he sat amongst the ashes or upon the dunghill, (as some translate it) and therefore are both these clauses joyned together. Though perhaps Satan deprived Iob of much more of his estate then is expressed, yet that he was brought to such extreme poverty, that he had neither house to dwell in, nor a rag to wipe his sores with, and therefore sat upon a dunghill and scraped himself with a potsheard, as some conceive, I now where find, but rather find the contrary; for he had a bed to lie on. chap. 7. 4. *When I lie down,*

down, I say, *When shall I arise?* and vers. 13, 14. *When I say, My bed shall comfort me my couch shall ease my complaint: Then thou scarest me with dreams and terrifiest me through visions;* and a house whether his friends resorted to him, even when his afflictions came to a period, chap. 42. 11. *Then came there unto him all his brethren and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house.* And though the Lord gave Satan liberty to deprive him of all that he had, chap. 1. 12. and it is not likely this enemy would shew him any favour, yet before he had taken all from him, seeing his wonderfull patience he might judge that he did it out of a slavish fear, least God should strike him in his body too, and so, the Lord giving him liberty, might presently bring these diseases upon him also. Rather therefore it may be thought that voluntarily leaving his house and bed he went abroad (and thence it is said vers. 12. that when his friends came to visit him they saw him *a far off*) and sat down amongst the ashes, as men in their extreme sorrow and humiliation used to do, Ion. 3. 6. *The King of Nineveh laid his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes,* as a testimony of his earthly condition and his baseness and unworthiness; and so being there having no body else that would vouchsafe to dresse him, he took up a posheard to scrape himself: either to allay the itching of his sores, or rather to take off the matter and filth that issued from his ulcers, and that because his fingers were so sore that he could not doe it with them, and besides he perhaps loathed to touch it, and as for his servants and friends they abhorred him so that they would not come near him, Job 19. 14, 17.

Vers. 9. *Then said his wife unto him, &c.*] Though Satan were not restrained from wreaking his teen upon all that was Iobs, himself only excepted, chap. 1. 12. yet he medled not with his wife, either because she was a part of himself, or rather because he intended to make use of her in tempting him to impatience, as knowing well that men are most easily seduced by their wives, that no injuries do sooner drive men to impatience, then those that are offered them by such as are nearest to them, and that his friends and others were likely to be encouraged to the like by her example.

Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die.] I have met with some expositours that understand this speech of Iobs wife to him thus. After all these judgements which God hath laid upon thee, dost thou still maintain thy self to be sincere and upright? Being brought so low, at the very point of death wilt thou still deny thy hypocrisie? Take heed, by acknowledging thy hypocrisie *blesse God, give glory to God, and so die,* or, *curse God and die,* that is, thou hadst as good discover by a desperate blasphemy at last what thou hast formerly been, that so dying it may be seen that God hath dealt justly with thee in all that he hath laid upon thee. But because in the third verse this phrase of retaining his integrity is used concerning Iob in a way of commendation, the more ordinary exposition of these words I take to be the best, which is this, *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* That is, after all these calamities and vain patience dost thou yet retain thy integrity? alas what doth it profit you? to what end do you still hope in God, and pray to him and blesse him? He still as a persecuting enemy

pours out his wrath more and more upon you, rather therefore *curse God and die*, where by cursing God is meant, as before, chap. 1. 11. whatever might tend to Gods reproach, and this his wife like an infernall fury adviseth him to, either as intimating that he had as good die cursing of God as blessing him, since thereby he should at least satisfie his grieved and afflicted spirit, or else as prescribing this as a means to put an end to all his insufferable miseries, to wit, by provoking God with his blasphemy to kill him outright.

Verf. 10. *But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.*] As if he should have said, Thou dost not now, wife, speak like thy self, this had not wont to be thy language, even those women that are most silly and foolish, most profane and irreligious, most desperately violent in their passions, could not speak more Atheistically and wickedly then thou hast now spoken, more indeed like those idolatrous women, that use to revile their sencelesse Gods, then like a woman, who had been instructed in the knowledge of the true ever living God, and one that had hitherto carried her self as one that feared him

Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?] These words imply many reasons why it is fit that men should patiently endure those many afflictions, that sometimes fall upon them. 1. Because it is not fit that wretched man should bind God to his will and prescribe him what he should do, to wit, that he should still lade him with his blessings, and never intermix any sorrows with them. 2. Because the many blessings which he hath bestowed upon us, far surpassing the evils he inflicts, may well bind us by way of thankfulness to be content that he should exercise his dominion over us, and afflict us when he seeth cause without any murmuring against him. 3. Because the good he doth for us proves him a loving father, and therefore should assure us, that even in the evil he inflicts, he seeks our advantage, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* saith Christ. John 18. 11. and so Heb. 12. 9. *We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live?*

In all this did not Iob sin with his lips.] That is, not so much as with speaking a hasty and impatient word; which was indeed a high degree of patience, James 3. 2. *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* See the note chap. 1. 22.

Verf. 11. *Now when Iobs three friends heard, &c.*] That is, his three special choice and most intimate friends, to wit, Eliphaz (who is called the Temanite, either because he was of the stock of Teman, the son of Eliphaz the son of Esau, Gen. 36. 11. or else because he was of the land of Teman mentioned, Ier. 49. 7.) and Bildad (who is called the Shuhite, perhaps because he was of the stock of Shuah, the son of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. 25. 2. perhaps of some country or city so called) and Zophar the Naamathite (so called also for some such like reason it may be from the city Naamah Josh. 15. 41.) As for Elihu of whom mention is made, chap. 32. 2. he came not it seems with these his three friends, but standing by, as perhaps many others did, and hearing their conference he brake out also and soake his mind. It is said by some that these men were Kings; but no such thing

thing do we find in the Scripture. Men they were doubtlesse of eminent learning and piety (as by their discourse with Iob doth every where appear) yea such to whom the Lord used to appear in dreams and visions, *Now a thing was secretly brought to me*, (saith Eliphaz chap. 4. 12, 13.) *and mine ear received a little thereof, in thoughts from the visions of the night*, as likewise men of great years and experience; whence is that of Elihu concerning these men, chap. 32. 6, 7. *I am young and ye are very old, I said, Daies should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom*, and Iobs faithfull friends; doubtlesse they were, and in their love to him came now to visit him, and spake all they said to him out of a sincere desire of his good, though they erred fouly in judging of his cause: All which made the harsh censures which afterward they passed upon him, the more bitter and grievous to be born.

For they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.] to wit, because it is a kind of ease to an afflicted man, to see that others pity him and compassionate his case, neither can words of comfort be acceptable unlesse they come from those of whom he is perswaded that they have a fellow-feeling of his sorrows.

Verf. 12. *And sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.*] It seems there were two severall waies of sprinkling dust: sometimes they did barely sprinkle it upon their heads (concerning which see the Notes, Iosh. 7. 6.) but sometimes again they took the dust and threw it up into the air, so letting it fall back upon their heads; for so we read also of the Iews that were enraged at Pauls preaching, Acts 22. 23. *They cryed out and casting off their cloths threw dust into the aire*; and this circumstance of their throwing the dust toward heaven might signifie, either that it was a day of grievous darknesse and affliction that was come upon them, yea a day of dismall confusion wherein things were turned upside down, and earth and aire as it were mingled together, or else that the spectacle they beheld was such, that they might well wish the heavens were overclouded with darknesse that they might not behold it.

Verf. 13. *So they sat down with him upon the ground seven daies and seven nights.*] That is, say some Expositours, many daies and many nights; for the number seven is sometimes used indefinitely, as 1 Sam. 2. 5. of which see the Note there: or else the meaning may be that the greatest part of seven daies and seven nights they spent in a silent sitting by him, condoling his misery and mourning with him. It cannot be thought that Iob sat so long amongst the ashes, without ever withdrawing himself upon any occasion; much lesse can this be conceived of his friends; but as it is said of Anna that she *continued daily in the Temple*, though it cannot be thought that she never went out of it, Luke 2. 37. So it is here said of Iobs friends that they *sat with him on the ground seven daies and seven nights*, that is, the greatest part of that time, but yet doubtlesse they took their time for necessary food and rest, &c

And none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.] To wit, both because they at first thought it not so seasonable to begin to comfort him, before he had a little unladed his heart of sorrow, least by speaking they

should rather cause him to break forth into greater passion, then any whit assuage his grief: and likewise because the longer they observed and considered in what extremity Gods hand was upon him, the more they were even overwhelmed with sorrow, and so not able to speak, and that doubtlesse especially because though formerly they had alwaies esteemed him a sincere godly man, and therefore came with a full resolution to speak comfortably to him, yet now the excessive misery they saw him in, made them begin to stagger concerning this, and suspect that all he had formerly done was done in hypocrisie, and therefore the Lord abhorred him and punished him thus severely, and so herewith they were so astonished and perplexed, that they could not speak nor knew what to say to him.

CHAP. III.

Verf. 1. **A**fter this opened Iob his mouth.] That is, though for a while he sat silent as being overwhelmed with grief and not able to speak, according to that of David, Psal. 77. 4. *I am so troubled that I cannot speak;* yet getting at last some power over himself he gave vent to his sorrows and cursed his day; or thus, though hitherto Iob had carried himself with admirable patience, yet after this now at length he began to speak, and that freely and boldly (for that is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase, *Iob opened his mouth*) having sat silent with his friends a long time before, he began now to complain of his miseries, and gave therein too much liberty to himself, and was carried too farre beyond the bounds of patience by his passions, and therefore afterward was sharply reproved by God out of the whirlwind. chap. 38. 2. *Who is this that darkneth counsel by words without knowledge?* and condemned by himself, chap. 40. 4. *Behold I am vile what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth, &c.* And so again, chap. 42. 3, 6. And doubtlesse the cause of this sudden change was because God was now pleased to withdraw not only the light of his countenance, to make his tryall the more terrible, but also the strength of grace whereby he had been hitherto enabled to endure with such patience what he had suffered, & that to make it manifest, that all comfort and strength to stand in tryalls comes from God, and what the holiest and best of Gods servants would be, if they should be left unto themselves: yet it is not strange that Iobs patience should be so highly extolled in the Scripture, if we consider, 1. That his afflictions were not only exceeding great and very many but had also continued a long time upon him ere he brake forth into this impatience; for at the end of this dispute which he had with his friends, ere they left him, God began to raise him up again, chap. 42. 10. and yet then he had been many months, (as some conceive many years) under these heavy pressures, we see what he saith, chap. 7. 3. *I am made to possesse months of vanity.* 2. That upon the silence of his friends so many daies together, the Devil might have occasion to suggest that even they also (as his other friends had done before) deemed him a wicked man upon whom God had begun to pour forth his wrath, and therefore had not one word of comfort for him, which might much embitter his soul. 3. That in his greatest impatience he was not wholly over-born, his

his desire was still to approve himself to God, only the flesh lusted against the spirit and prevailed sometimes too farre over him, and when he did forget himself, it was not so much Iob that did it, as sin that dwelt in him, Rom. 7. 17. he still strove against it; and 4. That he did at length prevail over his corruptions, we see what he saith chap. 40. 4, 5. *Behold I am vile, I will lay my hand upon my mouth, I will speak no more: and chap. 42. I abhorre myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* And herein especially is the patience of Iob commended to us as a patten, because at the end he prevailed and got the day, Iam. 5. 11. *Behold, we count them happy which endure: ye have heard of the patience of Iob, and have seen the end of the Lord.*

And cursed his day.] That is, his birth-day, as it is expressed vers. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born*, not the very day whereon he was born, which was long since past and gone, but his anniversary birth-day, which was in its time to return every year, as is evident vers. 4. *Let that day be darknesse, let not God regard it, &c.* And this he cursed, to wit, with those execrations mentioned in the following verses, not as having a thought that those things were like to befall his birth-day upon his imprecations, or as deliberately and seriously wishing it might so be, only transported with the heat of his passions, he seeks thereby with all vehemency to expresse, how he abhorred his life, what a dismall and unhappy thing it was to him that he was ever born, &c.

Vers. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born and the night, &c.*] That is, whereas the tydings of a child born, especially of a man child, are usually received with much joy, & their birth-daies afterwards solemnized with a great deal of mirth and jollity; I may rather wish that I had never been born, or that the day of my birth and the night of my conception may perish, and not have their course in the Kalender amongst the daies and nights of the year, at least that they may be no more solemnized but may be buried in eternall oblivion (as it is more plainly expressed vers. 6. *Let it not be joyned to the daies of the year, let it not come in'o the number of the months.*) and that because I was born to so much misery and sorrow. Some Expositours indeed will have the night whereof Iob here speaks to be not the night of his conception, because it could not be then known that a man child was conceived, but the night of his birth. But there is no necessity that we should thus understand the words, for as Esa. 48. 8. *Thou wast called a transgressor from the womb*, is the same with *Thou hast been a transgressor from the womb.* So here the night wherein it was said, *a man child is conceived*, is to be understood in the same sense as if he had said, the night wherein a man child was conceived; from this verse to the beginning of the 42 chapter in the originall the Penman of the holy Ghost hath expressed all that passed betwixt Iob and his friends, &c. in meeter.

Vers. 4. *Let that day be darknesse.*] This may be understood figuratively, let it be alwaies a sad and sorrowfull day; but I rather conceive that it was meant properly, let it be alwaies a pitchy dark day even as darknesse it self. The like may be said also concerning the last clause of this verse, *neither let the light shine upon it.*

Let not God regard it from above, &c.] That is, let not the Lord afford that day

the light of the Sun from above, nor other the influences of the heavens; that we enjoy a succession of light and darknesse, fruitfull times and seasons it is from Gods care and providence over the world, and hence is that expression which Moses useth concerning the land of Canaan, Deut. 11, 12. *The eyes of the Lord thy God are alwaies upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year*: So that when Iob wisheth that the Lord would not regard that day from above, it is all one as if he had wished that God would not mind it nor yield it the least of those blessings which he affords to other daies.

Verf. 5. *Let darknesse and the shadow of death stain it, &c.*] That is, a most extreme darknesse, to wit, first a darknesse like death that may be the very image and shadow of death, or 2. a darknesse like that wherewith dead men are overwhelmed that lye buried in their graves, or 3. a stifling killing darknesse, such as where damps and thick vapours that are in deep pits, that strike men suddenly dead, or 4. a dismall horrible darknesse, like enough to kill men with the very terrour of it, for hereto hath that clause reference also in the end of the verse, *Let the blacknesse of the day terrifie it*, that is, make it terrible to men. All this may be comprehended under this phrase of *the shadow of death*, and when Iob wished that such a darknesse might stain the day whereon he was born, the ground of the expression is this, that darknesse takes away the glory of a day, and hides the beauty of all things whatsoever.

Verf. 7. *Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyfull voice come therein.*] That is, whereas the night is usually the time of feasting, dancing, and all kind of jollity, as at marriages and all other times of festivity and rejoycing whatsoever, let it not be so on that unhappy night wherein I was conceived, but quite contrary let it be solitary, still, and silent, yea, let the darknesse thereof be so terrible, (all the stars in heaven withdrawing their light,) that neither man nor beast may dare to stir or move either within doores or without.

Verf. 8. *Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.*] That is, all that in the bitterness of their sorrows are wont to curse the day, as being weary both of life and light, let them curse that night wherein I was conceived and born. Some expositours understand this of fishermen and marriners, and that because they read the last clause of this verse, according to the translation which is set in the margin of our Bibles (*who are ready to raise up a Leviathan*) Such mens mouths are usually full of most fearfull execrations and curses, and especially when they are employed in taking whales, that huge fish which is called a Leviathan, chap. 41. 1. And that because the fishing for the whale is a businesse of great charge and greater danger, so that when they have seized upon one and are ready to raise him up, if by any mishap they loose him again, they are wont violently to break forth into all kind of fearfull imprecations against that unlucky and unfortunate day, because great losses cause great passions, specially in such ungodly wretches; and therefore, say they, Iob here wisheth that these men might curse the night of his conception; and to this we may adde too, that some referre this to the cursing of those marriners, who as they sail along lighting at unawares upon some place where they are ready to stirre or raise up a whale, do there-

thereupon seeing themselves in such imminent danger, curse the day that they entred upon that voyage, or that brought them within the reach of this sea-monster now ready to sink their vessell and drown them all. Again, others by Leviathan understand the Devil, metaphorically so called, to whom many authours in like manner apply that place, Esa. 27. 1. *In that day the Lord with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent,* and so conceive these words to be meant of those furious men, that in their passions are wont to wish the Devil might take either themselves, or others that are the occasion of their misery. Let them curse it that in the extremity of their impatience, not only use to curse the day, but also are ready ever and anon in their rage to raise up a Leviathan, that is, to call upon the Devil to take them. But now if we read the words according as our Translatours have rendered it, *Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning,* There is another exposition may be given of these words, which seems far more apt and easie, to wit, that whereas there were usually in those times certain persons, both men and women, that were hired to howle and lament at funeralls, or any other times of great calamitie and dismall sorrow, and that because they could doe it artificially, they were trained up to it, and had certain sad and dolefull ditties wherein they did in a solemn and passionate manner curse, sometimes the day of those sad accidents, sometimes those that were the occasion of it, to which custome many places of Scripture clearly have reference, as Amos 5. 16. *They shall call the husband-man to the mourning, and such as are skilfull of lamentation to wailing.* And so again Ier. 9. 17. 2 Chron. 35. 25. Mat. 9. 23. Ezek. 30. 2. Joel 1. 15. These now that were so ready and prepared at all times to raise up a mourning, or to call their company together to mourn, these I say Iob desires might be imployed to curse the night wherein he was conceived. And happily some one ditty they might have fullest of bitter imprecations, that was called a *Leviathan*.

Verf. 9. *Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark, &c.* The stars are a great ornament to the heaven, like so many spangles or Oes of gold set in the Canopy of heaven, they are also a great delight and comfort in the night and of speciall use for the direction of sea-men and others. To expresse therefore what cause he had to be troubled that ever he was conceived, Iob here wisheth the night of his conception might not have a star shining in it, that it might have no mixture of light, no not in the twilight of the evening, nor in the dawning of the morning (called here in the Hebrew *the eye-lids of the morning*, because the beams of the Sun the eye of the world, do then first discover themselves) but desireth that rather it might be a perpetuall night, then that any mixture of light by the approach of the morning should any whit abate the terror of its darknesse. *Let it look for light but have none*, which expression is used as an aggravation of the nights darknesse, that there should be a long expectation of light, and then at last their expectation should be frustrate.

Verf. 10. *Because it shut not up the doors of my mothers womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.* To wit, either that I might not have been conceived, or at least that I had not been born, and so might never have seen those sorrows, that now I have lived,

lived to see; for here Iob begins to render the reason why he had cursed both the day of his birth, and the night of his conception; and therefore this may be referred to both.

Vers. 12. *Why did the knees prevent me? &c.*] That is, why did the midwife so carefully prevent my falling upon the earth, by receiving me so charily into her lap, that I might be afterward washed, and swaddled, and nursed up? why did she not rather suffer me to fall from the womb to the earth, where I might have lyen and perished presently? and it may well be which some think, that in these expressions Iob alludes to that execrable custome used in those times by unnatural parents, who were wont to cast out their children as soon as they were born, and there to leave them upon the cold earth naked and helpless, whereto the holy Ghost also seems to have respect in that remarkable place. Ezek. 16, 3, 4, 5. *Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite; and as for thy nativity in the day thou wast born, thy navell was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee, thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all; none eyed pitted thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee, but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.*

Vers. 13. *For now should I have lyen still and been quiet, &c.*] It is evident that Iob speaks here only of the rest of the body in the grave, and the freedome which death brings from all worldly troubles and sorrows whatsoever; for he speaks of the rest which befalls all men after death, the bad as well as the good, the wicked oppressours as well as the poor that are oppressed by them, as is evident vers. 17. &c. *There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.* But since Iob knew well enough (doubtlesse) and did certainly believe, that when the bodies of men are laid in the grave, yet their souls then passe to greater pains and miseries, unlesse they be of Gods elect, to whom through Christs merits, an entrance is given to heaven and everlasting glory, why doth Iob here make no mention of this, but only speak of the rest of mens carcases in the grave, as if he believed not the immortality of the soul, nor put any difference betwixt the wicked and the righteous after death? surely because 1. He had a kind of secret assurance concerning the blisse of his soul after death, and so made no mention of that, and 2. Because through the vehement perturbations of his mind at present, and the violence of his passions by reason of the extremity of his sufferings, he only now minded as it were and thought upon the happinesse of those that were at quiet in their graves, and the thought of a second life, and the resurrection of mens bodies to shame or glory, they lyen for the present as forgotten, buried under the rubbish of his confused passions, as Moses when he saw the people of God like to be cut off, by the revenging hand of Gods justice, did in a manner forget (what he knew well enough) the immutability of Gods decree, and was only carried with the vehemency of his affections to the people of God, and his earnest desire of Gods glory, when he wished. Exod. 32. 32. that he would forgive the people their sin, or else blot him out of the book of life.

Vers. 14. *With Kings and counsellours of the earth, which build desolate places for themselves.*] That is, had I died immediately either in the womb, or so soon as ever

ever I was born, besides that I should have escaped all the miseries I have now suffered, in the grave I should have been not one jot in a worse condition, then the greatest Kings and Nobles are when they come to die, for all the great pomp and pleasure they have lived in before, and the great pomp of their sepulchers when they are dead: for by Kings and counsellors which built desolate places for themselves are meant here the most glorious, the mightiest Princes of the world, that by reason of their great power and riches sought to perpetuate the memory of their name by building desolate places, that is, either 1. by erecting huge and stately tombes and monuments, as memorialls of their buriall in those places, such as were the Egyptians Pyramids, &c. which are called desolate places, not only because the dead bodies buried there are left as it were forsaken of all friends in a desolate condition, but also because such monuments were built usually not in towns and cities, but abroad in the fields in solitary and unfrequented places; whence is that of the prophet, Ezek. 26. 20. where foretelling the destruction of Tyre, he speaks as in the name of the Lord thus, *When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, &c.* or 2. by rebuilding what their ancestours durst not attempt, great houses or cities formerly ruined, that had been a long time *wast places*, as the Prophet calls them, Isa. 58. 12. whereof there had been nothing but *the foundations* left for *many generations*; or rather, 3. by building in places formerly desolate, wherein haply one would wonder how such buildings could be raised, either great cities or stately houses for themselves to dwell in, and that of such a huge bignesse and vast compasse, that a Princes family cannot fill them, but still they seem in many places empty and desolate.

Verf. 15. *Or with Princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver.* That is, with the richest of Princes, who gathered in their life time the greatest masse of treasure; yet some understand this, as spoken with reference to a custome used in those times, of burying much treasure in the houses, that is, the graves and tombes of their great Princes.

Verf. 16. *Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been, &c.* That is, had I not been born, but dyed in the womb, (which also Iob had wished before verf. 10.) such as the condition of abortives is, that perish in the womb, to wit, either those that by some mischance miscarry within a while after they are conceived, (called here *an hidden untimely birth*, because they are presently laid by or cast away as unpleasing spectacles, or not at all looked after; or else because the form and lineaments of a child in such imperfect embryoes cannot well be discerned,) or those that have their full and perfect shape, but then die in the wombe, and so being dead-born never see light; such (saith Iob) had been then my condition, *I had not been*, that is, I had never been numbred amongst the sons of Adam, but had been wholly buried in oblivion, and had passed without name, as Solomon we see speaks of such an untimely birth. Eccles. 6. 4. *He cometh in and departeth in darknesse, and his name shall be covered with darknesse.*

Verf. 17. *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.*] By *the weary* here may be meant those that wicked oppressours have wearied with continuall troubles; and then the summe of the whole verse is this, that in the grave the oppressours and the oppressed are both at rest together. But *the weary* here intended may be also the wicked persecutours and oppressours, that do weary and tire out themselves with vexing and troubling others, till they come to be laid in the graves and then there they are at rest, and this may seem the more probable exposition, because in the following verse he speaks of those that suffer, and here therefore it is likely of those only that make men suffer.

Verf. 18. *There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressour.*] Because wicked oppressours use bitter words, and with their terrible threatening, and their insulting and scoffing language are wont to wound as deeply those that are under their power, as any other way: hence is this expression, *they hear not the voice of the oppressour.*

Verf. 20. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?*] These words are added, to imply how earnestly now he desired death; They are indeed a kind of expostulation with God, for continuing life to those that are in such misery, that they had rather die then live; but doubtlesse, though the extremity of his miseries wrung these words from him, yet he did not utter them with a purpose to contend with God, and to charge him with dealing too hardly with those that are in misery. Indeed they are words of lamentation rather then expostulation, *wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?* that is, Alas, it were well for those that are in bitter calamities, if they might die: they cannot but earnestly desire it, and it is a kind of addition to their miseries, that they must live, though they would die. Revel. 9. 6. *And in those daies shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

Verf. 23. *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?*] That is, to a man that cannot find out the meaning of Gods dealing with him, or why it is that he is so sorely afflicted; or rather, to a man whom God hath so hedged and hemmed in with many and divers calamities, and those so desperate and inextricable, that (poor wretch) it is not possible he should conceive which way to turn himself, or what courle to take to find out any way of escape, whereby he might wind himself out of these troubles, and therefore must needs be in continuall perplexity to think what will become of him, and what the end will be of all these miseries that are fallen upon him. Much to this purpose is that complaint of the Church, Lam. 3. 9. *He hath inclosed my waies with hewen stone: he hath made my paths crooked.*

Verf. 24. *For my sighing cometh before I eat.*] This is added, to imply that he was one of those, of whom he had spoken, to whom it was an addition of miseries, that they must still live, though they can see no hope of deliverance, and that because though he had alwaies worked out his salvation with fear and trembling (which is at least implied verf. 25, 26. *The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,*) yet his miseries were so grievous and continuall, without intermission, that

that he had not so much space of freedome, as to eat his meat in quiet, nor could forbear his sighs and tears, when the naturall desire of food was most urgent upon him; which indeed is most like that complaint of the Psalmist, Psal. 102. 9. *I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.* Some expositours understand this of his sighing because of the pain it would be to him to eat, in regard of his ulcers, wherewith he was every where filled, or because it grieved him to think that he must by feeding uphold the life, which he would so gladly be rid of; but the first exposition is far the most proper.

And my roarings are poured out like the waters.] That is, violently, abundantly and without ceasing; for he compares his roaring to the pouring out of waters. 1. Because when waters are poured forth, or break through the banks that before held them in, they rush out in great abundance and with unresistable violence. 2. Because the waters of rivers flow on continually without ceasing, as being still supplied from their fountains and springs, and 3. Because the noise of his roarings, by reason of their violence, was much like that of waters, where they break forth with such fury and carry all before them that stands in their way. It must be a great affliction that can make a man of spirit to mourn, and therefore much more that which makes him cry out and roare; & therefore the extremity of a mans misery is usually set forth in the Scripture by this that it makes him roar; as Psal. 32. 3. *I roared for the very disquietnesse of my soul;* So that when Iob complains not only that his sorrows made him roar, but also that his roarings were poured forth like water, this implyes how exceeding grievous his miseries were.

Verf. 25. *For the thing I greatly feared is come upon me, &c.*] This is added as an aggravation of his misery, (to shew what just cause he had to be weary of his life) to wit, that in the daies of his prosperity he had not lived carelessly and securely as wicked men use to doe, that when things go well with them confidently assure themselves that there shall never come a change, and so walk on presumptuously in their own waies, without any fear either of God or man; but that he had alwaies considered before hand what might befall him, and out of an awfull apprehension of the great alterations, which God could make in his condition even in an instant, he had alwaies walked humbly with God, and looked narrowly to his waies, that he might avoid his indignation; and yet notwithstanding that which he feared was fallen upon him. Had he in his prosperity glutted himself with pleasure and lived securely, it had been another matter (for to such God hath threatned destruction. 1 Thes. 5. 3. *When they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape*) But (saith Iob) I was not in safety, I did not think my self safe, but as one that ever feared what might come, I still watched over my waies, and yet these grievous troubles are come upon me.

CHAP. IV.

Verf. 2. **I***f we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved &c.?*] Hitherto Iobs friends had forbore speaking to him, partly because they were afraid they should by speaking encrease his grief, and partly because by the extraordinary heavinesse of Gods hand upon him they began to think, that doubtlesse he had alwaies been a secret hypocrite and therefore now at length the vengeance of God was in this fearfull manner fallen upon him; But when now they had heard him in such an impatient manner curse the day of his birth and wish for death, to put an end to all his miseries, but especially when they heard him in his last words, as it were justifying himself, to wit, by affirming that he had not by his security in the time of his prosperity provoked God to deal thus with him, but rather had done what he could to prevent it, this confirmed them in their opinion, that his heart was not right with God. And therefore Eliphaz, as being haply the elder and the chief of them, begins now with him, resolving to reprove him for his impatience, and to prove to him that God useth not to plague any but wicked men, as he was now plagued, and therefore it was fit that he should repent and turn to God, and not justifie himself. Now because he feared that this Iob would hardly take in good part, he begins with a profession that he was loth to grieve him, but that he could not forbear; *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* that is, I fear thou wilt, and it is that which hath made us forbear so long; *but who can withhold himself from speaking?* that is, hearing thee thus dishonour God and justifie thy self, as if all were well with thee, when Gods fearfull judgements upon thee do manifest the contrary, it is not possible we should hold our peace; if we have any care of thy soul, or be tender of Gods dishonour, it must need constrain us to speak.

Verf. 3. *Behold thou hast instructed many, &c.*] This is the first argument which Eliphaz useth, to condemn Iobs impatience, and to discover to him that he had only hitherto carried himself hypocritically in the profession of religion, to wit, that he had been a great Instructor and comforter of others, yea many others, in time of their calamity, fear and sorrow, and yet now when it came to be his portion to be in the like misery, no man could be more faint-hearted nor more impatient and rebellious against God then he was. To strengthen the weak hands and the feeble knees, and to uphold him that was falling, is to comfort those that are ready to faint and sink in despair, because of any grievous calamities that lie upon them, or are unavoidably, as they conceive, coming towards them, as Esa. 35. 3, 4. *Strengthen yee the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, say to them that are of a fearfull heart, be strong,* and so likewise Heb. 12. 12. 2 Sam. 4. 1. Jer. 6. 24. 1 Sam. 23. 16. Now because Iob had done this to others, but minded not now to do himself what he had taught others to do, this Eliphaz presseth upon him, as an argument, that there was never in him that truly religious heart, which he made shew of to others.

Verf. 6. *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy wayes*

waies?] That is, having made such a shew in thy prosperity of fearing God, of walking uprightly, of great hope and confidence which thou hast in God, whereas now when Gods hand is fallen upon thee, thou carriest thy self in a quite contrary manner to what thou madest a shew of, and didst advise others to, doth not this plainly discover, that all this was counterfeit in thee? and that thou didst but aime at thine own advantage in all that thou hast done? wherein when thou findest that God would no longer satisfie thy aimes, now thou art ready to fly in Gods face and to spurn against him. This is the drift of these words: And perhaps in the first place he speaks of his fear of God, because Iob had in a manner boasted of that in the two last verses of the former chapter.

Verf. 7. *Remember I pray thee, who ever perished being innocens? &c.*] That is, call to mind whether thou hast ever seen, or read, or heard of any one of Gods righteous servants, that have been destroyed by the avenging hand of God, and so utterly cast off and forsaken by him? This is another argument whereby Eliphaz seeeks to proove him not to have been so fearfull to offend God, as he pretended, to wit, because such plagues God used not to lay upon the righteous, as were now poured upon him.

Verf. 8. *Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, &c.*] Wicked men are said to *plow iniquity* and *sow wickednesse* because 1. They plot before hand how to accomplish their injurious purposes, as husbandmen by plowing the ground make it ready for the seed. 2. They follow their plot with all possible pains and diligence, moving every stone, turning up every clod, assaying by all means they can think of, all kind of injustice, treachery and deceit, to effect what they have contrived. 3. They act their wicked devices cunningly and artificially, they are not bunglers in the waies of sinning, as some men are, but manage their work with such curious cunning, that nothing can be done with more exact skill for the accomplishment of their cursed devices, and 4. They do all this in hope of some fruit and advantage that shall redound to them thereby. And then again they are said to *reap the same*, because in time they reap that which is the proper fruit of such waies, that is, the wrath of God, as the just recompence of their evil courses. Prov. 22. 8. *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity*, and Gal. 6. 8. *He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption*: whence it is that the just reward and fruit of wickednesse is called wickednesse (and therefore it is clear that they thus *reap the same*) Ier. 4. 18. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickednesse*. Wicked men may not be punished for a time, but at last they shall have a harvest answerable and proportionable to their deeds. Hos. 10. 13. *Ye have plowed wickednesse, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lies*; or because others at length deal with them just as they dealt with others, and so God paies them in their own kind, and that double many times. Revelat. 18. 6. *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double: yea seven-fold* Psal. 79. 12. *And render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosome; their reproach wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord*. So also Luke 6. 38. For of such unjust oppressours of others, Eliphaz chiefly here speaks, as is evident by the following words. verf. 10. 11.

Verf. 9. *By the blast of God they perish, &c.*] That is, the Lords anger breaking forth against them, he doth with ease on a sudden destroy them. Because when men are filled with indignation their passion and wrath will discover it self in the breathing and puffing of their nostrils, the Lords anger is many times in the Scripture expressed by the breathing of his nostrils, as Esa. 30. 33. and because wicked men are oftentimes cut off in an instant and with ease, the Lord only as it were blowing upon them, Hag. 1. 9. *Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little: and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it;* they are said to be destroyed with a blast, even as when corn that comes up hopefully is on a sudden blasted (whereto we may the rather think that Eliphaz alludes because of the foregoing metaphor of wicked mens sowing wickednesse and reaping the same) or as a house by a blast of wind is suddenly blown down; and doubtlesse at that dismall death that befell Iobs children, Eliphaz doth in this expression especially aime.

Verf. 10. *The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, &c.*] That is, the Lord usually abates the courage and power of the mightiest of the wicked, even those that have made a prey of others, no body daring to resist them; yea, he many times destroyes them and brings them to perish with hunger, both they and their whelps; That wicked powerfull tyrannicall oppressours are usually termed lions in the Scripture is manifest from many places; Ezek. 32. 2. *Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh King of Egypt, and say unto him, thou art like a young lion of the nations,* and 38. 13. *Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof shall say unto thee, art thou come to take our spoil?* and 2 Tim. 4. 17. *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion,* that is, out of the mouth of Nero, and indeed oppressing great ones do resemble lions in divers respects: as 1. in their pride and loftinesse of spirit; for the lion is a proud and stately creature. 2. In regard of their strength; for as the lion is the strongest amongst beasts, and therefore there is no resisting or withstanding the lion: So great men that are oppressours by reason of their power may doe what they please, and there is no contending with them. 3. In regard of the terriblenesse of the lions roaring, and the sternesse of his countenance; the very threatnings and looks of oppressing tyrants are dreadfull to those that are subject to their power. 4. In regard of their blood-sucking cruelty; we see what the Prophet saith of such men, Mich. 3. 2. *They pluck their skins from off them, and their flesh from off their bones, &c.* and 5. In regard of their greedinesse after the prey. *They have set their eyes bowing down so the earth like as a lion that is greedy of his prey,* Psal. 17. 11, 12. So that because Iob was a great man, a man in authority, it may well be that Eliphaz intended in these words to give a hint to Iob that as he had dealt hardly and cruelly with others, so now the Lord had accordingly dealt with him; and that last clause concerning the breaking of the teeth of the lions whelps, or the young lions, may seem purposely added, because of the destruction that fell upon Iobs children, when they were feasting together.

Verf. 12. *Now a thing was secretly brought to me.*] That is, in a vision, and that too in the secrecy & solitarinesse of the night, and perhaps also in a secret manner with a still and low small voice, not easily discernable; for here Eliphaz begins to

relate a vision he had formerly had, wherein amongst other things this was revealed to him that it was a vain and audacious part for men to contend with God when he corrects them, as if they were juster then God; and that to proove, that by Gods dealing with Iob it was evident enough that he had given the Lord just cause to proceed with such severity against him, and likewise to shew what a foul sin it was in Iob to murmur so against God as he had done.

And mine ear received a little thereof.] Hereby is not so much meant that he only heard some little part of that which was spoken to him, as that by his ear he did receive into his mind, that is, understand and lay up in his heart, somewhat of that which in his vision was imparted to him, acknowledging modestly that he did not fully and perfectly either comprehend or retain what God was pleased in this prophetical way to reveal unto him.

Vers. 13. *In thoughts from the visions of the night, &c.*] That Iob might not doubt but the vision he now speaks of was from God, and so the more regard what was then revealed to him, Eliphaz here describes the manner of his vision, to wit, that in the beginning of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, that is, when men used to be most soundly a-sleep, in thoughts caused by a nightly vision (but whether waking or sleeping it is not expressed) *a spirit* vers. 15. *passed before his face*, that is, an angel appeared and came to him, he being at the same time stricken with extreme terrour and fear, *fear came upon me*, saith he, *and trembling, &c.* which last is the rather mentioned, because when God in former times appeared to men in dreams and visions, he did alwaies thus humble and cast them down with fear, that by those impressions of terrour, caused by the apprehension of his Majesty and glory, they might be assuredly perswaded that the vision was from God and so the more reverently receive and the more carefully obey what he then gave them in charge, as the prophet Daniel acknowledges of himself when he had seen a vision, Dan. 10. 17. *As for me straight way there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.*

Vers. 16. *It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof, &c.*] That is, the spirit, the angel before spoken of (having at his first appearance approached towards him, or perhaps walked a turn or two in his sight) did at length stand still before him (either that he might present himself the more fully to his view, or as addressing himself to speak to him) and so he saw it, though he could not fully and distinctly discern his shape.

There was silence, and I heard a voice.] This clause may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *I heard a still voice* or a silent voice, that is, a low whispering voice: for as we use to call an imperfect obscure light a dark light, so a low soft voice we use to call a silent still voice; and the reasons given by Expositours why the angel spake with so low a voice are, 1. That hereby might be implied that it was a secret which God would now whisper, as it were, into his ear, and 2. That Eliphaz might thereby be stirred to receive with reverence and attention what was spoken, and that because a man must needs set himself with earnestnesse to hear that which is spoken in such a manner. But according to that Translation that is in our Text it cannot be meant of the silence of the voice, but of a silence, fore.

foregoing the voice, to wit, either the silence of Eliphaz, that he spake never a word, but waited to hear what would be spoken, or else the silence generally that was in the place; whereas haply at first the angel appeared with some noise, the more to encrease his terrour, at length all things were hushed, and there was a still silence, and thereupon, saith Eliphaz, I began to recover my self out of my fear, and being attentive I heard a low still voice speaking as followeth.

Verf. 17. *Shall mortall man be more just then God? &c.*] That is, it is not possible: and this Eliphaz alledgeth. 1. Because when men in their troubles do expostulate with God, as if he had dealt too hardly with them, and especially if they plead their own integrity and righteousness, as if thereby they had deserved better at Gods hands, they do hereby make man to be more just then God, and that because a just righteous man will not punish any one causelessly or unjustly; yea they do hereby as it were professe themselves to be more just and pure then God their creatour, who hath so causelessly punished them: and 2. Because he conceived that Iob by expostulating so with God, and especially by alledging chap. 3. 23, 26. how humbly and warily he had walked and that purposely to avoid Gods displeasure, the bitter effects whereof were yet notwithstanding now fallen upon him, had in effect made himself *more just then God*.

Verf. 18. *Behold he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:*] These words, as it is most probable, are added by Eliphaz for the better clearing of that before in the former verse, which was declared to him in a vision by an angel; the servants of God here meant are the angels, as it is expressed in the second clause (for that men, who are Gods faithfull servants, are not included, is clear by the opposition in the following verse, *How much lesse on them that dwell in houses of clay, &c.*) and that, as they were all at first created in a holy and glorious estate and condition; and of them it is here said, that God put no trust in them, that is, that they are not firmly and unchangeably righteous in themselves, God could not trust nor rest upon their righteousness, being mutable creatures subject to sin and to fall from their estate, as some of them did, and the rest also might do, had not God by Christ established them in this blessed and perfectly holy condition, wherein they now serve God, Col. 1. 19, 20. *For it pleased the father, that in him should all fulnesse dwell. And (having made peace through the blood of his Crosse) by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven,* and 2. That he charged them with folly, which may be meant not only of those Apostate angels, who abode not in the truth, and so were cast to hell, but also of the holy angels, who though they be not in the least degree tainted with sin, yet before God they are chargeable with folly, not only comparatively in regard of his infinite wisdom and purity, even as the moon and stars have no light, when the Sun appears, but also in regard of their vanity and weakness, as they are mutable creatures, because they are like enough in themselves to fall away, and to forsake their own happiness, if God should not support them.

Verf. 19. *How much lesse on them that dwell in houses of clay? &c.*] From that which

which is said in the former verse concerning the instability of the angels, Eliphaz inferres how much lesse likely it is, that men should be found so unblameably just, that nothing should be found in them reprovabable and for which God may justly punish them, who dwell in *houses of clay*, that is, in earthly bodies *whose foundation is in the dust and are crushed before the moth*, that is, are crushed and molder to nothing, if God laies his hand upon them, more suddenly and easily, then a moth is crushed and rubbed to dust between a mans fingers. And thus he maketh the earthly and frail condition of man the ground of this inference. 1. Because the angels, Gods choice servants, do continually behold the face of God, Matth. 18. 10. attending alwaies upon him, as the Peeres of heaven, in the glorious Palace of the heavenly Ierusalem, and men that dwell here below and behold him only as farre off, darkly and obscurely, cannot be thought to be so righteous and holy as they are, 2. Because in regard of their earthly condition they are so addicted to earthly things, that hereby they are often insnared in sin, and 3. Because by reason of their frailty, they are subject to many miseries, and so in danger to be carried away with their passions and to forget God.

Verf. 20. *They are destroyed from morning to evening :*] That is, they are gone on a sudden, well in the morning and dead before night, Psal. 90. 5, 6. *In the morning they are like grasse which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up: in the evening it is cut down and withereth;* or, all the day long they decay and wax old insensibly by degrees, and approach still nearer to their end, and have every moment somewhat spent of their life: yea they are subject to sudden destruction from morning to evening every moment, and hence are those expressions, *I die daily.* 1 Cor. 15. 31. *in deaths often.* 2 Cor. 11. 23. *we are killed all the day long.* & Rom. 8. 36. *they perish for ever without any regarding it;* that is, they are taken away never more to live in this world; and yet scarce any amongst the living they leave behind them do ever regard this or lay it to heart; This I conceive is the true meaning of the place; for they are said to perish for ever that dye, only because they are gone for ever, in regard of the comforts of this life, according to that chap. 14. 14. *If a man dye shall he live again?* and that, Psal. 103. 16. *As for man his dayes are as grasse; as the flower of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it and it is gone and the place thereof shall know it no more;* and it is doubtlesse the living that see this and make not good use of this perishing condition of those that dye, concerning whom that clause of complant is added *without regarding it* yet some I know understand this otherwise, to wit, thus; whereas the consideration of this mortality of man might and should (one would think) make men the more carefull to walk righteously before God, naturally it is otherwise, they never regard this, and so as others before them, they die in their sins and perish for ever.

Verf. 21. *Doth not their excellency which is in them, go away? they die, even without wisdom.*] Some understand the first clause thus, that when men die, their soul, which is the excellency and glory of man, goeth away; but I rather understand it thus, that even those men that have any excellencies above others, whether naturall or acquired, they perish and their excellencies with them vanish and come to

nothing, and then *they die even without wisdom*, that is, either first they die like fools, men that had not the wisdom by the mortality of men to consider before-hand of their end, but run on in their sins and never provide for a better estate; or 2. They die, as if they had no wisdom, they have no more privilege against the stroke of death, then fools have, according to that, Eccles. 2. 16. *How dieth the wise man? as the fool*; or 3. They cannot carry their wisdom away with them, but that, as all other their excellencies, vanisheth away.

C H A P. V.

Verf. 1. **C** *All now if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?*] Eliphaz having in the former chapter proved that God did never unjustly punish men, but for their wickedness, and therefore that it was a most bold and presumptuous part in him to justify himself, and to murmur against God, as he had done, in these words now he gives him to understand, that if he should appeal, to any of the Saints and servants of God, dead or living, he should not find one amongst them all, whose judgement were like his, or that had raged against God, as he had done, by whose example he might defend himself.

Verf. 2. *For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.*] That is, either these passions carry men head-long to such unadvised courses as prove their death, or else 2. By murmuring and breaking out in wrath and impatience against God, or by an envious grudging that God deals worse with them than others, men provoke the Lord utterly to destroy them; a most egregious piece of folly, which the Saints and servants of God have alwaies carefully avoided: or 3. By filling the soul with vexation and fretting grief, they make a mans life a continuall death, and do at last cause him to waste and pine away and bring him to the grave; And in this Eliphaz strikes secretly at the intemperate passion, which Iob had discovered in his late expostulations and complaints, which he conceived did spring from his rage against God for the troubles he was in, and from a secret envy that others were in a better condition than himself.

Verf. 3. *I have seen the foolish taking root:*] Eliphaz, having upbraided Iob for his wrath and impatience, returns here to his former argument of proving, that it is the wickedness of men, that brings Gods judgements upon them; for yielding at first, that indeed he had seen foolish, that is, wicked men, in such a flourishing estate for a while, that one would have thought there had been no danger of a change, he adds, *But suddenly I cursed his habitation*, which is meant, either that Eliphaz did immediately, even while they did thus flourish, resolve with himself, and perhaps foretell, that doubtlesse Gods curse would in the conclusion fall upon them, or else that suddenly their estate was so changed, that he concluded it was the curse of God upon them.

Verf. 4. *His children are farre from safety, &c.*] This is added to shew, both that wicked mens children are oft involved in the same destruction with their fathers, and likewise that though wicked men sometimes escape Gods judgements in their

their own persons, yet at least then they fall upon their children and posterity, they shall be oppressed in the gate, that is, before the seats of justice, and no body shall stand in their defence.

Verf. 5. *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, &c.*] That is, after all their labour in plowing, sowing, and keeping their fields, when they are now in hope of reaping the fruit of their labour, or have already reaped it, poor and needy robbers and men greedy of prey shall violently seise upon their harvest (their hedge of thorns about their fields or about their stack, Exod. 22. 6. shall be no fence for it, nor whatever else they can do to guard and preserve it) and shall carry it away, swallow it up, and devour it. And under this one particular the same is implied concerning all the goods and provisions, which wicked men gather up with a great deal of labour and toil, namely, that they shall be spoiled of all by a company of poor greedy wretches that will break through and have it, whatever it cost them.

Verf. 6. *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, &c.*] Eliphaz still proceeds to prove that Iob was justly punished for his sins; and so withall makes way to the following exhortation, covertly given him, verf. 8. of seeking unto God, that for his sins had brought these miseries upon him. But because this phrase of affliction coming forth out of the dust, and springing out of the ground, may be understood probably four severall waies, accordingly these two verses may be expounded in a four-fold sence. 1. Thus, Though affliction and trouble come not by chance and we know not how (as those things that of their own accord grow out of the earth, without any seed sown) yet this we may see, that men are born to trouble, and that severall miseries befall them, even as naturally as the sparks fly upward, and therefore doubtlesse some cause or reason may be assigned for these things; and 2ly thus, Although affliction and trouble springs not meerly and onely from the creature below, yet we see plainly, that man is full of trouble; and therefore surely it comes from heaven, from God, who disposeth all things according to his own good pleasure, and 3. Thus, although affliction springs not from the dust or any thing without man, yet we see it is alwaies mans portion, and therefore questionlesse it springs from himself, even the sin that is within him; or 4. Thus, (which is much to the same purpose with the former) Although the calamities and miseries which men are subject to, spring not merely from the earthly condition of mans body (for notwithstanding this, had man continued in his innocency he should have been free from all miseries) yet *man is born to trouble*, to wit, because he is born in sin, as naturally, as the sparks fly upward; it is as naturall for man to be in trouble and misery, as for the sparkes to fly upward; yea it is that which is derived to us by a lineall descent from our parents as our inheritance or birth-right, *Man is born unto trouble*; And thus the nature of man is compared to coals, his sin and corruption to fire in the coals, and his afflictions and troubles to the sparks that fly up from the fire, and Iob is taught to acknowledge, that he could not justly ascribe the calamities, that were fallen upon him, to any thing else but his own wickednesse, and to the justice of God in punishing him for it.

Verf. 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.*] That is, were I in your case Iob I would not murmur and complain of Gods dealing with me, as you do; but considering that it is the great God of heaven and earth that I have to deal with, and that it is my sins that have brought these miseries upon me, I would turn to him, acknowledge my sins, seek for mercy at his hands, and in the mean season patiently bear what he was pleased to lay upon me, and quietly commend both my self and my condition and cause wholly to his disposing.

Verf. 9. *Which doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number.*] This following enumeration of many severall works of Gods Providence is to proove the infinite power, wisdom, goodness and justice of God, and so thence to imply, that it is not fit men should quarrell with him, the reason of whose works they cannot search out, but rather seek to him for help, who is so good and able at his pleasure to raise them up again from the greatest miseries.

Verf. 10. *And sendeth waters upon the fields:*] to wit, not rain only, but springs also, brooks and rivers to water the severall parts of the earth.

Verf. 11. *To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.*] These words may be referred, either to the immediately foregoing clause, verf. 10. *who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields*, to wit, thereby to enrich those that were poor, by causing their land to yield plentiful increase, and to save those that are ready to perish for want, by sending fruitfull times and seasons; or else rather, they may be referred to those foregoing words, verf. 9. *that God doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number*; and that hereby he doth many times *set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety*: and thus Eliphaz gives Iob a hint for his comfort and encouragement, that if he would seek to God, as he had advised verf. 8. though his estate was now very low, yet he might be set up again, and from that sad condition wherein he lay, he might be exalted to joy and safety.

Verf. 13. *He taketh the wise in their own craftinesse:*] That is, he causeth the crafty plots of the subtle, wise men of the world, to become mischievous to themselves, as it was in Achitophels and Hamans plots. And worthy it is of our noting, that this speech of Eliphaz is cited by S. Paul, 1 Cor. 3. 19. as a divine Testimony.

And the counsell of the froward is carried headlong.] That is, when many froward, that is, perverse and stubborn wicked men lay their heads together to do any mischief to Gods servants, their counsells and resolutions shall be overthrown and come to nothing, and that, either by the very rashnesse and headinesse, wherewith they shall be carried in their consultations, pitching upon these resolutions for want of due deliberation, which had they been prudently weighed, were never likely to proove successfull, or by their rashnesse and precipitancy in acting what they had well enough contrived.

Verf. 14. *They meet with darknesse in the day time, and grope at noon daies, as in the night.*] That is, where things shall be clear and manifest, yet they shall not see it,
but

but shall be needlessly scrupulous, full of doubts and fears, not knowing what to doe, and like blind men more likely to mistake then hit the right way. See Deut. 28. 29. *Thou shalt grope at noon day, as the blind gropeth in darknesse, &c.*

Verf. 15. *He saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.*] That is, he saveth them, not only from the open violence of their enemies and strong oppressours, but also from their slanders, reproaches and pernicious counsells, and whatever other waies there are, wherewith wicked men are wont by their venomous tongues to do mischief to the poor servants of God.

Verf. 16. *So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.*] That is, by the experience which men have of the Lords delivering the poor that are oppressed, from the power of the oppressour, others that are in the same condition are encouraged to put their hope in God; and so though they have nothing else in the world left them to trust in (as these words import) yet they have hope, as an anchor for their souls, sure and steadfast, Heb. 6. 19. and on the other side the wicked shall not have a word to say, they shall not dare to slander the godly, they shall not dare to vaunt and brag of their proud purposes, but shall become silent, as mute as fishes, as being filled with shame and confusion, or silenced with admiration, finding how evidently the Lord doth aid those, that are of no might to help themselves against those that wrong them.

Verf. 17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects, &c.*] Eliphaz having perswaded Job to seek to God and to commit his cause to him from verf. 18. here he shows him that if he would do so, that which he now suffered would be evidenced to be only the correction of a father, wherein he would be happy, and should have no cause to complain of it.

Verf. 18. *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: &c.*] That is, he layeth not affliction upon men to hurt them, but wounds as a Surgeon, that launceth a sore, to the end he may heal it, and when their afflictions have brought forth the quiet fruit of righteousness, he binds them up again, that is, by binding he heals them; for Physicians say, that the carefull and skilfull binding up of a wound doth much conduce to the cure of it, and hence binding in this sense is so often mentioned in the Scriptures, *The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken,* Ezek. 34. 4. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds,* Psal. 147. 3.

Verf. 19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles: &c.*] That is, though God send never so many troubles, following successively one in the neck of another, or compassing thee about at one and the same time, so that there seems to be no way of escape, he will deliver thee from them, yea from all that can befall thee, not only these afterwards mentioned, but any other more grievous then these; the Lord will not be weary of protecting thee from troubles or delivering thee out of adversity, but again and again he will be thy refuge, and give a comfortable issue out of them all, so that *no evil shall touch thee*; and this last clause may be meant either of the evil of sin, to wit, that God would preserve him from defiling himself with sin in his troubles; or of the evil of punishment, to wit, that in his troubles

bles all should be for his good, there should be no wrath in his sufferings, which only makes troubles truly evil.

Verf. 21. *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue:*] That is, from reproaches, backbitings, flanders, false accusations and witnesses of malicious wicked men: for as in a scourge there are many cords, so there are many severall waies wherewith wicked mens tongues do lash and wound Gods righteous servants: and they are said to be hid from the scourge of the tongue, whom the Lord either preserves from being flandered or reviled, or else defends against all such lies and calumnies, by causing their righteousness to break forth, as the light and their just dealing as the noon day.

Verf. 23. *For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: &c.*] That is, they shall be so far from doing thee any hurt, and so ready rather to do thee good, as if there were a mutuall covenant of friendship made betwixt thee and them. Now the stones of the field, may in this sense be said to be in league with Gods people. 1. When they are not an occasion of the least hurt unto them as they pass up and down from one place to another, not so much as of dashing their foot against a stone, Psal. 91. 12. 2. When they no way hinder the encrease of their land, but rather are a help thereto, and when the most stony and rocky places yield great store of fruit, according to that, Deut. 32. 13. *He made him suck honey out of the rock, and oyle out of the flinty rock,* and that of Iob, chap. 29. 6. *The rock poured me out rivers of oyl:* 3. When the stony walls raised about their fields are such a sure defence thereto, that they are safely preserved from all dangers whatsoever, and 4. When neither stones nor rocks of the field do harbour any poysonous serpents or ravenous beasts, that do suddenly break out and hurt Gods people.

Verf. 24. *And thou shalt know, that thy tabernacle shall be in peace:*] That is, thou shalt see thine house free from the invasion of any enemy and from homebred dissention, yea that thy house and house-hold affairs do all prosper, and shalt not fear but be fully perswaded of the continuance hereof in time to come.

And thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.] That is, thou shalt wisely and successfully order upon all occasions thy house-hold affairs, the more circum-spectly watchfull not to sin against God, because of the experience thou shalt have of Gods blessing thee in a right way.

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Verse 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, &c.*] That is, though there seems now no hope of thy recovery, yet recover thou shalt, and shalt die old and full of daies, and be buried with honour.

Verf. 27. *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is, &c.*] That is, Though I alone have spoken, yet this I presume is the judgement of us all; we have all found this true by diligent enquiry, and clear experience; and therefore learn it, believe it, and make a holy and good use of the knowledge of it.

CHAP. VI.

Verf. 2. **O***H that my grief were thoroughly weighed, &c.]* Eliphaz sought to make good that there was no true piety nor fear of God in Iob, because his passions in his afflictions were so violent, and his complaints so grievous and bitter in the two foregoing chapters. Iob now undertakes to shew that his calamity, grief and anguish of spirit were such and so intolerable, that they might well drive him to those bitter complaints that he had uttered, though his heart were all the while upright towards God. According therefore to this drift and aime of Iobs words, they may be understood two severall waies. 1. That if his grief, that is, the bitternesse and anguish of his spirit, and his lamentations and complaints were laid in one scale, and his calamity and distresse, both outward and inward, were laid in the other, and so weighed together, his calamity would far overweigh his grief and bitter complaints; his calamities being indeed heavier, then all the sands of the sea, according to that which Iob saith also in another place, chap. 23. 2. *My stroke is heavier then my groaning;* or 2. That if his grief and calamities were weighed against the sand of the sea, they would be found heavier then that, as elsewhere the wrath of foolish wicked men is therewith compared, Pro. 27. 3. *A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then them both.* However doubtlesse Iobs intention in these words is to shew, that such misery as he had undergone might well make any man that was flesh and blood to complain, as bitterly as he had done, yea though therein he should forget himself.

Verf. 3. *Therefore my words are swallowed up.]* That is, I want words to expresse my grief and misery: when I would set forth what I suffer, extreme anguish stops my mouth, and I am not able to utter what I would say.

Verf. 4. *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, &c.]* That is, God hath not only wounded me, with divers and many outward calamities, but besides also he hath wounded my spirit inwardly, by making impressions of his wrath upon my conscience, perswading me that these things he hath laid upon me in his indignation and hot displeasure against me. All kind of plagues, especially those that come suddenly and swiftly, are compared to arrows in the Scripture, Psal. 38. 2. *For thine arrows stick fast in me: and thy hand presseth me sore,* and again, Ezek. 5. 16. But here they are principally the inward terrours wherewith his soul and conscience were wounded, that are compared to arrows, yea to poysoned arrows, (it being usuall in those daies to poyson the heads of their arrows in times of war) and that because the miseries he underwent, however grievous in themselves, were far the more grievous, and did the more torment him, because they were dipped, as it were, in the poyson of Gods wrath and displeasure, that is, he apprehended that God had in his wrath and hot indignation laid these heavy punishments upon him, which made them so insufferably painfull, inso-much that they did with their burning drink up his spirit, that is, his vitall spirits and strength, or his blood (wherein lye the vitall spirits) according to that which

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which the Lord saith, Deut. 32. 42. *I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, (and my sword shall devour flesh) and that with the blood of the slain; &c.*

Verf. 5. *Doth the wild asse bray when he hath grasse? or loweth the ox over his fodder?*] Two severall waies these words are expounded by Interpreters: and haply what both say Iob did intend. 1. That it is no wonder though they that lived in all plenty and peace, were so quiet and still, and spake nothing that might favour of impatience and discontent, were he in such an estate, he could do so, even the bruit beasts both wild and tame, yea those that have the least shadow of understanding in them, the asse and the ox, will be quiet when they want nothing; and were they not therefore too uncharitable, they might well think that he would not complain so bitterly, if he had not just cause: But then 2. some again understand them, as spoken to shew the reason, why the words that Eliphaz had spoken to him did no whit appease his grief, to wit, because he had said nothing that could yield true satisfaction to a troubled soul (namely as he applied what he said, charging Iob with hypocrisie, and that now he quarrelled with God, being justly punished for his former wickednesse) even the bruiest beasts, saith Iob, are quiet when they have whereon to feed, and worse were I therefore then a beast, if I should not be pacified, had there been any thing in your words that might have eased or refreshed my mind.

Verf. 6. *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? &c.*] These words, as those before, may also be probably expounded two severall waies; to wit, 1. That it is not possible that any man should take pleasure in such bitter afflictions, as God had mingled for him to drink, yea that he should not abhorre them, and complain of the bitterness of them, no more then it is possible for a man not to distaste that which is unsavoury and hath no relish in it; all afflictions are grievous, especially such as have no mixture of any thing that is pleasing; and if the want of a little salt make men distaste meat, needs must Iob distaste such bitter sorrows as he had underwent, unlesse he were sencelesse and stupid, or 2. That Eliphaz his speech to him had been so harsh and bitter, that it was as possible for a mans palate to find relish in the white of an egge or any other unsavoury meat, as for him to receive any comfort from such unsavoury speeches, as he had uttered: and indeed though Eliphaz spake what was most true in it self, yet as he applied it, there was not the least grain of pity or prudence in what he had said, and so was more likely to imbitter his spirit more and more, then any whit to allay his grief or temper his passions.

Verf. 7. *The things that my soul refuseth to touch, are as my sorrowfull meat.*] Iob here proceeds still on in the metaphor he had formerly used, comparing the words of Eliphaz to bitter meat, now given him to feed upon to his great sorrow, which heretofore he should have abhorred to touch; he was forced now to swallow down that with grief, which in former times he could not have endured. Others understand this more generally, of all the severall miseries, that Iob underwent, which he was forced now to feed upon, though in former times his stomach would have risen against them: yea some understand it of the corruption running down from his soars upon his meat, by means whereof that which formerly he

he should have loathed to touch, he was now forced to eat together with his meat. But the first exposition is the best.

Verf. 9. *Even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off.*] That is, that God would be pleased presently to cut me off and make an end of me, and not suffer me thus to languish away by degrees; hitherto he hath held back his hand, that though I were wounded, yet his strokes might not be mortall, but by this meanes my miserie is the greater, and therefore my desire is (if he would be so pleased) that he would let loose his hand and strike home, even that he would out of hand presently destroy me.

Verf. 10. *Then should I yet have comfort, yea I would harden myself in sorrow;*] That is, If I were sure that God would out of hand make an end of me, that would be some comfort to me, and though what I suffered were never so bitter, yet would I harden my self to endure it.

For I have not concealed the words of the holy One.] This Iob gives as a reason, why he desired death, to wit, because he had alwaies professed the truth of God, and therefore knew well, that death could do him no hurt, but only give him an entrance into a blessed and happy estate.

Verf. 11. *What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?*] This is added as another reason, why he desired death, and might justly doe so, to wit, because his condition was such, that he could not hope that his life could long continue; languish he might a while in that grievous misery (and better it were for him to be cut off presently then to doe so) but to hope he should prolong his daies it was altogether vain, and that because he was not able to endure such grievous misery as he suffered, his strength would not bear it: Eliphaz had told him that because of the great things that God often doth in the world, *the poor hath hope* even in their lowest condition, chap. 5. 16. and again, verf. 24, 25. that if he would turn unto the Lord, he should know that his tabernacle should be in peace, his seed should be great, and his off-spring as the grasse of the earth, and that he should come to his grave in a full age, &c. In answer therefore to all this, Iob now tells him that he was so worn out with the miseries he had undergone, that he could not hope in regard of any strength in him, that his life should be prolonged for the recovering of such a happy condition. This is the drift of these words, *what is my strength that I should hope?* and so likewise do many Expositours understand the next clause also, *what is mine end that I should prolong my life?* for they conceive, that by his end here is meant the end of his misery, that he could not see any likelihood that his miseries should come to an end, and so should therefore desire still to live, or rather that it is meant of the end of his life, that mans life being so fading and transitory, and so soon at an end, there was no reason why he should hope long to prolong his life, especially lying under the pressure of such insupportable miseries, and therefore had just cause rather to desire that he might be presently cut off. But there is another Exposition of the last clause which others, and that upon good grounds do most approve, *what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?* as

if he had said, I know no such evil in coming to mine end, that I should desire to prolong my life: the misery of dying cannot be so great, that I should desire to avoid that to spin out my life in that grievous misery I now undergo, since after death I am sure to be in a blessed condition; let them therefore that have no hope in their death, desire the prolonging of their life; but as for me, being assured what mine end will be, I see not why I may not well desire death rather than life.

Vers. 12. *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?* To wit, that I should hope to outwear these grievous miseries I lie under, or for the present endure them without complaint, as if I had no sense nor feeling of them: No; I am made of flesh and bones as well as others, and therefore must needs feel what I endure, nor can long endure what I feel.

Vers. 13. *Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?* Either hereby is meant, that Iob was not yet so void of wisdom and judgement, but that he was able to discern between right and wrong, and so accordingly to judge of their unjust dealing with him, to help himself and maintain his cause against all their false accusations, or else rather that he had in him that which would sustain and support him against all their harsh censures, to wit, his innocency and the testimony of a good conscience, and that he did still continue in the fear of God, which is the only true wisdom. And indeed this exposition agrees well with that of the Apostle, Gal. 6. 4. *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*

Vers. 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they passe away: &c.* Iob here compares his friends to winter brooks, that are full of water in the winter, and are dried up in the summer; and the reason why he so compares them, is more fully explained in the following verses, to wit, that as those brooks when the traveller passeth by them in the winter time, having then no need of them, overflow their banks, and by reason of rain and snow are full of water and blackish by reason of the ice, (which may be meant of their being black by reason of the deepness of waters, or of the colour of ice) and so being frozen seem stable and like to continue, but then in the warm summer they are suddenly dried up and gone; at first haply there are severall little drilling streams here and there passing through the sands (which are therefore called, vers. 18. *the paths of their way*) but at last even they also are dried up and vanish to nothing, and so when the troupes of Tema and companies of Sheba (that is, those that travell through the countries of Tema and Sheba, of Arabia the desert, and happy, where they went by troupes, because of the danger of robbers) that had formerly taken notice of those brooks in winter time, do afterwards in summer time come thither to seek for water to quench their thirst, whereof they are exceeding desirous in those hot countries, they find none and so are ashamed and confounded, as men use to be that have long hoped certainly for any thing, and then in time of need their expectation fails them, so did his friends deceive him now; for in the time of his prosperity, when he had no need of their comfort, they made a fair show of great friendship, but now in his afflictions, when he had need of their comfort, they failed him quite.

Vers. 19.

Verf. 19. *The troupes of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.*] That is, the inhabitants of Arabia the desert, and Arabia the happy, travelling either for merchandise or other occasions from those countries; for the posterity of Tema the son of Ishmael, Gen. 25. 15. did inhabit Arabia the desert, and the posterity of Sheba, who was the grandchild of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. 25. 3. did inhabit the other Arabia.

Verf. 21. *For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.*] That is, ye yield me no comfort. Iust such as those brooks before spoken of, are in the summer to the thirsty travellers, such are you to me; for having made great shew of love in the time of my prosperity, when I had no need of you, now in the day of my calamity, when I stand in need of your friendship, *ye are nothing*, not one drop of comfort comes from you; my affliction you see, *and are afraid*, that is, you stand astonished, not able to speak one word of comfort, yea ye are ready to fly off from me, as being afraid to be infected by me and are startled at me, as a fearfull spectacle of Gods vengeance, one upon whom the wrath of God is poured forth because of my sins.

Verf. 22. *Did I say, bring unto me? or give a reward for me of your substance?*] The drift of Iob in these words, might be either to clear himself from that charge of being so impatient merely for the losse of his estate, because his not seeking to them to have his losses repaired, did plainly discover that it was not that which did so exceedingly pinch him, or else to aggravate their uncharitableness: If he had desired of them a supply of his wants or help in his troubles, it had been fit they should have done it; and was it not hard then they should not afford him a ~~mouth~~ full of counsell or comfort? or lastly, to shew how causelessly they were so harsh to him; *Did I say, bring unto me?* &c. That is, being deprived of my estate, I sent not to you to relieve me, or to give me any thing to supply my wants, or to rescue that which I had, out of the hands of those that spoyled me of my substance; had I been thus or any other way burthensome or chargeable to you, it had been the lesse strange that you should be thus bitter; for such I know is the common guise of the world to insult over those that seek to them for succour, and to use them as reproachfully as they please; but I neither have nor do yet desire any such thing of you; All that I desire of you is, that you would comfort me in my affliction, and it is very strange you cannot afford me that.

Verf. 24. *Teach me and I will hold my tongue: &c.*] That is, it is not enough to passe harsh censures upon me, as that I have been an hypocrite, and that for my wickednesse all this is fallen upon me, convince me of this by evident proofs, and I will yield presently, I will complain no more, I will reply no more against you.

Verf. 25. *But what doth your arguing reprove?*] That is, though right words are powerfull to convince men, yet this kind of arguing which you use hath no power of reproof in it; you have charged me with many things, but you have convinced me of nothing.

Verf. 26. *Do you imagine to reprove words, &c.*] Two severall waies this expostulation of Iobs may be well understood. 1. As if he charged them with an un-

just flighting that which he had spoken, *Do you imagine to reprove words?* &c. that is, do you think that all I have spoken is mere empty words, and that there is no weight of reason in them? Do you conceit that you speak nothing but clear reason, and I nothing but idle frothy discourse, the speeches of an idle headed man who cares not what he saith, or saith he knows not what, yea the *speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind*, that is, the speeches of a mad man, who being in a condition that seems desperate and hopelesse, is therefore as a man distracted, and speaks he knows not what, words no more to be regarded then a puffe of wind? and indeed this last expression doth in this sense agree with other places, where vain regardlesse words are compared to wind, as Ier. 5. 13. *The prophets shall become wind*, and Iob 15. 3. *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East wind?* or 2. As if he accused them of captiousnesse and seeking to contend with him without cause, *Do you imagine to reprove words?* that is, Do ye continue to catch at my words, do ye think it enough to take an advantage of some word or other that I have spoken, not considering the truth of the cause, and the aime and intention of him that speakes them, yea and those too the speeches of one that is in a desperate condition as I now am, not considering that the words of men in such a condition are usually as wind, that is, sudden, violent, and full of passion; as if he should have said, in this ye deale not fairly with me.

Verf. 27. *Yea ye overwhelm the fatherlesse, and you dig a pit for your friend.* That is, this your insulting over me, and trampling upon me in my miseries, when I am in such a poor condition, forsaken of all, not having one left to plead for me, is all one as if you should *overwhelm* and oppresse the fatherlesse, that are left to the wide world, and have no body usually to stand up in their defence; and whilst you thus seek, as you do, to intrap me in my words, and to take advantage against any word that falls from me, this is no other but *to dig a pit for your friend*. And indeed the captiousnesse of men in cavilling at that which they hear spoken by others, and picking a quarrell against them for it, is usually in the Scriptures compared to digging of pits, and laying of snares treacherously to catch men in, as Esa. 29. 21. where it is said of wicked men, that *they make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate*.

Verf. 28. *Now therefore be content, look upon me, &c.* Iob having hitherto chiefly complained of the uncharitablenesse of his friends in passing such rigid censures upon him because of his complaints, he now again addresseth himself to set forth the grievousnesse of his misery, and to that end doth first in these words desire his friends to attend to what he should farther say, *Now therefore be content*, that is, be no longer carried away with passion, but be willing and yield to hear that I shall say, and so to consider better of my condition, *look upon me*, that is, flight me not, turn not away your eyes from me in discontent, but view me well and observe well the condition wherein I am, as I shall discover it to you (for this clause may be meant both of beholding him with their bodily eyes, and of marking what he should say concerning his condition) by that which I shall declare, yea by that which you may see with your eyes, it is evident and clear, *whether I have lyled or do lie unto you*; yet some understand this somewhat otherwise, th us,

thus, *look upon me, for it is evident unto you if I lie*, as if he had said, come let us quietly argue out this businesse a little farther, I am not afraid to dispute it with you face to face, and no doubt upon a more sober debate the truth will out, you will soon discover in my words or in my countenance whether that which I have spoken be true or false.

Verf. 29. *Return I pray you, let it not be iniquity; &c.*] Some understand these words, *Return I pray you*, as spoken by Iob to call back his friends that were ready to goe away in a pet or in a fume; But we need not, I conceive, build upon such a supposition; the words are clear enough, if we understand them to be a perswasion of his friends to consider again more equally of his cause and condition. *Return I pray you*, as if he should have said, you have hitherto cast me off as a reprobate, as a wicked wretch forsaken of God, why? because you were carried away with passion, and did not seriously and exactly weigh my condition; Return therefore from these unjust and passionate censures, betake your selves to a more equall review of my estate, to consider of and discusse these things more seriously then yet you have done, *let it not be iniquity*, that is, consider well of what I suffer, and in your disputing and reasoning with me, let right prevail, and deal not unjustly with me, or do not charge me with iniquity till we have again weighed the matter, *yea return again, my righteousness is in it*, that is, return again to a second consideration or debate of my cause, the result will be that my righteousness and innocency will appear in the businesse, or my righteousness depends upon your examining of my cause yet more exactly.

Verf. 30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my tast discern perverse things?*] That is, do I or have I spoken that which is unjust? am I not able to judge what is true and what is false, what is just and what is unjust? or observing what I shall farther now say, you shall find that I will not utter any thing false or unjust, and that I am able to judge of things, and that I have not spoken a misse in defending my innocency as you think I have done.

C H A P. VII.

Verf. 1. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? &c.*] Some read the first clause of this verse, *Is there not a warfare to man upon earth?* and accordingly conceive that mans life is by Iob here compared to a warfare, both because as souldiers are continually exposed to variety of dangers, and all kind of hard labour and sorrows, hunger and thirst and heat and cold, and watching and wearisome travels &c. So is man in this life subject to all kind of miseries: and likewise as souldiers are hired but for a time, and then receive their pay, and at length are discharged, so is it with men, there is a time, to wit, the hour of death, when they are discharged from all the miseries of this life. But the best translation I conceive is that in our Text, *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* for that best agreeth with the second clause, *are not his daies also like the daies of an hireling?* However the meaning of the words is evident, for Iob here returns (as he had desired his friends they might do, verf. 29. of the former chapter)

ter) to a review of his estate, and undertakes to make it manifest to them, that it was not such an heinous offence as they would make it, that he had wished for death and desired that God would cut him off, considering the grievous misery that he endured; to which end in the first place he here wisheth them to consider, that there is *an appointed time for man upon earth; and that his daies also are like the daies of an hireling*, that is, as the hired servant is hired but for a certain time, and so though he endures much hard labour during the time of his service; yet that time being run out, then there is an end and he takes his rest, so is it with man, God hath allotted him a set time for his daies upon earth, which are indeed few and full of labour and sorrow, like the daies of an hireling; but then death brings rest, so from thence afterwards concluding that it was no more strange that he should desire death, (especially if the unusuall miseries that he underwent were all weighed,) then that an hireling should desire an end of his hard service &c.

Verf. 2. *As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow.*] That is, the night; and indeed as in all places the rest and cool of the night is most welcome to the weary labourer, so especially in those hot countries where they must needs by day be scorched with the scalding heat of the Sun.

Verf. 3. *So am I made to possesse moneths of vanity, &c.*] That is, in such a sad and wearisome condition, panting and longing after some ease and rest, do I spend my daies, only it is worse with me then it is with the servant and hireling: for he when he hath wrought all day, receives his wages at night, and then can lie down quietly and take his rest; but I am in misery whole moneths together, and when the night comes, that is as laborious and troublesome to me as the day is, and that is all the wages and the reward I have for the misery I undergoe, and therefore well may I desire the shadow of death, as the labouring servant doth the shadow of the night, as knowing in this life rest I shall find none. *By moneths of vanity* are meant moneths of restless misery, wherein he enjoyed no comfort, nothing of the good and rest he expected but mere vanity and vexation of spirit, and when he saith he was made to possesse these moneths of vanity, his meaning is that these sad times and sore afflictions were certainly and unavoidably imposed upon him, by the hand of God, and lay upon him continually without intermission; in which regard he had cause enough to desire he might die and be rid of these miseries.

Verf. 5. *My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust, &c.*] This he mentioned to shew the strangeness of his misery, and so why he thought the time of his life so tedious and irksome, to wit, that his flesh was clothed, that is, covered all over from head to foot as with a garment *with worms and clods of dust*; where by worms are meant either lice or very worms which do sometimes breed in the corruption that distils out of sores and ulcers, when they are not constantly washed and kept clean, and by clods of dust are meant either the very clods of dust which whilst he lay tumbling on the ground did cleave to his ulcerous body, or rather the very dry scabs of his sores which were like clods of dust, or the scurf wherewith, when he had clawed his scabs, his flesh was overspread and that

his skin was broken, to wit, chapped with extreme drynesse, or broken with ulcers, and so with the filth and corrupt matter that issued thence very loathsome.

Verf. 6. *My daies are swifter then a weavers shutele, and are spent without hope.*] That is, my life is suddenly spent in a manner, and gone without hope of recovery. And this Iob adds to prevent an objection, which his friends had indeed harped upon, chap. 5. 18, &c. to wit, that if he would repent and turn to God as he ought to doe, God would put an end to all his miseries, and prolong his daies; No faith he, there is no hope of that, I may plainly see that my end is at hand, and why should I then wish for any thing but the hastening of my death, to put an end to my miseries.

Verf. 7. *O remember that my life is wind:*] Iob having as he thought cleared it sufficiently, that a man in misery might as well long for death and desire it, as the hireling may desire the night for rest &c. especially being in such a condition as he was, without hope of seeing any other end of his misery but only death, he turns here his speech to God, and desires him to remember that his life was but a blast of wind, that is, suddenly gone without hope of recovery (as the Psalmist also expresseth it, Psal. 78. 39. *he remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passeth away and cometh not again.*) intending thereby, that his desire was, that since he was in such a hopelesse condition, the Lord would therefore not let his hand be so heavy upon him, but suddenly cut him off, and so put a period to his sorrows.

Mine eye shall no more see good.] That is, I shall certainly die, nor shall ever live to enjoy good day more in this world: for in the scripture phrase to see good, is nothing else but to enjoy good; Ier. 17. 6. *He shall be like the heath in the desert,* (saith the Lord of him that trusteth in man) *and shall not see when good cometh.* And so also to see evil is to suffer evil, Psal. 90. 15. *Make us glad according to the daies, wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evill.* and to see death is to die, Psal. 89. 48. *What man is he that liveth and shall not see death?*

Verf. 8. *Thine eyes are upon me and I am not.*] That is, I shall be cut off or shall not be found amongst the living, as Rahell weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children because they were not, Ier. 31. 15. and Gen. 42. 13. *The youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.* As for the first words of this clause concerning Gods eyes being upon him, there may be severall expositions given of them. 1. That they are spoken to set forth the frailty of his life, that if God should but cast *his eyes upon him* to cut him off, he should soon be destroyed, one glance of his eyes would do it. 2. That they are spoken as a motive to persuade the Lord, to shew him mercy speedily, because else help would come too late; if God should relent, and turn his eyes in mercy upon him, he should not be found amongst the living, to whom mercy could be shewed, and 3. That they are only spoken, as that which went before, to set forth his hopelesse condition, how certain it was that the misery he lay in would at length, yea and that ere long too, make an end of him, and therefore consequently that he had reason to desire that God would not prolong his misery, but cut him off instantly, for having

ving in the former words said that the time was coming when those that saw him should *see him no more*, he adds, *thine eyes are upon me and I am not*, that is, yea if thou seekest for me amongst the living thou shalt not find me, Iob herein speaking of God, as is usuall, after the manner of men. And this I conceive to be the best exposition, because it agrees best with the drift of Iobs speech, and that which went before.

Verf. 9. *So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.*] To wit, to live in this world as formerly, as Iob explains himself in the following verse, *He shall return no more to his house &c.* Iob therefore doth not in these words speak as one that knew not or believed not the resurrection of the dead at the last day, but only shewed the impossibility of mans returning after he is once dead and laid in the grave, to live again in this world amongst his friends and acquaintance as formerly.

Verf. 10. *Neither shall his place know him any more.*] That is, he shall no more come to enjoy the place of office or dignity which formerly he enjoyed, or he shall be no more known in the place of his habitation amongst his family and friends as formerly; as it is said of the flourishing *flower of the field*, Psal. 103. 16. *The wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more*, that is, it shall be no more seen in the place where it grew.

Verf. 11. *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, &c.*] That is, since my grief and miseries are so intolerably great, and my condition in that regard desperate without hope of recovery, I will never forbear to speak, or restrain my self in speaking, but will rather pour out my complaints freely in whatsoever my soul imbittered with grief shall suggest to me, and so hereby will ease my mind overladen with anguish and sorrow whilst I may do it, there being no hope of redresse or ease any other way for me.

Verf. 12. *Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?*] That is, am I such a monster of men, that thou must deal with me, as with no other man? am I so proud and rebellious against thee, or likely to break forth with such fury and unresistable rage upon men to hurt them, as the *sea* doth sometimes, and even to swallow them up as the *whale* swallows up a multitude of smaller fishes, and overturns ships and gallies when they come in his way, that thereupon as thou hast set *barres and dores* to shut up the swelling waves of the sea, saying, *hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, & as thou dost by thy providence watch in a speciall manner over the whale the *king over all the children of pride* (as he is called, ch. 41. 34.) and hast shut him up within the bounds of the great Ocean, that so the lesser fish may the more safely live in other seas, so thou settest a *watch over me*, curbing and restraining me with these ulcers, and many other miseries least otherwise I should break forth into rebellion against thee, or to the destruction of those that live about me; or is there such an overbearing might and strength in me, as in the *sea* or the *whale*, that nothing but the almighty power of God can withstand or restrain me, that no lesse then these many grievous and mighty afflictions can keep me within compasse? as if he should have said, surely it is not so; I have neither been so stubborn against God, nor so harmefull to men

men that I should need to be so shackled, nor am I so strong, but that a smaller matter, if there had been any such danger, might have kept me in.

Verf. 13. *My couch shall ease my complaint:*] That is, my couch shall ease my pain and sorrows, the cause of my complaint, by yielding me some little refreshing rest and sleep, and so consequently shall allay the bitterness of my complaints too.

Verf. 14. *Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions.*] *Dreams and visions* may be meant both of one and the same thing; or else we may thus distinguish them, that whilst he slept he was scared with terrible and fearfull dreames, and whilst he lay awake, with ghastly sights and visions. It is indeed most probable that Satan did both waies seek to disturb him, that so he might the better drive him to despair; and that this it is which Iob here complains of and bemoans; and yet because Satan can do nothing, but as he receives a Commission from God, therefore Iob speaks thus to God, *Thou scarest me with dreames, and terrifiest me through visions.*

Verf. 15. *So that my soul chooseth strangling; and death rather then my life.*] That is, hereupon it is that I had rather die, if I might have my choice, yea though it were by any kind of death, rather then to live in this miserable condition, wherein I now live: for *strangling* he mentions in the first clause, to signifie that he would preferre any violent, bitter, shamesfull death before life; and the second clause, *death rather then my life*; which is in the originall *death rather then my bones*, discovers the ground of his choice, to wit, the miserable condition wherein he lived, being become a very Anatomy, nothing but skin and bones, or having a body that was consumed and rotted even to the very bones, which made him choose any death rather then such a life: and indeed considering that Satan desired at first, that God would *touch his flesh and his bones*, we need not doubt but he had gone, as deep as his Commission would permit him.

Verf. 16. *I would not live alway:*] To wit, in this world, and in this sad and miserable condition, wherein I now live; my sorrows make me loath life, so that if I might live alwaies and never die, I should rather choose to die, then to live under such a burden of affliction as now I endure.

Let me alone for my daies are vanity.] That is, do not support and continue me in this misery, but let me alone that I may die, for my daies are no better then vanity, and why should I desire to live in such a vain condition? or else withdraw thine hand, and do not afflict me so grievously; for there will be no need of it, my daies are very vanity, so that a smaller thing then what I suffer would soon make an end of me.

Verf. 17. *What is man, that thou shouldest magnifie him? &c.*] This is not meant of the great blessings, which God hath poured forth upon men, concerning which the like expressions are used in other places, as Psal. 8. 45. &c. and Psal. 144. 3. to wit, that such a base wretch as man is, was not worthy of so much honour, as God had done him, and did him daily in making such precious account of him, in causing all the creatures even the Angels themselves to be serviceable to him, yea in keeping such a watchfull eye of providence over him to support and protect

rest him and to supply him with all things requisite for him day after day; But first it may be meant of the great honour and riches, whereto God doth many times advance men, and had advanced Iob in particular; reflecting upon his former greatnesse, (for he was the greatest man in the East) and considering how extremely miserable he was now become, he breaks forth into this expostulation, *what is man that thou shouldest magnifie him?* &c. Why should the Lord doe so much to magnifie and set up a man, that may be so suddenly cast down again? It is as if a man should lay out much to trim and adorn a house that may be cast down with every puffe of wind, or 2. Rather it is meant of his afflictions and his continuall overpressing evils, to wit, that it was too great a magnifying of so base and despicable a worm as man is, that the great God of heaven and earth should so sollicitously contend with him, as a Prince should too much honour a poor servant, that should bend all his might to contend with him, and to prevail over him, watching daily to take some advantage against him, and making it his great study and businesse to crush and ruine him. So that as David spake to Saul, 1 Sam. 24. 14. *After whom is the King of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea;* so doth Iob here speak to God, *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him?* as if he should have said, it is strange to me, that thou shouldest vouchsafe so farre to honour such a base vild wretch as man is, as to contend with him, *that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him,* that is, that thou shouldest mind or regard him, that thou shouldest so sollicitously intend him, either to crush him, as if there were any danger in him, or to humble him, and to doe him good by the evils thou layest upon him, *that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment,* that is, that thou shouldest so continually day after day, yea every moment of the day, and so diligently (as those that rise early in the morning to dispatch their businesse they desire earnestly to be done) observe and mark his waies and follow him with thy chastisements and tryalls. The whole drift of this speech is to shew, that poor base man was not worthy of so much honour, that the great God of heaven and earth should so farre buisy himself about such a wretch to contend with him, and to shew forth his power against him.

Verf. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me? &c.*] That is, how long will it be ere thou wilt give over afflicting me, and let me be at ease, though it be but for a moment, *till I swallow down my spittle*, that is, for a little while, even but whilst I take my breath, which is the very expression Iob useth afterward, chap. 9. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath.*

Verf. 20. *I have sinned, what shall I doe unto thee, O thou preserver of men?*] As if he had said, It is true indeed, that *I have sinned*, though I cannot yield what my friends would charge upon me, that I have been secretly a wicked and vild hypocrite, and so have drawn these extraordinary calamities upon my self; yet that I have many waies sinned, and provoked thee by my sins to displeasure, I freely acknowledge, there is no need that thou shouldest hold me still upon the wrack to draw this from me, I freely confesse it, and *what shall I doe unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* that is, teach me, O Lord, what I shall doe: or rather, I know not what

what to doe: I cannot make that undone which is done, I can no way justifie or excuse my sins before thee, who art the searcher of the heart and reins, I can by no means make thee amends for that I have done, or satisfie thy justice, all I can doe is thus to confesse and acknowledge my fault, and seeing therefore thou art the gracious *preserver of men*, seeing thou dost of thy great goodnesse nourish, cherish, defend, and sustain men, and takest it as one of thy glorious titles that thou art the Saviour and *preserver of men*, why dost thou destroy me whilst thou preservest others, and dealest not with me according to thy wonted grace and goodnesse to other men?

Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee? &c.] That is, seeing I confesse my sins, and humble my self before thee, why dost thou still follow me with so many miseries, and afflictions, as if thou hadst culled me out from others, as a mark against whom thou didst mean to empty thy quiver, and as it were to make it thy sport to make me miserable, *so that I am a burden to my self*, that is, I am not able to endure my self, my very life and being is a burden to me: Parallel hereto is that complaint of the Church, Lam. 3. 12. *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow*, and that of Iob elsewhere, chap. 16. 12, 13. *He hath taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder.*

Verf. 21. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression? &c.*] Why dost thou not, according to thy wonted grace to others, freely forgive all my sins and transgressions, removing them all out of thy sight, that then accordingly also thou mayst withdraw thine hand from correcting me?

For now shall I sleep in the dust &c.] That is, if thou dost not send help speedily, I shall quickly be laid in the dust, *and thou shalt seek me in the morning and I shall not be*, that is, and then if thou shouldest make never so much hast to help me, it would be too late: for thou shouldest not find me in the land of the living, amongst those that are capable of thy goodnesse and mercy.

C H A P. VIII.

Verf. 1. **T***hen answered Bildad the Shuhite,*] Bildad, having heard Iob hitherto defending himself, and disliking what he spake in his defence, more then his former complaints, undertook at length to second what Eliphaz had before spoken, reprooving Iob for charging God with injustice in his dealing with him, and exhorting him to repent of his former wickednesse, as the only sure means to turn away the Lords displeasure; yea it seems by his first words in the following verse, that whereas Iob was proceeding on to have spoken farther, Bildad did here interrupt him, as not able to endure him any longer, *How long wilt thou speak these things? &c.*

Verf. 2. *How long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?*] That is, violent, and bruitishly impetuous, not sparing any body, no not the Lord himself when he comes in thy way; Because Iobs words in his answer to Eliphaz had been indeed somewhat sharp and rough, and full of vehement expressions; there-

fore Bildad compares them here to a *strong wind*; and because he had so often reiterated his complaints of the grievous miseries he suffered, and his protestations concerning his desire of death, &c. yet and that after Eliphaz had sought to convince him of the evil thereof, not regarding any thing that he had spoken, therefore he upbraids him with his persisting in this way, *How long wilt thou speak these things, and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?* But yet withall there is another thing which Bildad might also intend to imply in comparing Jobs words to a strong wind, to wit, that whilst he went about to overthrow the justice of God, as if he had not deserved what God had inflicted on him, his words though never so violent, would be but as a puffe of wind; Gods justice would stand firm and unmoved whatever he should say to the contrary.

Verf. 3. *Dost God pervert judgement? or dost the Almighty pervert justice?* As if he should have said, Every one by the light of nature knows that this is altogether impossible; though God be almighty, and able to doe to men whatever he pleaseth, yet he is not wont to make use of his power to doe any thing but what is just, as great and mighty men many times doe, and that because. 1. He is essentially and so infinitely just, as well as almighty, 2. The judge of the whole world, to whom men must fly for refuge and help, when they are unjustly wronged and oppressed, and therefore he can no more deal unjustly with any man, then he can cease to be God.

Verf. 4. *If thy children have sinned against him, &c.* That is, though God hath utterly cut off and destroyed thy children, it was doubtlesse for their sins, & what he hath therefore done therein, he hath done most justly, and thy self he hath not hitherto destroyed, but spared thee, that thou mightest take warning by them; which if thou wouldest doe, and wouldest *betimes*, that is, speedily and with all possible care and diligence seek reconciliation with God, and pray unto him for favour and mercy, in stead of pleading thine innocency, quarrelling and contending with him as thou hast hitherto done, and withall abandon all thy former wicked waies, and that upon sincere ends, and so become *pure and upright* in heart and life, (without which indeed no seeking to God by prayer will doe any good) then doubtlesse he would not fail to pardon thy sins, withdraw the judgements that lye upon thee and doe thee good; whereas hitherto he hath seemed to sleep, and not to regard thy miseries, he will presently awake to thy help, and make the habitation of righteousness prosperous; that is, prosper thee and thy family and all that belongs to thee, so long as you all continue to live righteously and to doe that which is just in Gods sight.

Verf. 7. *Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly encrease.* Two severall waies these words are understood by Expositours; first, that though when God should begin to prosper him after his repentance, his estate should be but little, (as some indeed think it was but little, and that he began upon almes, as it were, when his kindred and acquaintance gave him every man a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold, chap. 42. 11.) yet by degrees this little should encrease so, that at last he should again come to have a mighty estate: and 2. That the estate he had before this tribulation besell him, how great soever it

was, yet should be but little in comparison of that he should have in the conclusion, if he would repent and turn unto the Lord; as the moon, one of Gods two great lights, is but little in comparison of the Sun, whereto may seem to agree that which is said of Iob, chap. 42. 12. *So the Lord blessed the later end of Iob more then his beginning.* But yet the first exposition is clearly the most proper.

Verf. 8. *For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, &c.*] Bildad here prooves what he had said by the experience of all former ages; to which he the rather appeals, because there was probably then no written word: *Enquire* (saith he) *I pray thee of the former age, &c.* as if he should have said, search the records of former times, make enquiry how it hath been in the daies of our ancestours, and so likewise of their fathers for many generations, even from the beginning of the world, you shall find that it hath been alwaies thus as I have said, that God hath prospered the righteous and punished the wicked, and that when evil doers have repented, forsaken their evil waies and turned unto the Lord, he hath then withdrawn his hand from punishing them, and poured forth his blessings plentifully upon them.

Verf. 9. *For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because &c.*] This is added as a reason, why Bildad counselled Iob to search into the records of former times, and it is also two severall waies expounded; for some, yea indeed the most of Expositours, conceive that in these words Bildad compares the short lives of those of this age with the long lives of the fathers in the first ages of the world, *we are but of yesterday*, saith he, *and know nothing*, that is, whereas the fathers lived many years, by long experience their knowledge was very great, we alas in these times live but a little while in the world, our daies passing away as a shadow, and so for want of experience know nothing comparatively: But then again others conceive that Bildad here opposeth the short life of man to the experience of all former ages; and sheweth how much better satisfaction we may receive by examining the testimony of all ages, from the beginning of the world, then by resting merely upon our own observation, who are *but of yesterday*, of no continuance to speak of, and so of little or no experience and knowledge, because *our daies* are few and as a shadow passe suddenly away.

Verf. 10. *Shall not they teach thee and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?*] *To utter words out of the heart* is to speak truly what men think, and what they have seriously and diligently considered of, and with judgement and wisdom concluded; so that the meaning of these words is, that if Iob would enquire how it had been in former ages, those that lived in those times would truly make known to him, what by due consideration and diligent observation, they had found to be true, to wit, the same which he had said to him, that they are the wicked only whom God destroyes, and that the upright and righteous shall certainly flourish.

Verf. 11. *Can the rush grow up without mire, &c.*] This which follows unto the end of the 19. verse may be read as the answer, which Bildad pretends would be given to Iob by the ancients of former times, if he would enquire of them, as he had advised him, but howsoever the drift of these words is to show that it is

noe more possible, in regard of the ordinary course of Gods providence and government of the world, that wicked hollow-hearted hypocrites, who are not rooted in grace, and in whom there is no true piety, should alwaies flourish and prosper, then that rushes and flags, which have no solidity in them, but are of a spongy substance, should by the ordinary course of nature grow without mire and without water. *Can the rush grow without mire? &c.* that is, as rushes and flags do only thrive in miry and watry grounds, and therefore in times of drowth when there is no water, even when they are in their perfect greenesse, though they be not cut down, they wither in an instant, so soon as ever they begin to want moisture; so neither can any man flourish and prosper long, whom God favours not, whether they be openly prophane or such as only make a shew of religion, but in truth are hypocrites, *So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish,* that is, such is the conclusion of the waies and counsells of all that think not of God, that mind not the approving of themselves to God, and the seeking of his favour, but only trust to themselves, that slight and despise God; they may as such rushes and flags flourish for a time, but at last they shall wither, and come to nothing; if they be not cut down and destroyed by men, as many times they are by the just judgement of God, yet a secret curse of God shall waite and consume them, and all the hope of such dissembling hypocrites shall proove vain and quite deceive them, so that at last they shall give over such vain hopes.

Verf. 14. *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders webb,*] That is, those things, wherein such men do place all their hope and confidence, shall be utterly destroyed, and come suddenly to nothing, and so their hope and confidence shall perish together with them; and indeed these things are well compared to a spiders webb. 1. Because their wealth and dignities, their projects and counsells, are raised and made up with much labour and skill, by many curious and subtle contrivements, spunne as it were out of their own bowells, and 2. Because when all is done there is no firmnesse nor solidity in them, but they are easily on a sudden, as a spiders web, brushed down and destroyed: all which doubtlesse Bildad intended, that Iob should apply to the sudden ruine of his own family and estate.

Verf. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand, &c.*] That is, as the spider rests securely upon his cobweb house, and doth what he can to fasten it surely, but all in vain; for on a sudden it is swept down and broken to pieces, so the wicked man and the hypocrite shall rely upon his house and great possessions, &c. and do what may be done to assure them to him and his, yea he shall rest upon his spirituall gifts, his performance of holy duties and his supposed graces, but to no purpose; for ere he is aware of it, all his outward supports shall be ruined, and all the means he can possibly use shall not avail to prevent their ruine, and those spirituall things whereon he rested shall do him no good, but shall quite deceive him.

Verf. 16. *He is grean before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.*] Many Expositours understand this and the following verses of the righteous, that enjoy the love and favour of God, and so conceive, that it is added as by way of oppo-

opposition to that which was before spoken concerning the hypocrite, to expresse which they are forced to insert these words, *As for the righteous, in the beginning of this verse, As for the righteous man, he is green before the Sun, &c.* But according to our translation, this also must needs be a continuation of that, which was before said concerning the wicked, whether openly prophane or hypocrites, to wit, that though they flourish exceedingly for a while, yet at last they shall be utterly destroyed: *He is green before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden,* that is, as a tree planted in a rich and fruitfull garden is green and flourisheth, rather cherished by the quickning heat of *the Sun*, then any way impaired and parched by the scorching beams thereof, and so daily spreadeth forth his boughs and his branches; so is it usually a long time with wicked men, they flourish and prosper every way, and their children are greatly encreased, yea in the most perillous and hard times when others wither, and flourish still and grow greater and greater.

Vers. 17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap and seeth the place of stones.*] This is also spoken of that flourishing tree, to which the flourishing of the wicked for a time is compared: but yet in what sense they are spoken, it is hard to say. Some conceive that it is meant of the harmfulnesse of such a tree, that the spreading roots thereof are at length wrapped about the foundation of the owners house, to the evident weakning and endangering thereof, and so the owner is thereupon forced to cut it down, and to grub it up by the very roots, as it followeth in the next verse, and that thereby is noted that the wicked man, who is resembled to this tree, thrives and will thrive if by any means he can, though he undermines and ruins another mans house to fasten and establish himself. Others think, that the spreading of the roots of this tree amongst the stones is only mentioned, as the occasion of its withering, to wit, that however at first it flourished exceedingly, yet when at length the roots come to be bound up and streightened in stony places then it withers and dies away, and so is hewed down; so making this tree in this regard to resemble the estate of hypocrites, who though they live in great prosperity a while, yet at last they meet with something or other, that nips them at the root and marres all their glory: But then 3. There are many that conceive, (and that I think upon best grounds) that these words also, as those before, tend still to set forth the flourishing of this tree, and the flourishing of the wicked principally intended therein, to wit, either that as such a tree grows and flourisheth, yea even in places of greatest disadvantage, in stony places, though her roots be wrapped about heaps of stones, yet that hinders not her growth and flourishing, so is it with the wicked for a time they prosper, maugre all opposition, nothing can hinder their pomp and glory, they thrive amongst stones: or else, that as trees, whose roots are wrapped about stones, will stand firm in the greatest storms, when those that grow in loose sandy earth or tougher clay are easily thrown down with tempestuous winds, so the wicked stand firm and strong for a time in their flourishing estate against all opposition.

Vers. 18. *If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*] That is, if the Sun, of which he had spoken vers. 16. parcheth and so
kil.

killeth this tree, or if the husbandman or owner of this tree, shall once cut it up by the roots, how goodly a show soever it made before, there shall not be the least memoriall of it left, whereby it might be known, that it did once grow in that place, and so shall it be with the wicked, that flourish and prosper for a time, when the Lord begins once to hew him down, he shall so utterly destroy him and his, that his very memory shall be quite extinguished; for that is the meaning of the phrase here used, that *his place shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee*, as is noted before, chap. 7. 10.

Verf. 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.*] This is spoken Ironically; 1. With relation to the flourishing tree of which he had spoken, thus, *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, &c. that is, this is the conclusion of this tree, which seemed for a time to exalt it self and rejoyce in its flourishing condition, down at last it is cut and grubbed up by the roots, and then *out of the earth others grow up* in the room of it; and 2. With reference to the wicked man, whom he had compared to this flourishing tree, *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, &c. that is, this is the issue of that rich and prosperous estate and condition, wherein such wicked wretches do for a time so exceedingly rejoyce, that at last the Lord doth utterly destroy them, and then *out of the earth shall others grow*, that is, others shall arise up in his room, not of his posterity, but rather meer strangers to him, that shall enjoy his lands, riches and honours, according to that which Iob afterwards acknowledgeth concerning such hypocrites, chap. 27. 16, 17. *Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare rayment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.*

Verf. 21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing.*] In the foregoing verse Bildad began to lay down the conclusion of all that he had formerly spoken, to wit, that *God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers*; which though it were delivered generally, yet being spoken with an intention of applying it to Iob particularly, he therefore adds these words, *till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing*, as if he should have said, this thou shalt find true in thine own particular, if thou returnest to the Almighty and walkest sincerely before him, as becomes a *perfect and upright man*, God will not cast thee off, though he have afflicted thee for a time, but will so abundantly blesse thee, and destroy those that wrong thee, that for exceeding joy of heart thou shalt continually break forth into laughter and rejoycing; for then is the mouth said properly to be filled with laughter, when a man hath more joy then his heart can hold, when the joy of his heart causeth much laughter, so much that he can hardly speak for laughing.

Verf. 22. *They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame.*] That is, they shall be overwhelmed and covered with shame on every side in the sight of all men, to wit, when they shall see thee, over whom they have formerly insulted, settled again in a more happy and prosperous estate then formerly.

C H A P. IX.

Verf. 2. **I** *Know it is so of a truth; but how should man be just with God?*] Iob perceiving by Bildads speech, that he also, as Eliphaz had done before, did quite misunderstand what he had spoken, charging him as if he had accused God of dealing unjustly with him, he now yields to all which Bildad had said for the justifying of God, and advanceth the justice of God farther, then either he or Eliphaz had done, to wit, by affirming not only that God is just, in that he doth alwaies blesse the righteous and destroy the wicked, but also that he cannot be charged with injustice even then when he afflicts the most righteous and innocent. *I know*, saith he, *it is so of a truth*, that is, *I know that God doth not pervert judgement, nor doth the Almighty pervert justice*, (which is that Bildad had objected, chap. 8. 3.) I know it is most true, that he doth alwaies prosper the pure and upright, and that the wicked shall certainly be destroyed, though they may flourish for a time; *but how should man be just with God?* that is, how shall any man living be found so just in Gods sight, that when God corrects him he may justly complain, that he hath wrong done him? No alas; those that are best, whatever they may be in their own eyes or in the judgement of others, if they come to be tryed before God, will be found to have deserved far heavier punishments, then he hath laid upon them.

Verf. 3. *If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.*] That is, if any man whatsoever should undertake to expostulate with God concerning his sufferings, as thinking to justifie himself, and to clear himself from having deserved what God hath laid upon him, he shall never be able to answer *one of a thousand* of those things, which God may object against him, and charge him with, as the just cause of those his sufferings; which agrees with that where Iob speaks particularly of himself in the 14 verf. of this chapter, *How much lesse shall I answer him, and chuse out words to reason with him?*

Verf. 4. *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength, &c.*] This which Iob here addeth concerning the infinite wisdom and power of God is, 1. To prove that God is exactly just, because being *wise in heart*, that is, knowing all things, and how to govern them, it cannot be thought that he knoweth not how to doe right, and being *mighty in strength*, he needs not pervert justice for fear of men; and then 2. To discover how vain and perillous a thing it is for the most righteous men that live to murmur against God, to quarrell and contend with him when he corrects them, as if they would justifie themselves; and that because being of such infinite wisdom he can charge them with much evil, which they discern not in themselves, neither can they by any excuses or pretences hide their guilt from his all-seeing eye, and being of such infinite power, there is no possibility that they should prosper, that do harden themselves to contend with him.

Verf. 5. *Which removeth the mountains and they know not,*] That is, God can if he please remove the greatest hills and mountains from one place to another, and overturn them in his anger, and that suddenly even in an instant, before they can

apprehend what is done to them; for though this clause, *and they know not*, may be meant of those that dwell in these mountains, to wit, that such mountains are in such an instant carried out of their places, that the inhabitants have no warning to discern the danger, that they might shift for themselves; yet it may as well be understood of the mountains themselves, the Scripture usually speaking of things without life, as if they had both life and reason and understanding too, as Psal. 58. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thornes, he shall take them away.*

Verf. 6. *Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.*] That is, he can, if he pleaseth, shake the earth from the top to the bottome, and make the very foundations thereof to tremble; The earth is here compared to a great building, supported with pillars; and because the earth hath no other foundations, but its own center, to which the earth on every side presseth by reason of its naturall heaviness, therefore this or the lower parts of the earth may be supposed to be that, which is here called *the pillars of the earth*: Now though it be generally held by the learned, that in the greatest earthquakes the whole body of the earth is never shaken, but only some parts of it, whence they say it is that David saith, Psal. 104. 5. that God *laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever*, yet Iob saith here, that *he shaketh the earth out of her place*, because God can thus if he seeth cause even overturn the course of nature, and because indeed in great and terrible earthquakes, it seems to men that the whole body of the earth doth quake and tremble.

Verf. 7. *Which commandeth the Sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the starres.*] This which Iob here saith, that God *commandeth the Sun and it riseth not*, may be meant of the ordinary providence of God in disposing the night-season, by keeping the Sun for a time in another hemisphere, as likewise of his hiding the Sun from shining upon us in the Eclipses it frequently suffers, or in the darknesse of mighty tempests, when by the extraordinary blacknesse of the clouds, the day is, as it were, turned into night: and so again, that which followeth, that God *sealeth up the starres*, may be understood, either of Gods hiding the starres from us by the ordinary intercourse of the day, or of his covering them from our sight by thick and pitchy clouds, as in that terrible tempest, Act. 27. 20. *when neither Sun nor starres for many daies appeared*. And thus indeed many Expositours do explain this place. But I rather conceive that it is meant, as the former verses also are, of Gods supreme over-ruling power, not of that which God doth ordinarily, but of that which he can doe, to wit, that if he pleaseth he can command the Sun that it shall shine no more upon us, and lock up the starres from us, as long as he listeth, and so deprive us both of their light and influences: of which unlimited power the Lord gave a notable proof, when he commanded the Sun to stand still upon Iosuah's prayer, and to go backward in the daies of Hezekiah.

Verf. 8. *Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea,*] That is, who as he did at first in the creation of the world, so he still doth by his continuall providence, stretch forth the heavens, as a glorious Canopy over our heads, and ruleth the raging billows of the sea at his pleasure; for that is meant by his treading upon the waves of the Sea, that they are sub-

subject to his dominion and power, so that he doth in them what seems good unto him.

Verf. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*] That is, who maketh all the severall starres and constellations in the heaven, from the Northern to the Southern pole; to arise in their severall seasons from the beginning to the end of the year; for though some few only are here mentioned, yet under these all the rest are comprehended, and these amongst the rest are particularly expressed, both because they are amongst many others most remarkable, and because also by them the severall seasons of the year are distinguished: for Arcturus is a Constellation of starres near the North Pole, behind the tail of *Ursa major*, or the greater Bear, (a Constellation so called because it hath the form of a Bear) and is thence termed Arcturus, *ἄρκτος ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὠρέος*, that is, the tail of the Bear, and it riseth in our Horizon about the beginning of September, some few daies before the Autumne Equinoctiall, which was amongst those ancient Eastern Nations counted the beginning of the year: Orion also is a Constellation of starres that riseth in our Hemisphere in December, when we account winter begins; the Pleiades is a Constellation usually called *the seven starres*, about the tail or back of the sign Taurus, and it riseth in our Hemisphere about the beginning of the Spring, and therefore also called *Vergilia*; and by *the chambers of the South* are meant, either those Southern starres, which because they are near the Southern Pole, and so we that dwell in the Northern Hemisphere cannot see them, are therefore called *the Chambers of the South*, as being starres, that are hid and withdrawn from our sight: or the dog-star and others that rise in the summer.

Verf. 11. *Loe, he goeth by me and I see him not, &c.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, that God doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number (which is fully what Eliphaz had said before, chap. 5. 9. of which see the Note there) here now Job proves this, that Gods works are thus innumerable and unsearchable. *Loe, he goeth by me and I see him not, &c.* That is, the Lord doth continually, not only in his works of creation, but also in the daily works of his Providence, manifest himself to us, his wisdom, justice, mercy, power, even as one that should walk up and down before us, and so presents himself near at hand to be seen by us; but alas, it fares with me, saith Job, in this, as it doth with others, *he goeth by me and I see him not*; poor wretches, we many times take no notice of him in his works, and when we do discern any thing of God by that which he doth, tis nothing comparatively in regard of that which is taught us thereby, neither are we any more able to comprehend by our reason and understanding the depth of his waies and counsells, with the exact reason of them, though they be all most exactly just and reasonable, then we are to behold him with our bodily eyes, who is invisible; so unsearchable are his judgements, and his waies past finding out, as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 11. 33*. And this Job addes as another reason to prove what he had said before, verf. 3. 4. to wit, that it was vain for the justest man living to contend with God, because when he doth afflict us, we are not alwaies able to reach the reason of his so proceeding with us, nor are we any waies able to guard our selves when he strikes; he may come upon us on

every side, and take all advantages to destroy us, and we not discerning him cannot possibly help our selves.

Verf. 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, what dost thou?*] That is, if God is pleased at any time to take away from men, as he hath from me, their estates, or their children, yea if he should be pleased to take away their lives, no man living can withstand him, nor so much as call him into question, to render a reason, why he doth it, his own will and pleasure being reason sufficient: so that as before he pleaded mans inability to discern the waies of God, so here also he pleads the weaknesse and inability of man to withstand God in any of his waies, or so much as to question what he doth, and that because of the unresistable power and unquestionable justice of God, which whilst he did so freely acknowledge, it was not likely that he would quarrell and contend with God, as his friends did unjustly charge him.

Verf. 13. *If God will not withdraw his anger the proud helpers do stoope under him.*] That is, when God is angry if he do not of his own free grace, & upon the repentance and prayers of those he is offended with, withdraw his anger, if he do not receive them again into favour, but resolves to proceed in his displeasure against them, alas it is in vain for the strongest, the wisest, the justest of men to goe about to withstand him; let those against whom he is angry, or any that shall seek to help them, oppose themselves against his proceedings, either by pleading for them and defending their innocency, or by seeking to resist and keep off the strokes of his displeasure, the Lord will soon crush both the one and the other, when in their greatest pride they exalt themselves against him; not ceasing till he hath convinced them of their folly and forced them to stoop to him, or at least crushed them by his power.

Verf. 14. *How much lesse shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?*] These words may have reference to those in the foregoing verse, that if *the proud helpers do stoope under him*, that is, if the Lord doth so easily quash the stoutest, that in the proud conceit of their own strength or righteousnesse shall contend with him, and all that shall rise up to help them herein, how much lesse should be a poor weak and despised wretch be able to answer him, or with a studied speech in a rhetoricall manner reason with him, hoping to convince him, that he hath dealt hardly and unjustly with him; or else they may be referred to all that he had before spoken, to wit, that if neither the mountains, the sea, the heavens, nor any other the strongest of the creatures, were able to stand before his almighty power, nor to endure the fury of his indignation, much lesse should such a poor worm as he be able to rise up against him, yea even so far as to plead his cause with him, *so chuse out words to reason with him*. Indeed he saith afterward, chap. 23, 3, that he desired to reason with God: but that is meant only of a reasoning by way of declaring his case and condition before God, this of a reasoning by way of contestation, or quarrelling about the works of Gods Providence; and therefore whilst he desired that he might well disclaim this.

Verf. 16. *If I had called, and he had answered me, &c.*] The chief difficulty of this passage lies in this word *called*: some understand it of his challenging or calling

ling God to an account, to make good what he had done, or of calling God to let him plead his righteousness before him, wherein if God *had answered him*, condescending to give him an account of his waies, or yielding to hear what he could say, yet he would not believe that he had hearkened to his voice, that is, either he could not believe, that the great God of heaven and earth should vouchsafe to hear the defence of such a poor worm as he was, or else rather he would not believe that he had so farre hearkened to his voice, as to accept of his defence, and to determine on his side, and so to acknowledge he had done him wrong; as if Iob had said, so farre am I from undertaking to justify my self, that if I had required liberty of God to proove mine innocency, and God had given way to me herein, yet would I not believe, that God had thereupon hearkened to my voice and acknowledged mine innocency; and that because the contrary is evident, in that his hand is still so heavy upon me. But then others again understand this word (*called*) of prayer, and so they conceive the sense of the words to be this, that if he had called, that is, if he had prayed and made supplication to his judge for mercy, (as he had said before in the foregoing verse,) and God had answered him, that is, had consented to grant him his desire, yet he would not believe, that he had hearkened to his voice, that is, that he had done it in respect to him or his prayer, for any worth in him, or in any service that he could perform: and that because his hand was now so heavy upon him. And indeed either of these expositions do well agree with the scope of Iobs answer to Bildad.

Verf. 17. *For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplyeth my wounds without cause.*] As if he should have said, they are not ordinary calamities that God hath laid upon me; No, he hath broken me in pieces, as with a thunderbolt from heaven, *and multiplyeth my wounds* still more and more, and that *without cause*, that is, without any cause manifested, or without any cause that I can discover; not being conscious to my self of any so great wickedness I have committed that should provoke him to lay so heavy a punishment upon me.

Verf. 19. *If I speak of strength, loe he is strong, &c.*] That is, how should I hope to contend with God? either it must be by strength, that I must defend my self against him, or by pleading my cause in a way of justice and judgement; Now alas if I speak of strength, if I hope that way to contend with him, *behold, he is strong*, that is, absolutely, infinitely strong, so that there is none that can possibly stand before him, *and if I speak of judgement*, hoping by a way of legall proceedings to clear mine innocency, *who shall set me a time to plead*, that is, where should I find a judge, that having power over us both, should appoint me a day, wherein I should plead my cause, and answer what the Lord could object against me.

Verf. 20. *If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me, &c.*] That is, though I should be admitted to plead my cause against the Lord, yet should I undertake to justify my self, mine own mouth would condemne me, to wit, either because the Lord by many severall particulars he might examine me upon, and charge me with, would easily so farre convince me, that I should be forced with mine own mouth to condemn my self, or else because not having any sufficient plea for the defence of my self, mine own lips would discover the weakness of my

cause, I should be intangled in mine own words, and even those things which I should speak for my self would be retorted upon me to proove me perverse, or else lastly because this very affirming of my self to be righteous, would be abundantly enough to condem me, since first it is sinfull for man to boast of his own righteousness; and secondly, thereby I should lie against the truth, and should discover most desperate boldnesse in contending against God, yea I should charge God with falsehood, and injustice, who hath concluded all under sin, and doth daily correct the most righteous for their transgressions; all which agrees fully with that of St. Iohn. 1. Iohn 1. 10. *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

Veri. 21. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul, I would despise my life.* That is, though I did verily perswade my self, that I were perfectly righteous, yet would I not believe mine own heart herein, nor regard mine own soul in this, to stand upon mine innocency, as knowing that there might be much amisse in me, which I discerned not in my self, but even for fear of tryall before the great God I should *despise my life*, that is, be glad I were dead; yea in point of justification I would utterly disclaime and *despise* the righteousness of my life and conversation, and would acknowledge my self an unprofitable servant. Or else the meaning of these words may be given thus: though upon pleading my cause, God should find me and acknowledge me perfect, yet I could take no joy in this, nor durst exalt my self, but should despise this righteousness of mine own life.

Verf. 22. *This is one thing, therefore I said it; he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked,* That is, this *one thing* is sure and certain, or this is the only *one thing* wherein we differ, and whereto all that I have spoken tendeth, (for as for those many other things you have delivered concerning God, therein we joyntly agree) which being clear and evident, *therefore I said it*, I could not forbear plainly to averre it, and do and shall still maintain it, namely, that *God destroyeth the perfect*, no lesse then *the wicked*. Hitherto Iob hath made good that he made no more question of the justice of Gods proceedings, then his friends did; but now he shows wherein the difference lay betwixt them, to wit, that whereas they maintained, that it should alwaies be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked here in this world, and that therefore, either the righteous should ever live in prosperity, or if the Lord did correct them for a while, when they had gone astray, yet upon their repentance he would soon show mercy, and not suffer them to end their daies in such miseries; and on the other side, either he would suddenly destroy the wicked, or if he suffered them to flourish for a time, he would afterwards pour out his vengeance the more heavily upon them; he for his part was farre otherwise perswaded, namely that for these outward things, Gods dealing was many times in every regard the same, both toward the righteous and toward the wicked, and that therefore there was no just cause at all, why his friends should condemn him for an hypocrite and a wicked man, because of the afflictions that God had laid upon him: and thus he answers what Bildad had said, chap. 8. 20. *Behold, God will not cast away the perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers.*

Verf. 23.

Verf. 23. *If the scourge stay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent.*] As if he should have said, when the Lord sends any sudden calamity, that sweeps away both the wicked and the righteous, the wicked by way of just vengeance, the righteous to proove and try them, there can be nothing said against the Lords proceeding herein, *he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent*, he will and may justly scorn the plea of any mans innocency, though the uprightest man breathing, and that because the most righteous have by their sins deserved worse then he laies upon them, nor can alledge any just cause, why they should be exempted from such calamities.

Verf. 24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth &c.*] This text of Scripture is very difficult, and accordingly it is diversly expounded: some conceive that by *the wicked* here is meant the Devil, and so conceive the meaning of the place to be this, that God hath delivered the earth to the power and sway of the Devil, permitting him to rule and have dominion amongst the children of men (as indeed he is called, in regard of his power over wicked men, *the God of this world*, 2 Cor. 4. 4, and *the ruler of the darknesse of this world*. Eph. 6. 12.) and that accordingly *he covereth the faces of the judges thereof*, that is, he makes them that sit in the seat of justice to be as blind men, neither regarding right nor wrong, neither justifying the righteous nor punishing the wicked, that oppresse the righteous, but suffering them without controul to run on in their violent courses, as if they saw no evil in them; And this they conceive is alledged by Iob as one reason, why the righteous suffer so much misery here in this world. But then others by *the wicked* understand wicked men, into whose hands the earth is said to be given, because they are advanced and become Lords in the world, and have the chief sway and command in every place, and that thus, as Iob had before confuted what Bildad had said concerning the Lords constant blessing the righteous, so here he refutes what Bildad had also said chap. 8. 13. concerning the curse that falls on the wicked, to wit, by shewing that instead of being accursed of God, they flourish and are exalted above others, and so rule and domineer in the world at their pleasure; and then for the next clause, *he covereth the faces of the judges thereof*, that also accordingly they understand of *the wicked man*, thus advanced in the world, but in two severall senses, to wit, that these wicked men do, either by bribery, or by their overbearing power, cover the faces of the judges, corrupting and blinding them, and making them do whatsoever they will have them without any respect to justice or equity; or else, that they despise and disgrace, yea condemn and deliver over to death the judges thereof, that is, men that are deservedly honoured for their wisdom and integrity: and to justify this last exposition, they show 1. That by covering the face in the Scripture is sometimes meant the delivering up of men to death; for so it is said of Haman, when the King was offended with him, Esth. 7. 8. *they covered Hamans face*, and 2. That by judges in the Scripture is sometimes also meant, not only those that sit in seats of judgement to punish malefactors, and to give sentence in matters of controversie, but also whosoever they are, that are honoured for their eminent wisdom and integrity, and are any way a stay or defence to the common-wealth where

where they live, and so this word seems to be used again, chap. 12. 17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled and maketh the judges fools.* But then again there is a third way of expounding these words, and that seems to me above the rest the most probable, to wit, that both these clauses must be understood of God, that *the earth is by him given into the hand of the wicked*, that through his providence the wicked, irreligious and ungodly sort of men are the great men of the earth, and rule and domineer in the world at their pleasure; and whereas the only remedy for this should be in those that sit in the seat of justice, *he covereth the faces of the judges thereof*, whereby is meant, either that by withdrawing his grace, leaving them to themselves, yea delivering them up to a reprobate mind, he covereth their faces, so that they sit in judgement like so many blind men, yea like so many idols, and as not discerning between right and wrong, when it is most palpable, they regard not the violent courses of these wicked wretches, but let them alone to doe what they please; or else that he is able to cover the faces of the most righteous judges with shame, when they think they have judged most uprightly, by discovering to them their failings and punishing them for it. And indeed hereto best agrees that last clause, *If not, where and who is he?* For though some understand this as a challenge, if this that I have said be not so, who and where is the man, that will disprove what I have spoken? Or thus, if it be not the wicked man, that doth this which I have spoken, to wit, that covers the faces of the judges, then who is it that doth it? who but a wicked man would doe it? yet I conceive the meaning of these words runs more clearly thus, *If not, where and who is he?* That is, if it be not God that doth these things, where is he or who is he that doth them? as if he should have said, it is not possible that this should be done without the knowledge and will of God: for if we say, that it is of the Devil or wicked men, yet we cannot but know that God is the supreme Ruler and governour of the whole world and all things that are therein, and that they could do nothing therefore without liberty from him. And thus doth Iob conclude, that it is God that doth both advance the wicked and afflict the righteous.

Verf. 25. *Now my daies are swifter then a Post, they flee away, they see no good, &c.]* That is, the daies of my prosperity. Here Iob returns to his complaints, alledging himself as an instance of Gods severity in afflicting those, who have endeavoured to walk uprightly with God; As he hath dealt with others in this kind, so he hath dealt with me, saith Iob, the daies of my prosperity are gone on a sudden, in a moment I am deprived of all that I enjoyed, mine honour is laid in the dust, and my life in a manner is brought unto the grave. As for that clause, that his daies did *see no good*, the meaning is, that he in his daies had seen no good; and either it must be understood of that time only, wherein this sudden change had befallen him, that therein his prosperity was gone on a sudden without the mixing of one good hour, or if it be extended to his whole life, it must be taken, as spoken by way of amplifying the sudden vanishing of his prosperous condition, that the good he had enjoyed was nothing to speak of, as indeed in pressing miseries men are wont to forget many times all the good which God hath done for them, and are

are only taken up with their present sufferings. See also the Note upon chap. 7. 7.

Verf. 27. *If I say, I will forget my complaint, &c.*] That is, if I determine to put the evils I have suffered, and do still suffer out of my mind, and so to give over complaining, if I resolve not to give way to my passions and grief as I have done, but to chear up and comfort my self, it is all in vain, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*, that is, the sense and weight of my sorrows do to overwhelm me with terrours and fears of Gods wrath and displeasure against me, that I am not able to quiet my mind and comfort my self; or thus, when I think of chearing my self, my sorrows present themselves a-fresh before me, and even scare me with their terrours: *I know that thou, Lord, wilt not hold me innocent*, that is, I see plainly that thou wilt still pursue me with all rigour for the evil thou seest in me: however upright I may seem in mine own eyes, or in the sight of others, thou wilt easily find matter enough of condemnation in me, and then thou wilt not acquit me, thou wilt not declare me to be innocent, and so convince these men that unjustly censure me, to wit, by easing me of these miseries; so that even by thy present proceedings with me, I plainly perceive that thou wilt still follow me with these evils, and that it will never be better with me. And thus Iob, being overborne with the terrours of his present sufferings, doth in the impatience of his spirit cast away all hope as it were of deliverance for the time to come. I know there are some learned Expositours that understand this as spoken to Bildad, *I know that thou, Bildad, wilt not hold me innocent*, meaning that as long as his troubles continued, he would still condemn him for an hypocrite. But the generall current of Expositours runs the other way.

Verf. 29. *If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?*] These words are expounded by Interpreters divers waies; some conceive it to be spoken as in answer to that counsell which Bildad had given him in the former chapter, verf. 5. *To seek unto God, and to make his supplication unto the Almighty*, as affirming that this would be labour in vain, if he were such a wicked hypocrite, as they his friends had affirmed him to be; others conceive it to be spoken by way of discontent, to wit, that if he were condemned by his friends as a wicked wretch, notwithstanding all his care and strict endeavour to walk uprightly with God, it was then labour in vain to walk so exactly; and he had even as good doe, as others did. But the best exposition I conceive is, that these words are spoken with reference to those in the foregoing verse, to wit, that if he were wicked, as his friends thought his affliction did import, and as indeed he must needs be found to be, if God should proceed to judge him, according to the rigour of his justice, it would be then in vain to seek to suppress his sorrow, and to comfort himself with hope of better daies for the time to come; and that because he could not be so righteous, but that God would find matter enough of condemnation in him, as it follows in the next verses.

Verf. 30. *If I wash myself with snow water, &c.*] It is probable that Iob here alludes to the ceremoniall washings, that were used both amongst the Iews and Gentiles, as a sign of purification. A man as exactly pure and righteous, as man can be, is here compared to one that is washed with snow water, not because snow water doth cleanse and wash things better then other water, (though perhaps it was

so in those countries where they had no good washing water, and so some conceive that Iob alludes to that) but either because the best washing water, the clearest fountain water may be figuratively tearmed snow water, for its purity and orient clearnesse; or else because those things that are washed most exactly do in whitenesse resemble the snow, it being usuall in the Scripture to expresse the whitenesse of any thing by saying it is washed in that, the pure whitenesse whereof it doth represent, as Cant. 5. 12. the holy Ghost speaks of *doves washed with milk*, meaning only thereby doves or pigeons as white as milk; *If I wash myself with snow water*, saith Iob, *and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou* vers. 31. *plunge me in the ditch*, that is, were I as pure and clean from sin, not only in the opinion of others, and in mine own judgement, but in deed and in truth, as sinfull man in this world can possibly be, were I as pure spiritually, as he is bodily, that is washed and scoured till he appears at last as white as snow, and were the works of my hands, my life and conversation, never so spotlesse and unblameable in the eyes of men, yet shouldest thou, O Lord, come to examine and judge me, thou mightest easily discover me to be most abominably unclean, if thou shouldest judge me according to the severity of thy justice, (yea the rather because I went about to justifie my self, and was so clean in mine own eyes) even as unclean as a man that hath been plunged over head and ears in a ditch that is full of dirt and mire, *and mine own clothes shall abhorre me*, saith Iob, that is, (say some Expositours) thou wouldest cast me down in dishonour, and so the clothes I formerly wore in my prosperity, as being not seemly for so base a wretch, would abhorre me; or thou wouldest slay me, and then my garments, as not becoming, as abhorring a dead carcase, must be stripped off from me; or else rather I shall be found so monstrously filthy, that mine own clothes, if they had sense, would abhorre to touch me; indeed this last clause some read thus, *And mine own clothes shall make me to be abhorred*, and so conceive the meaning thereof to be, either that those things wherewith they should endeavour to hide his filthinesse would make him the more abominable, or that the very righteousness wherewith he was clothed would be found as filthy rags and therefore justly make him to be abhorred. But the first Translation is most generally approved.

Vers. 32. *for he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him &c.*] This is added as a reason of that he had said in the foregoing verses, to wit, that though he were never so innocent, yet God would discover him to be exceeding guilty. The reason is, because there was no hope to deal with the Almighty God, as he might deal with men for the clearing of himself in a way of justice; *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgement*, as if he should have said, if I had to deal with you or with any other man as my self, with whom I might enter into judgement upon equall terms, I would not doubt to clear my self, and to answer what might be objected against me; But alas God is not as man in this regard, with whom I have to doe, he can easily discern that evil in me, which man could never see, yea which I should never discern in my self; even those things which are in high esteem with men are an abomination with God; And besides his majesty and glory would soon confound such a worm as I am, if I should undertake to answer what he would object against me.

Vers. 33.

Verf. 33. *Neither is there any daies-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*] As if he should have said, as I dare not contend with God in judgement, so neither is there any to whom I can referre the cause for arbitration; if I were so foolish as to desire to plead my cause with God in that way, alas where should we find any daies-man, or umpire that should undertake to judge and decide the cause betwixt us both, and so should consequently have power over both to prescribe bounds and orders to us in our arguing together, to restrain either party as occasion was offered, and to passe a finall sentence in our differences, whereto both of us should be forced to stand? for doubtlesse this phrase of *a daies-man that might lay his hand upon us both*, is either used with respect to the usuall custome of Umpires, who being chosen to hear and end some difference between parties at variance, do sometimes lay their hand upon the one and sometimes upon the other, when they undertake to shew them, wherein they are or have been to blame, or when they would restrain them from being too violent, or order either party what they should doe, and do at last cause them to shake hands and be friends; or else is used only to signifie the power which the umpire must needs have over both sides, to dispose of them in the controversies committed to his arbitrement as he sees cause; for the laying of the hand upon any thing signifies the power which we have over it, and hence is that expression, Psal. 89, 25. *I will see his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.*

Verf. 34. *Let him take his rod away from me, &c.*] We cannot conceive that Iobs meaning in these words was, that if God would withdraw his scourge, which lay now so heavy upon him, and not over-awe him with the terrour of his majesty, he would then freely and without any fear of God undertake to plead his cause with God, and to shew that he did causelessly lay those evils upon him; for this were expressly contrary to that he had said before, verf. 2, 3, that no man living can be *just with God*, nor able to *answer him one of a thousand*, if he will contend with him, yea to that he had said immediately before, verf. 30, 31. that though he were never so pure and innocent, God could easily discover him to be as spiritually filthy, as he must needs be outwardly, that hath been plunged over head and ears in a ditch full of mire; and therefore the meaning of these words is rather this, that if God would not proceed in such extremity with him as now he did, nor would terrifie him with the fear of the rigour of his justice and judgement, before which he knew well he was not able to stand, then he should not stick boldly and freely to plead his cause in regard of his accusers, and to proove his integrity, that he was not a wicked hypocrite as his friends affirmed him to be, and therefore had such grievous punishments poured forth upon him.

Verf. 35. *But it is not so with me.*] That is, I am not in such a condition, that I should speak so freely; his rod lyes so heavy upon me, and I see that he doth so discover his indignation against me, and his resolution to deal with me in the uttermost severity of his justice, that I am even overwhelmed with terrours, and having to deal with God, dare not say what otherwise I could say for my self, if I had only to deal with men.

C H A P. X.

Verf. 1. **M***y soul is weary of my life, &c.*] Iob having said in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, that God was of such terrible majesty and might, that he durst not plead his cause with him, as he would doe with a man as himself; here now as it were correcting or recalling what he had said, he professeth that yet his miseries were so great and insufferable, that he could not forbear breaking forth into complaints and expostulations, *My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon myself, &c.* Some read the first clause thus, as we see in the margin, *My soul is cut off while I live*, as if he had said, though as yet I live, yet I am in a manner no better then a dead man, and that either because he was in such a sad condition, that he was more like a dead stinking carcase then a living man, the life that he lived was not worthy the name of life, or because he was irrecoverably gone, as we use to say, ready immediately to tumble into the grave, there was but a step betwixt him and death; or else thus, my soul is in a manner cut off in the midst of my daies, I was likely enough to have lived many a fair day, but on a sudden my life is cut off and my daies are shortned. But reading this clause as it is in our Bibles, *My soul is weary of my life*, either it is an Hebraisme wherein the soul is put for the whole man, *my soul is weary*, that is, I am weary of my life, and it may be meant generally that he was weary of living, or that he was weary of that miserable life he lived; or else it is exprest thus by way of emphasis, *My very soul*, that is the cause I live, *is weary of my life*, I do even from my soul loath and abhorre life, and would be glad I were dead. And this he laies down as the ground of his following complaints, to wit, because in such bitterness of sorrows he was not able to forbear, and withall haply to intimate his hope, that God would the rather bear with him, because by so great miseries he was as it were constrained to say what he said; or else to imply that hereby he was encouraged to give way to his passion, because if he should loose his life for speaking, he should but loose that he was weary of: and thereupon he adds, *I will leave my complaint upon myself. I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*; where by leaving his complaint upon himself, is meant either that he would leave complaining of himself, since he saw that by accusing and condemning himself, he got no ease at all, and would now plead his cause with God; or else that though he suffered his soul to break forth into complaints, yet his complaints should not rest upon God but upon himself, he would only declare the misery, of his condition without uttering a word that should tend to the reproach of God, that had laid these sore calamities upon him; or else rather that he would abundantly pour out his complaints concerning his sad and dolefull condition whatever came of it, *I will leave my complaint upon myself, &c.* as if he should have said, I will give way to my complaints to break forth, they strive for a vent, and I will no longer restrain them; if any evil comes of it, at my perill be it, I must undergoe it though I have been hitherto afraid to speak, yet now I am resolved to give the reins to my embittered spirit, I will make a full complaint of my sufferings.

rings, and there at all adventures will leave it upon my self, that God may consider of it; and let him doe with me as shall seem good unto him. And so these words are indeed to the same purpose with what he had said before, chap. 7. 11. *I will not refrain my mouth, I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, &c.* of which see the Note there.

Verf. 2. *I will say unto God, do not condemn me, &c.*] Many Expositours conceive, that before Iob comes to plead with God, and to pour out his complaints before him, as he had resolved he would doe, he doth here deprecate the indignation of the Lord therein, *Do not condemne me*, that is, though I take a little freedom to plead my cause before thee, do not blame me, be not offended with me for it, yea though any thing should slip from me rashly or inconsiderately, charge it not upon me; which is much as Abraham spake when he pleaded with God, Gen. 18. 30. *Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak.* But the most of Expositours do I conceive better understand this to be the effect of these words, to wit, that either God would withdraw his hand from punishing him so severely as he had done, or else that he would shew him, why it was that he contended with him. *Do not condemne me*, that is, deal not with me thus as a wicked wretch, whom thou hast condemned to be cast off and destroyed; By the judgements thou hast laid upon me, thou dost in a manner proclaim me to be such a one, and so all men are ready to judge, and therefore either acquit me from this censure by withdrawing the stroke of thine hand, or else *shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* Questionlesse Iob was not ignorant, that by sin he had deserved to be condemned and severely punished, but he argues with God here as in relation to the Covenant of grace, which God had made with our first parents after the fall, wherein God was pleased to promise pardon of sins, and all other blessings to those that by faith embracing the promised seed should thereupon fear him; and endeavour to walk holily and righteously before him all their daies; Now because Iob was not conscious to himself, but that he had thus as one in Covenant with God, sincerely given himself to serve and fear him, therefore he desires that he would not condemne him and cast him off, but that he would shew him what it was he aimed at in afflicting him so, or what it was in him wherewith he had been provoked to deal so severely with him, that so he might amend what was amisse, and not provoke him any longer.

Verf. 3. *Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldest oppresse? &c.*] As if he should have said, that is farre from thee, thou art not wont to doe so: and there are three particulars which he mentions, that he would imply are not with any reason to be conceived of God. 1. That he should *opresse him*. 2. That he should *despise the work of his own hands*, and 3. That he should *shine upon the counsell of the wicked*. By oppressing him is meant a causelesse laying so many judgements upon him, both in his estate, children and person; by despising the work of his own hands is meant the destroying of his creature as a worthlesse despicable thing, without so much as vouchsafing first to try, convince and condemn him; and by shining upon the counsell of the ungodly is meant favouring and prospering their counsells and endeavours; Now none of these, Iob would have us know, can be charged

ged upon God: for this phrase, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppresse? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* &c. doth imply either that it cannot be just and right in the eyes of God, who is infinitely just and good, and hates all oppression in others, to deal thus with his poor creature; or else that it could be neither pleasure, nor profit, nor honour to the Almighty to deal so with man, and that therefore however sinfull men sitting in seats of justice, may out of by-respects to some advantage that is like to redound to themselves, or merely to please themselves, oppresse the innocent and favour the wicked, yet no such advantages can move God unjustly to oppresse or destroy his creature. Besides because he is the work of his own hands, he cannot make so little account of him, as to destroy him without cause. Every workman loves the work which himself hath made; a potter when he hath made a vessell of clay, will not without any cause take it and dash it against a wall; and much lesse then can we think that God, *whose tender mercies are over all his works*, Psal. 145. 9. will causelessly destroy his own creature, whatever he may doe by his sovereign power: As for that last clause, *or that thou shouldest shine upon the counsell of the wicked*, though divers Expositours understand it to be spoken as in relation to Iobs friends, namely that God by laying such heavy judgements upon Iob, might seem to favour and make good their judging him to be an hypocrite, yet in regard I can hardly think that because these his friends did rashly and unjustly censure him to be a wicked hypocrite, therefore he would runne into the same sin of judging them to be wicked men, I should rather conceive that Iob spake this generally, of Gods favouring wicked men without respect to any particulars, or that he might have respect, if to any, to those Sabeans and Chaldeans, who had unjustly surprised his estate, and went away tryumphing in their good successe; though God may prosper wicked men, yet he never favours them or their wicked designs.

Verf. 4. *Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?*] As if he had said, thou seest into the secrets of mens hearts, and dost not behold only that which appears outwardly as man doth, yea thou knowest all things perfectly. And this Iob adds either to shew, that therefore God could not deal with him as he did, out of ignorance; though his friends not knowing his heart, condemned him for an hypocrite, yet God the searcher of all hearts could not be so deceived: or else to intimate that God therefore needed not by laying such sore afflictions upon him, to endeavour to make a discovery of what he was or what he had done, as earthly judges are sometimes forced by tortures to search into the secret offences of those that are to be tryed before them. I know that some Expositours do give other interpretations of these words; as that God is not wont for ever to look with a fierce and revengefull eye upon those that have sinned against him, as men use to doe, as it is said of Saul, 1 Sam. 18. 9. *Sauleyed David from that day and forward*, or, that God looks not upon men with partiall eyes when he judgeth them, as men doe that are blinded with gifts, and corrupt affections, whether anger or love, and taken with the outward splendour of men, and so despise the poor and favour only the great and mighty, which agrees with that expression the prophet useth concerning Christ, Esa, 11. 3. *He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, &c.*
or,

or, that God judgeth not men by their actions only, which is the only way of mans judging, but by that which he sees in the men; he judgeth them by that which they alwaies are, and not by that which they sometimes act. But the first exposition is farre most agreeable to the drift of Iobs speech.

Verf. 5. *Are thy daies as the daies of man? &c.*] That is, they are not as the daies of man; and this may be understood generally, to wit, that God is not subject to any such infirmities as man is. But because of those following words, *Are thy years as mans daies, that thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?* it may more particularly be meant either 1. Of the immutability of God, that he is not as man changeable and inconstant, to day a friend, to morrow an enemy; and therefore it could not but seem strange to him, that after so many clear manifestations of his love to him, all should be now turned into such extremity of indignation against him; or 2. Of the eternity of God, that he is not short-lived as mortall man is, that hereupon he should deal with him in so great severity, heaping upon him such a multitude of miseries, least he should not have time to search out his sins, or to punish him for them when he had found them out; in reference whereto some observe, that only daies are here ascribed to frail man, but years to the immortall ever-living God; or 3. Of the omniscience of God, and that in relation also to his eternity, namely that whereas man gains knowledge by degrees in continuance of time, God is eternall, his life consists not in a succession of daies and years, and so he knows all things past, present and to come in the indivisible moment of his eternity, and therefore there was no need that by long continuing tortures and enquiries he should thus labour to search out his iniquity and sin.

Verf. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verses reckoned up many particulars which could not be conceived of God; as that he should oppresse or despise the work of his own hands, &c. here now Iob applies these things to himself, and shews how strange Gods dealing with him was in these regards, thereby also to imply his desire that God would remove these fore calamities from him, and not deal otherwise with him, then he dealt with any of his servants besides. Accordingly therefore for the words of this verse, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand,* Some conceive they are added in reference to the words in the two foregoing verses, and that to proove that God needed not to goe on in such a way of searching out his sins, as men are wont to doe, to wit, by long continuing tortures, and that 1. Because he knew his heart, and therefore could not be ignorant of his integrity, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, that is, of thy self without any search or enquiry thou knowest that my heart is upright, and that I am not a wicked man; and 2. Because there was no possibility that he should escape out of his hand; *None can deliver out of thine hand*, as if he should have said, malefactours are wont to be shut up fast in prison, to be shackled and bound in fetters and chains, lest they should escape the judgement that is to be executed upon them; yea and sometimes judges proceed with the greater rigour to bring those they have in their hands to confesse the evil they suspect they have done, as fearing lest they should

should by some higher power be fetched out of their hands, before they have gotten that out of them which they desire to know; But now, Lord, there is no cause why thou shouldest thus shackle and coop up me, as thou seemest to doe, to be sure to make me forth-coming, since there is no possibility that any man should escape out of thy hand, either by flight or rescue. But now again others doe, and I think better, referre these words to that which Iob had said before, vers. 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppresse?* and accordingly conceive that they are added to shew, that since it was no way likely that God would causelessly oppresse a poor wretch that was not able to withstand him, how strange therefore it must needs seem to him, that God should so crush him as he had done, both because he durst say that God knew that he was not wicked, though he could not justifie himself as free from sin, as himself had formerly confessed, chap. 9. 20. yet he durst say that God knew that his heart was upright, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked* (and it was indeed a very notable evidence of a clear conscience, that the hand of God being so heavy upon him, and his friends charging him so expressly with hypocrisie, he should notwithstanding thus courageously appeal to Gods knowledge of him that he was not wicked) and also because he was by no means able to save himself from Gods unresistable power, *none can deliver out of thine hand*; when humane powers oppresse, there is one above them that can deliver the oppressed, as Solomon saith, Eccles. 5. 8. *He that is higher then the highest regardeth, and there be higher then they*; But now none can deliver out of Gods hand, and therefore the innocent and righteous would be in an ill condition, if he should oppresse them. And this is the argument whereby Iob doth here covertly plead with God to remove his hand from him.

Vers. 8. *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me round about, &c.* That is, in every part all my body over; yea every member of my body and every faculty of my soul; the meaning is, that he was wholly the work of Gods own hands, that there was not the least piece of him from head to foot, within or without, not so much as the nailes upon his fingers and toes, which the Lord had not wrought and fashioned with all possible diligence, care, and skill; and in the words there may seem to be an allusion to a carefull and cunning workman, that useth when he hath made any choice piece, to turn it this way and that, & to look round about to see if there be any thing that is defective, or that may be made more curious and exact then as yet it is. Now for the connection of these words with that which went before; Some conceive, that Iob here prooves what he had said in the foregoing verse, to wit, that God knew that he was not wicked, and that none could deliver out of his hands, namely, because God made him, and he must needs know man that made man, neither was it possible that the work should deliver it self out of the hand of him that formed it; and indeed that God must needs know man perfectly is prooved by the same argument, Psal. 94. 9. *Vnderstand ye brutish.*— *He that planted the ear shall not he hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* But I rather conceive that Iob adds this also in reference to what he had said before, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* intimating how strange it seemed to him that God should despise his own work.

workmanship, especially a piece of such excellency as man was; and that yet he could not judge otherwise but that thus it was with him: for God had made him, and yet, saith he, *thou dost destroy me*, as if thou madest no reckoning of me: oh how wonderfull are thy judgements, and thy waies past finding out! Indeed because there is no wonder at all in it, that God should destroy wicked men, though they were the work of his hands (concerning the old world *the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created*, Gen. 6. 7. and concerning the rebellious Jews by the prophet, Esa. 27. 11. *He that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour*) therefore some Expositours conceive, that those words *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me* are meant, not only of Gods first forming him in his conception, but also of the work of Regeneration, when the Lord by the spirit of Grace, did renew his image in him, and made him a new creature, this being that which seemed so strange to Iob, that being such a one, yet God should destroy him. But methinks it is evident, that the words do intend only the fashioning and framing of Iob in his first conception; yet indeed that which Iob mentions as the matter of his wonder, is not so much that he should destroy the work of his own hands, as that he should doe it causelessly (for so Iob conceived it was with him) as if he minded not his own handy-work, as is noted before, vers. 3. And besides this complaint may imply a deprecation, Thou seemest resolved to destroy me, but doe not, consider that I am the work of thine own hands, as it follows in the next vers. *Remember I beseech thee that thou hast made me, &c.*

Vers. 9. *Thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?*] Here Iob proceeds to desire God to be favourable to him from the foregoing consideration, that he was the work of his own hands, which he farther enlargeth in the following verses. In the first words, *Thou hast made me as the clay*, some hold that he hath respect to the creation of our first father Adam, in whom we were all made of earth, *of the dust of the ground*, Gen. 2. 7. or else to his conception in the womb of his mother, where the first materials whereof he was made were such, that it might well be said, that he was at the first no better then clay; But if he had had respect to either of these, he would not have said that he was made *as the clay* but of clay. Rather therefore the meaning is only this, that as a potter doth form and fashion the clay which he makes into a vessel, so God had wonderfully shaped and fashioned him in the womb of his mother; and however some also conceive, that the drift of this is to desire the Lord to deal more gently with him, as considering of what brittle principles he was made, *Thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?* that is, thou hast made me as brittle as a vessel of clay, so that thou needest not lay thine hand so heavy upon me, to bring me back into dust again; yea since I am sure ere long to molder into dust again, let that suffice, and do not make me live that short time I have to live, in such extreme torment and misery as now I doe; yet I should rather judge that the chief thing he still pleads is, that since God had so wonderfully made him, he would not now causelessly destroy the work of his own hands: for though he had many times in a passion wished himself dead, yet it is no wonder at all, that when he comes to plead with God, he should desire him to spare his

life, at least that he would not with such fury and indignation grind and beat him to dust; as by his present proceedings with him, he seemed resolved to doe.

Verf. 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me as cheese?*] Thus he modestly expresseth how wonderfully he was by the mighty power of God conceived in the womb of the seed of his parents, which being first poured forth as milk, (whereto in colour it is not unlike) afterwards was congealed and crudled together like cheese, and so became an imperfect embryo. And hereby Iob seeks to set forth what a rare and choic piece man is, especially considering of what vild and sordid principles he is made. We wonder not much to see a cheese made of crudled milk; but that a living man bearing the image of God, and so artificially and curiously framed and joyned together in every part, should be made of such base materialls, this is exceeding wonderfull; and the more it heightened the worth of Gods workmanship in the forming of man, the stranger it seemed to Iob, that God should despise such a precious piece of his own handy-work.

Verf. 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh; &c.*] He tearms his skin and flesh a clothing, either in reference to his soul, which is the chief of man, and to which the body is as it were a garment, which it wears during its abode here in this world, and then at the hour of death puts it off, and laies it by for a time, whence is that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 4. where those that die are said to be *unclothed*; or else rather in reference to the inward, and more noble and tender vitall parts, the heart, liver, brains, and bowells, which are clothed and covered with flesh and skin, especially the vitall parts; which are therefore also said to be *fenced with bones and sinews*, as alluding to the fence of the ribs, and the orderly juncture of other bones and sinews, whereby the inward, especially the vitall parts, are kept safe and preserved. However Iob still proceeds to shew how wonderfully he was formed in his mothers womb, when the same liquid substance, which a while was but as crudled milk, became severally in some part skin and flesh, and elsewhere bones and sinews; all which tends still to set forth how strange it was to him, that God should causelessly destroy what he had made with so many miracles of wisdom and skill.

Verf. 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour; &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, of thy free grace and favour thou hast granted me life. But rather by *life and favour* two distinct mercies are meant, to wit, that God did not only adde a living soul to the body, which was so wonderfully and curiously fashioned and made, but also many other mercies and comforts to make life sweet and pleasant to him, as especially reason and understanding, wherein man excels all other living creatures, together with those excellent gifts of wit, judgement, memory, ability to speak and discourse, and the like; and then also beauty, which is most properly called *favour*, health, and strength, and liberty, good education and instruction in all kind of knowledge, both humane and divine; yea under this word *favour* may be comprehended all other requisite accomodations for his life and well being, as food and raiment, &c. And then to this he addes too Gods care.

carefull preserving of him, *and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit*, that is, thy providence hath continually watched over me, and secured my life in many dangers; and indeed considering how strange it is, that the child should live in the fiteights of the mothers womb, and what dangers it passeth through, both in the birth and afterwards, well might Iob admire the sollicitous and constant providence of God, in sustaining and preserving him alive after he had made him.

Verf. 13. *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart; I know that this is with thee.*] Some Expositours referre those words (*these things*) to the calamities which he now suffered; as if Iob had said in a kind of passion and discontent, I know that all the time thou shewedst thy self thus favourable to me, thou hadst a resolution to bring all these miseries upon me; even as a man that intends to be revenged on one that hath wronged him, doth yet cunningly conceal what he intends till he can get a fit opportunity to doe it: so thou didst not discover till now what evil thou intendedst against me, but even then I know it was hidden in thine heart: But this is somewhat too harsh to be conceived of Iob, and therefore others referre them (and I think upon better ground) to those gracious dispensations of Gods providence towards him, whereof he had immediately before spoken, to wit; his wonderfull conception and preservation, and many other favours that God had afforded him; and yet they differ in their judgement concerning the meaning of the words; for some think that Iob therein speaks of mans inability fully to comprehend those secrets of Gods providence, whereof he had spoken, *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart*, that is, how thou hast done these things no man exactly knows, that is a secret which lies hid in thine own heart; but that these things were as I have said, so much I understand, and *I know this is with thee*. And then others conceive the meaning to be this, *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart; I know that this is with thee*, that is, I know thou dost remember that I am the work of thine hands, and therefore am perswaded that thou wilt not causelessly destroy me, though indeed for the present thy dealing is such with me, that thou dost not discover any such things thou knowest better then I how wonderfully thou hast made me, and how tenderly thou hast preserved me, though now thou hidest thy self, as if thou didst not regard the work of thine own hands: neither indeed can I comprehend how it should come to passe, that having formerly shown me such favour, thou shouldst now afflict me so sorely. And this as it is the most ordinary, so I conceive it is the best exposition of the words: they contain an assertion of Iobs assurance that God loved him, even whilst he laid such sore afflictions upon him, and withall it may be alledged, as an argument to move God not to destroy him, since hereby he should loose all he had formerly done for him.

Verf. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*] Some referre this to the last words of the foregoing verse; *I know, saith Iob there, that this is with thee*, and here he expresseth what was with him, *If I sin, then thou markest me*, &c. Others referre it to the 12 verse, there he had said, *Thou hast granted me life and favour*, &c. But now here he adds, that though God had been so many waies favourable to him, yet God would not bear with him, if he

did not walk uprightly, *If I sin, then thou markest me*, &c. But more generally it is thought, that Iob here enlargeth himself as in relation to the last branch of his former expostulation, vers. 3. *Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldest shine upon the counsell of the wicked?* for because by laying such sore calamities upon him, he seemed to favour those that condemned him for an hypocrite, or at least not to be such an enemy to prophane wretches as he was to him, or rather because Gods severity in punishing every sin of his (though he were not wicked) was a clear proof, that God was farre enough from shining upon the counsell of the wicked, therefore he alledgeth here how severely God dealt with him, *If I sin, then thou markest me*, &c. where by (*marking him*) is meant either Gods keeping a watch over him to make sure he might not escape punishment, or else rather Gods observing every sin he committed, *If I sin, then thou markest me*, &c. that is, thou takest notice (which is very hard) of every fault I commit, and keepest a strict account of it, resolved to let no slip of mine passe unpunished.

Vers. 15. *If I be wicked, woe unto me*, &c.] As if he should have said, whether I be wicked, or righteous, it is all one, I can however hope for no release of my misery; which agrees with that chap. 9. 22, where he saith that God *destroyeth the perfect and the wicked*: for if *I be wicked, woe unto me*, that is, then I were in a wofull condition indeed, I have then deserved the woe and misery that is upon me, and it is just that I should suffer what I do suffer, yea worse and worse I might well expect even unto eternity; and if *I be righteous*, one that sincerely fears God, and desires to obey his commands, yet will I not hold up my head, I dare not for that stand to justify my self, or I cannot for that chear my self with any hope or comfort; and the reason why he said thus, might be, either because he knew that however righteous he was, yet many things he had done amisse, for which God might severely and yet justly contend with him; or else because the sorrows he endured were so extreme, that he could not any way comfort himself; and thereupon he turns himself at last to God, desiring him to take pity of him, *I am full of confusion*, that is, the more I think of my estate, the farther and farther am I still plunged in confusion, being overwhelmed with distracted thoughts, not knowing what to think of my condition, nor wherewith to chear up my spirit, therefore *see thou mine affliction*, that is, consider in what a sad and miserable condition I am, and have compassion on me.

Vers. 16. *Thou huntest me as a fierce lyon*, &c.] Some Expositours conceive that it is himself that Iob compares to a lyon, and so understand the words thus, that as men hunt a fierce lyon that hath ranged up and down and done much mischief, following him with all violence till they have at last taken him and slain him, so the Lord dealt with him: as if he had been some fierce proud wretch, that had been mischievous to the place where he had lived, God had hunted him with variety of plagues that he might destroy him; much according to that which Iob had formerly said, chap. 7. 12. *Am I a sea or a whale that thou settest a watch over me?* But others do better hold that it is the Lord whom Iob compares to a lyon, *thou huntest me as a fierce lyon*, that is, thou as a fierce lyon (before whom no beast can stand) dost with all violence pursue me with thy judgements, and by thy un-

resistable strength dost rend and tear me in pieces; which indeed agrees with those expressions we find elsewhere concerning God, Hof. 5. 14. *I will be unto Ephraim as a lyon; and as a young lyon to the house of Iudah: I even I will tear and goe away, &c.* and that of Hezekiah, Esa. 38. 13. *as a lyon so will he break all my bones.*

And again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.] This may be understood thus, that as formerly God had marvellously blessed Job, inso much that *he was the greatest of all the men of the East*, chap. 1. 3. and for piety and grace *there was none like him in the earth*, vers. 8. so now again God did as marvellously punish him. But the most ordinary exposition I conceive is the best, to wit, that as his sufferings were very great and bitter, so they were successively renewed again and again upon him: and this phrase *thou shawest thy self marvellous upon me* is used to imply, either that the plagues were wonderfull that God had laid upon him, inso much that he was become a strange spectacle of misery to all that looked upon him, and men therefore stood amazed to behold his condition, and Gods dealing with him was, as if God intended him for a president, upon whom he would shew what he could doe, and how many new strange waies God had to torture him; or else that it was strange and marvellous, that God who was so abundant in mercy and compassion should deal with him, a man that feared God, as if it were some prophane wretch that he had in hand. However in those last words, (*upon me*) there seems to be some emphasis, *and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me*, that is, upon me that am in a manner half dead already.

Verf. 17. *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, &c.*] That is, thou dost continually come upon me with new plagues, which are witnesses of thy displeasure, and by mine uncomfortable friends are taken as evidences, whereby thou bearest witness for them against me, that thou dost esteem me no better then an hypocrite.

Changes and warre are against me.] That is, changes of warre: the meaning is that many and divers miseries and sorrows did continually assail him; as in the warre severall troops and companies of souldiers do successively one after another renew and maintain the fight, so it was with him, whose troops of divers calamities did successively afflict him, so that he was continually assaulted, and had scarce any breathing time to rest himself.

Verf. 18. *O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!*] Either he wisheth that he had died in the womb, that so wasting there away he had never been born, and then no eye had seen him, which agrees with the foregoing words, *wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of my mothers womb?* or else that he had died in the womb or so soon as he was born, and so no eye had seen him alive, or he should have been carried presently to his grave before there had scarce any notice been taken of him. And indeed it may well be, as some expositours conceive, that in that clause, *that no eye had seen me*, he had respect to that great esteem amongst men, which he had formerly enjoyed; and so his meaning might be to imply, that however in his former prosperity the eyes of men had been much upon him, and he had been much observed, and respected of all that knew him, yet considering the grievous miseries he had since suffered, it had been happy for him, if no eye had ever seen him.

Verf. 22. *A land of darknesse without any order, and where the light is as darknesse.* A description this is of the grave or the region of death: and it is said to be *without order*, because there are there no vicissitudes or distinctions of times, persons, & things disposed in order, which is indeed the beauty of the land of the living: no vicissitudes of day and night, winter and summer, joy and sorrow; no distinction of ages or degrees, the oldest do not go thither first, and then the young, the rich first and after them the poor; and when they are there, the bones and dust of Princes and beggars lie confusedly tumbled together without any difference. As for the last clause *where the light is as darknesse*, the meaning is only this, that when the Sun shines brightest elsewhere, there is nothing but pitchy darknesse there: or that there is nothing there but darknesse; if we can imagine any thing to have a shew of light in the grave, that very light is as darknesse.

CHAP. XI.

Verf. 1. **T**hen answered Zophar, &c. The friends of Job, as became grave men, took their turns in order, and so spake to him one after another. Zophar therefore having heard the severall answers which Job had returned to Eliphaz and Bildad, undertakes here in the third place to reprove and admonish him, as the other two had done before him; only indeed the heat of contention in these disputes, as is usually encreasing by degrees, Zophar is somewhat more sharp and bitter then the other two had been, insomuch that he forbears not reproachfull and reviling language, upbraiding him as a babbler, a liar, a mocker, &c. so highly he was offended with Job, even to passion, to see that after he had been twice reprovved, he should again break forth into the same impatient complaints that he had used at the first, as we see he did in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, *wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? &c.*

Verf. 2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered? &c.* We may observe that Job had been hitherto much larger in his replies upon Eliphaz and Bildad, then they had been in their speeches to him; and indeed considering how full his heart was of sorrow, both by reason of the many miseries he suffered, and especially their unjust censuring of him hereupon as an hypocrite, no wonder it is, though he were abundant in pouring forth his complaints, and laboured by all the arguments he could to clear himself from their accusations. But Zophar receiving no satisfaction from that which he had spoken, and therefore fretting to hear him heap up so many words, as he conceived, to no purpose, (the rather perhaps because he longed to vent what he had conceived in his mind to reply upon him) he upbraids him with his *multitude of words*; and it is very probable (as is noted before concerning Bildad, chap. 8. v. 1.) that he interrupted Job, and would not let him go on as he meant to have done; *Should not, saith he, the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?* wherein he would imply either 1. That it was not fit that he should run on as he had done, and that no body should be suffered to speak but himself, and that when men are thus talkative

tive, not willing to hear any body croud in a word with them, they should be re-proved for it, and not be bolstered up in their vain babling by the silence of those that stand by, but should be made to know that *in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin*. Prov. 10. 19. or 2. That it was not fit that he should carry the cause away only with his pouring forth such a multitude of words. Usually indeed men are unwilling to answer those that are all tongue and talk, as knowing that it is to no purpose, it is not possible to stop such mens mouths, they will have the last word; but yet because when standers by are silent in this kind, they seem to give a tacit consent to the truth of that which such bablers say, and so to justify that they have spoken, therefore it is not fit such men should be unanswered; and as for Iob he should know, that let him talk never so long and with never so much eloquence set a fair colour upon an ill cause, that should not serve his turn, because they were resolved to answer him, and to discover the weakness of all that he had spoken.

Verf. 3. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* Iob had formerly appealed to them, that he did not lie in that which he spake, chap. 6. 28; nor was there indeed any great likely-hood that he should lie, especially at this time when the hand of God was so heavy upon him, and he looked for death as it were every moment. But so confident Zophar was, as his other two friends before him had been, that God would never have laid such sore and grievous judgements upon him, had he not been an hypocrite, that thereupon he perswaded himself, that what he had affirmed concerning his own integrity was utterly false, and that he spake not sincerely in all that he had spoken concerning the justice of God; and so he upbraids Iob with lying, and protests against a silent swallowing down those untruths he had uttered; *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* we may read it also, *Should thy devices make men hold their peace?* But both readings are much to the same effect, lies being nothing else but devised untruths, according to that answer which Nehemiah returned to the false accusations of Sanballat and his companions, Neh. 6. 8. *There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest (or devisest) them out of thine own heart.* However the drift of Zophar in these words is evident, namely, that he judged it an unreasonable thing to hold his peace, when he heard him utter such grosse falsehoods; and that though some men may have their mouths stopped with a fair flourishing tale or plea, though there be never a word of truth in it, and some may judge it in vain to argue with one that cares not what untruth he utters; yet he thought it unfit to let him so carry it, but was resolved to disprove those devices and falsehoods, wherewith he had sought to justify himself.

And when thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed? As if he should have said, it is impossible that a man that fears God should hear thee speak in such a scornfull flouting manner, as thou hast done both of God and of the reproofs and admonitions of thy friends, and not seek to discover thy folly and wickedness herein to thy shame. Some conceive that Zophar speaks this in reference to that which Iob had said, chap. 10. 3. (as thinking he had spoken that in a mocking manner) *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppresse? that thou shouldest*
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despise the work of thine hands, &c. and others referre it to other passages. But I rather think that he speaks it more generally, as apprehending that in many passages he had only made a mock of that which his friends had spoken to him.

Verf. 4. *For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure and I am clean in thine eyes.*] His meaning is, that he had maintained that to be true which he had spoken concerning God and his providence, the afflictions of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked, &c. and that he was innocent and upright before God: and it may well be that Zophar spake this in reference to that which Iob had said chap. 6, 10. *I have not concealed the words of the Holy one.* and again verf. 30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* and so likewise, chap. 10. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* But yet because Iob had so clearly again and again expressed himself, that he durst not justifie himself before God, as chap. 9. 20. *If I justifie my self (saith he) mine own mouth shall condemn me; If I say I am perfect, it shall also proove me perverse,* it is most probable, that Zophar in these words intended not to charge him any farther then thus, to wit, for saying that he by any secret wickednesse or hypocrisie had not provoked God to punish him so severely; for this Zophar judged a lie, and a reproach of God, as holding that God would never have made him such a pattern of misery, had he not been an hypocrite.

Verf. 5. *But, O that God would speak and open his lips against thee.*] Because Iob had wished that he might plead with God concerning his condition, chap. 9. 34, 35. *Let him take his rod away from me and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I speak and not fear him,* and because he had for the most part in the foregoing chapter directed his speech to God, verf. 2. *I will say unto God, do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou consendest with me,* and because withall Zophar apprehended, that he minded not what his friends said to him, nothing that they spake did the least good upon him, so that though it were histurn now to speak, it would be to no purpose, therefore he wisheth here that God would by himself answer him, *O that God would speak and open his lips against thee,* (which must needs be meant either of Gods convincing him by the inward voice of his own spirit, or else rather of Gods speaking to him in a vision, or by an audible voice from heaven, as afterwards indeed he did, chap. 38. 1.) hereby implying that if God should plead with him, or but open his lips to speak a word to him (which yet after all his importunate desires he might see God had refused to doe) he would then see his folly, and would find that God had in no degree dealt so severely with him.

Verf. 6. *And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is, &c.*] A very difficult passage this is, so that there are very few Expositours that agree in one judgement concerning the meaning of it. By *the secrets of wisdom* may be meant, either the secrets of divine instruction which men doe not nor cannot sufficiently comprehend, or the secrets of Gods purposes and counsells in the manifold dispensations of his providence; and so accordingly by Gods shewing Iob that these *secrets of wisdom* are double to that which is may be meant, either that the conformity which God requires of man to his will, is double to that which is, that is, farre more then that which man apprehends, or which is found in the best; or that the secret contrivements of God in the works
of

of his providence are *double to that which is*, that is, farre more then what outwardly appears, or man can comprehend: And indeed both these might be well intended by Zophar, his drift being to imply to Iob that God in his wisdom knew infinitely more that was sinfull and vild in him then he knew by himself, and that therefore that which God in his wisdom knew might justly be laid upon him, was double to that which he did undergoe; for this agrees fully with that following clause, *know therefore that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth.*

Verf. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God? &c.*] That is, thou canst not by all thy possible endeavours search and find out God, to wit, to know him or his waies and counsells perfectly; we may know him in part, much we may understand concerning God by observing the footsteps of his power, wisdom, and goodnesse in the creatures, but to know him exactly and unto perfection is absolutely impossible; to expresse which that second clause is added, *canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?*

Verf. 8. *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou doe? &c.*] That is, if by all we can doe, we cannot exactly find out and know the height of the heaven, or the depth of hell, or the length and breadth of the earth and Sea, how much lesse shall we be able to comprehend him, or the wisdom of his providence, who is infinite and therefore incomprehensible: and in all this Zophars aim still is to shew Iob how foolish a thing it was to quarrel with God, because he could not see the reason why he proceeded so severely with him.

Verf. 10. *If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?*] The first word (which is in our translation *If he cut off*) may be renderd, *If he make a change*. But however that be translated it is not easie to say what is meant by that or the following words of shutting up and gathering together. Some conceive that all these words do but expresse one and the same thing, to wit, the Lords overturning the whole frame and course of nature, *If he cut off* (or *make a change*) *and shut up, or gather together*, that is, if he turn and change, destroy and subvert the whole frame and course of nature, and so mingling things together should reduce all into a confused chaos again, *then who can hinder him?* that is, no body can controul him, or alledge any just reason why he should not doe best in so doing; and hereby (they say) Zophar gave Iob to understand, that if God might thus change and break in pieces the whole frame of nature, and be unquestionably wise in so doing, it were strange that now he should be called in question for the subverting of his family alone. Again others understand the words of two contrary dispensations of providence, thus, that if God will deal well with some and ill with others, if some he will destroy or shut up in prison, and others he will gather together into towns, cities or provinces, or if he will at one time destroy or shut up, and another time gather together and save the very same persons, all this he may doe in great wisdom. Again others by cutting off (or making a change) understand the subverting and ruining people, families or persons, and by shutting up the bringing of men into great streights and difficulties; but then by gathering together they understand the gathering together his witness

ses or his armies for the condemning of those whom he intends to judge, or for the cutting off those whom he hath condemned; so that, I say, Expolitours differ much in their judgement concerning the meaning of these words. But yet however the drift of the words seems to be clear, to wit, from the unsearchableness of Gods wisdom to conclude, that whatsoever strange things God should doe, yea though he should overturn all things and mingle heaven and earth together, yet it were not fit that men should question his proceedings therein. Indeed Iob himself had said as much before in effect, chap. 9, 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him?* But it seems Zophar conceived that this could not agree with other things that he had spoken, and therefore he presseth him here with this which himself had acknowledged.

Verf. 11. *For he knoweth vain men, &c.* It is also very questionable how this depends upon that which went before. 1. It may be added to shew why God in great wisdom doth so diversely deal with the same men, sometimes blessing them, and at other times again sorely afflicting them, to wit, because *he knoweth vain men*, that is, he knoweth the vanity and inconstancy of men; such is the fickleness of the best, that they are ever and anon ready to start aside from the waies of righteousness, and therefore he cannot proceed with them in one continued way and course of gentleness and favour. 2. It may be added to shew why it is not possible that any man should except against the wisdom of any of Gods proceedings, to wit, because poor simple vain man is altogether unable to comprehend the wisdom of God in the severall dispensations of his providence. But 3. It may be to shew that when God is pleased to make any alterations in the world, there is no hindering of him in what he is resolved to doe, *for he knoweth vain men*, that is, he knoweth that poor frail man cannot in the least withstand his will, he may doe what he will with him; and 4. It may imply the reason why there is no excepting against the wisdom of Gods proceedings, even when he doth cut off and destroy, namely because *he knoweth vain men*, that is, he knoweth exactly all that is amiss in man; though poor simple man cannot comprehend the waies and wisdom of God, yet God knows the vanity of man, the proneness of his nature to sin, and even when there is nothing to be discerned that is not right in the outward conversation, yet he knoweth the vanity that is in their hearts; so that men may wonder at the afflictions of those that yet are most justly afflicted, because they know not that evil in them which God knows by them. And this I the rather think is principally intended, because hereto agree the following words, *he seeth wickedness also, will he not then consider it?* as if he should have said, since God seeth all the evil that is done by the children of men shall we or can we think that God will passe it by as if it were nothing, and not lay it to heart, to punish men for it? Noe surely.

Verf. 12. *For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild asses colt.* Some conceive that man is here said to be born like a wild asses colt, because indeed when they first come into the world there seems to be no more knowledge and understanding in an infant newly born then in a wild asses colt newly foaled; But I rather think that this phrase relates to that brutishness which is in all men

naturally as they are born into the world since the fall of our first parents, to wit, that they are no more able to comprehend the things and waies of God, then a wild asses colt is able to comprehend matters of reason. So that these words are I conceive added as in a way of derision, *vain man would be wise*, &c. that is, foolish man hath a high opinion of his own wisdom, and will many times pretend to so much wisdom and understanding, as to be able to judge of Gods waies, and to expostulate with God concerning his works, whereas naturally, poor wretch, man is as brutish, as unteachable, and untractable for the understanding of the things of God, as a wild asses colt is. This is I take it the clear meaning of the words; yet some would have the meaning to be this, that *vain man would be wise*, that is, he would be made wise, to wit, by Gods chastisements, though naturally he be as brutish, as unteachable, & untractable in regard of such knowledge as the most stupid and untamed creature that is.

Verf. 13. *If thou prepare thine heart and stretch out thine hands towards him.*] That is, if thou wilt with all sincerity of heart pray to the Lord for pardon and grace; for the stretching forth of the hands to heaven is the gesture of those that pray, as we see in Solomon 1 Kings 8. 22. whereby is signified 1. The lifting up of the heart to God, 2. Their earnest desire and assured hope of receiving from God what they beg of him. 3. A holy striving with God, or an earnest intention of spirit as it were to take hold of God, and 4. Their yielding up themselves to God, as ready to doe whatever he will have them.

Verf. 14. *If iniquity be in thine hand, &c.*] That is, if there be any sinfull practise thou hast been inured to; or if there be any thing unjustly gotten in thy possession; *put it farre away*, that is, abandon it utterly; *And let not wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacle*, that is, neither walk thy self in any way of wickednesse, nor suffer those of thy family to doe that which is evil in Gods sight: though wickednesse may get into thy house, yet when thou knowest it, let it not stay there.

Verf. 15. *For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.*] Iob had said chap. 10. 15. *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head*, in reference to this Zophar tells him here, that if he would with a prepared heart repent and turn to the Lord, he might then lift up his head, *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot*, that is, then mayest thou walk chearfully and comfortably, and hold up thy face before God or man as any occasion is offered without fear and without shame. Because when men have their faces spotted with dirt, they are ashamed to shew their faces, whereas if those spots be washed away then they go abroad again without blushing or fear, therefore when a man can appear before God, or man with a countenance not cast down, either through the guilt of any foul spot of sin that lies upon him, or the shame of any reproach or dishonour that lies upon him, or of any punishment wherewith God hath testified against him, he may be then said to lift up his face without spot.

Tea thou shalt be stedfast and shalt not fear.] The first clause, *thou shalt be stedfast* may be meant, 1. Of the stedfastnesse of his outward condition, to wit, that being upon his true repentance received into Gods favour he should be establi-

shed in a sure and stedfast prosperous condition; whereas when hypocrites are in a prosperous estate, there's no certainty of their continuance therein, they stand in a slippery place, being ever in danger of a dismall change and fall, his prosperity should be stedfast and permanent; free from all danger of the return of any such calamities as now he had suffered, and 2. Of the stedfastnesse of his mind, to wit, that he should have a settled and composed mind through the assurance of Gods favour, and so free from all distraction of fear; and then *thou shalt be stedfast* is explained by the following words *and shalt not fear*. Because men in fear are alwaies full of many roving distracted thoughts, sometimes suggesting this or that evil which they fear will come upon them, and sometimes contriving diversely what course they should take to help themselves, hence. they say is this expression, *thou shalt be stedfast and shalt not fear*. I know there are some that include in this promise likewise that spirituall stedfastnesse whereby he should be preserved from relapsing into sin; But I cannot see that this is so clear in the words.

Verf. 16. *Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that passe away.* That is, thou shalt quite forget all thy former misery, or at least thou shalt scarcely or very little remember it: for three things the expression here used may imply; 1. That he should so long be freed from those calamities that had afflicted him, that he should in a manner forget that ever he had been so afflicted. 2. That he should be so perfectly delivered from those manifold miseries and calamities that he now lay under, that there should not be the least memoriall left of them, to put him in mind of what he had suffered, *thou shalt remember it as waters that passe away*, that is, as a land-flood though it overflow all for a time, yet passeth away and is gone on a sudden, and then there is no sign of it left, to make one think there had ever been such mighty streams of water there, so should he be freed from those floods of affliction that had broken in upon him, insomuch that there should be no memoriall of them left, but they should quite be forgotten. 3. That God should so abundantly blesse him with all blessings inward and outward, that his present prosperity should quite put out of his mind all his former misery; even as the waters that run by in a river are no sooner out of sight then out of mind, by reason of a new supply of water that comes still in the room of that which passeth away. And indeed usually in the Scripture an eminency of prosperity is expressed in these tearms, that it should be such as should make them forget their former sorrows, as Gen. 41. 51. where Ioseph being highly advanced in Egypt called his first-born son Manasseh, and gave this reason for it, *For God*, said he, *hath made me forget all my toil*, and Esa. 54. 4. *Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widow-hood any more*, and John 16. 21. *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembreth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.* and 4. That at least he should remember his former miseries without the least distresse, or anxiety of mind for fear they should return again upon him; for this is to remember his misery, *as waters that passe away*, which being once gone can never possibly turn back again.

Verf. 17.

Verf. 17. *And thine age shall be clearer then the noon day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*] That is, thine adversity shall be suddenly changed into exceeding great prosperity; and so the remainder of thy time or life, even thine old age, which thou givest for lost, of which thou makest no reckoning, and which thou expectest will yield thee nothing but weaknesse and sorrow, shall be the prime part of thy daies for joy and glory. To signifie that his joy and glory should be exceeding great, it is said that his age should be *clearer then the noon day*: and to signifie it should come suddenly after a sad night of affliction and should then continually encrease more and more, it is said that he should *shine forth and be as the morning*.

Verf. 18. *And thou shalt be secure because there is hope, &c.*] That is, being in this prosperous condition, thou shalt be fearlesse of any such sad changes as have now befallen thee, and that because thou shalt then upon thy repentance have assured hope and confidence in Gods love and favour; to which purpose also is that which follows, *yea thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety*, for thereby is meant, either that he should follow his husbandry, digging and ploughing his ground without any fear of an enemy, or digging for water for his flocks and heards without any to withstand him, yea figuratively it may be meant of the labours of any calling, as Luke 16. 3. or 2. That he should sleep as securely, as those doe that have digged some deep trench about them, to secure them from the breaking in of an enemy upon them, or 3. That if he did but build an house (for digging may be put for the digging of the foundation of a house) or dig a place to pitch his tent in, and withall some little trench about it (as the Arabians in those times used to doe, to which Zophar seems here to allude) he should enjoy himself safelier herein then otherwise he would doe in a walled city.

Verf. 19. *Many shall make suit unto thee.*] That is, being so greatly enriched and highly exalted, many both great and small, yea even those that now insult over thee, shall crouch and bow before thee, and sue to thee for favour. Little did Zophar indeed think that this which he now promised Iob should be accomplished in him, and his two companions Eliphaz and Bildad, that did now so harshly censure him. But yet so we see it was when the Lord sent them to Iob humbly to desire him that he would pray for them, chap. 42. 8, 9.

Verf. 20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, &c.*] Because the fixing of the eye long upon one place to look for any thing doth much weaken the sight, especially when also men weep much, by reason that they so earnestly desire and look for comes not (for nothing marres the eyes more then weeping, Lam. 2. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears*) therefore when men in misery do earnestly wait for deliverance or comfort and all in vain, it is usually expressed in the Scripture by this phrate of the failing of the eyes, as Psal. 69. 3. *Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God*: and so here to expresse that wicked men shall in vain expect any help from God in their distresse, he saith *the eyes of the wicked shall fail*, and then addes, *they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost*, the meaning whereof is either 1. That after all their expectation the end of their hope shall be a miserable death, or that they shall die in their misery, either by making themselves a way

way in despair, or by some other way of Gods just vengeance upon them, or 2. That in the conclusion they should come to be in as hopelesse and desperate a condition, as is a man when he is giving up the ghost, or 3. That their hope should come to nothing, even as the breath of a man vanisheth to nothing when he giveth up the ghost, and therefore indeed some translate this clause thus, *their hope shall be as a puffe of breath*. Now the main drift of this was to give Iob a hint, that if he continued in his wickednesse and did not repent, this at last would be his portion.

CHAP. XII.

Verf. 2. **N**O doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.] Because Zophar had interrupted Iob when he was speaking, charging him with babling forth a multitude of words to no purpose, yea with uttering many lies and falsehoods, chap. 11. 2, 3. and had in effect, though covertly verf. 12. compared Iob to a *wild asses colt*, Iob therefore undertaking here to reply upon him upbraids Zophar, and together with him his other two friends also, who had all run on in the same strain, with the high conceit which they had of themselves, and their contempt of others; and this he doth not out of hatred or envy, not as scorning or disdainning his friends, but merely to reprove them for their vain-glorious exalting of themselves and despising of him: *No doubt but ye are the people, &c.* It is ironically spoken; and that which he upbraids them with is, either that they carried themselves, as if they thought that what they said was in effect as much, as if all the people in the world, or the whole people where they lived had said it, and that because they were the great Oracles for wisdom, to whose sayings all the people would be ready to subscribe; or else rather that they thought themselves *the men*, that is, the only wise men in the world, that no body knew any thing but they, all were fools yea brut beasts in comparison of them; insomuch that if they died, all wisdom must needs die with them, there would be nothing but darknesse where their Sun shined not; and thus it is much to the same purpose, as is that ironical expression of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 10. *We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak but ye are strong, &c.*

Verf. 3. *But I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to you, &c.*] As if he had said, I see not but that through the grace of God, I am able to understand and judge of things as well as you, nor am, at least in this cause that I have pleaded against you, one whit inferiour to you. Now this he adds also, not in a way of bragging and boasting, as vain-glorious men are wont to doe, but only to plead so farre for himself, that his friends might not slight what he said out of an overweening conceit of their own surpassing wisdom. And indeed the following clause shews that it was not from any high conceit of himself that he had spoken this; for therein he makes so little of that which they had spoken, that it could not seem pride in him to equall himself with them, yea, saith he, *who knoweth not such things as these?* that is, such things as these that you have uttered, and which

which you magnifie as such high points of wisdom, namely that God is infinitely wise and just, and is wont to doe good to the godly and to punish the wicked; every one, man or woman, that is but of ordinary understanding is able to say as much as this; and therefore there is no reason why you should so exceedingly exalt your selves for the profound wisdom of that which you have spoken.

Verf. 4. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God and he answereth him, &c.*] The greatest difficulty in these words is, whereto that clause must be referred, *who calleth upon God and he answereth him*: Some referre it to the man that is *mocked of his neighbour*, and accordingly they conceive that those words *who calleth upon God and he answereth him* are added, 1. To imply that he means a holy righteous man that is mocked of his neighbour, one who though he be scorned and despised by those amongst whom he lives, yet God makes precious account of him, and is alwaies ready to hear and answer him when he calls upon him; and hence those words are added in the following clause, *the just upright man is laughed to scorn*. 2. To imply the danger of those that do mock such a man, and that because if the good man that is thus despised of his neighbour doe call upon God and make his complaint to him, God will answer his prayers and take his part against his neighbour that mocketh him. But then again others referre those words to the mocking neighbour, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who*, that is, which mocking neighbour, *calleth upon God and he answereth him*; and accordingly also they conceive that these words are added to imply the prosperity of such a mocker, as if it had been said, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour who lives in plenty and prosperity*, God affording him whatever his own heart can desire: let him but ask or wish for any thing God answers him and grants him his desire, yea and many times more then he desires, and so being in a prosperous condition himself he can mock and despise him that is in misery. And indeed though wicked men do never truly pray and call upon God, nor doth God ever regard such prayers as they make, yet even of such it may be said, that they call upon God and he answereth them, because the light of nature teacheth them to wish as it were, and in some kind to seek the good they desire of God, and commonly it is said of such prosperous men, that they are heavens favourites; and that God doth for them whatever they will. But however, the drift of Job in these words is manifest, to wit, covertly to blame them, for despising him as they had done. He had told them that he had understanding as well as they; but, saith he, it fares with me as with many other good men that being in affliction are despised even of their nearest neighbours and friends, that live in a high and prosperous condition.

Verf. 5. *He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.*] The drift of these words is the same with those in the foregoing verse. By a man *ready to slip with his feet* is meant one that is ready to sink under heavy calamities that lye upon him, one that is like to be utterly ruined and undone, in such desperate danger that there seems to be but a step betwixt him and death, he is every moment ready to fall under the heavy hand of God that is up-
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on him; this is evident by many other places, as Deut. 32. 35. *To me belongeth vengeance and recompence, their foot shall slide in due time.* Psal. 38. 16, 17. *When my foot slippeth they magnifie themselves against me, for I am ready to halt and my sorrow is continually before me.* and Psal. 94. 18. *when I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.* Again on the other side that man is said to be at ease that lives in prosperity, and is not disquieted with the least affliction and sorrow, as we see Psal. 123. 4. *Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud,* and thereto agrees that of the rich man, Luk. 12. 19. *I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, &c.* And lastly therefore whereas it is said here that *he that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease,* the meaning of this expression is, that men brought low by affliction are slighted and despised by those that are in prosperity, as poor, base, and worthlesse things. When a link or torch is burnt so farre away that we can hold it no longer, when a candle is spent to the very snuff, though before they did us very good service, yet then they are of no farther use, but are like to be noysome, and therefore we cast them away and tread them under foot, and so when men formerly of great esteem come to sink in affliction, those that are themselves in prosperity mind them no more then the snuff of a candle. And thus Iob shews the reason why his friends did so despise him and regard his words so little; it was because he was brought so low, and they were at ease and felt not the least of that which he suffered. But yet withall too there is in these words a transition to that which next follows, to wit, the disprooving of that which his friends had joyntly affirmed, concerning the certain prosperity of the righteous, and the misery of the wicked: Zophar had told Iob that if he would repent and turn unto God, his age should be clearer then the Sun at noon-day, chap. 11. 17. but Iob here tells him, that so farre are the righteous from being alwaies in such a glorious condition, that they are many times *as a despised lamp, &c.*

Verf. 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, &c.* Having reprovved Zophar and the rest of his friends for scorning him as they had done, and despising what he had spoken, here he undertakes to disprove that which they had all so stiffly maintained, to wit, that the righteous do alwaies prosper for outward things, and that the wicked are ever outwardly punished, and particularly that wherewith Zophar had concluded his speech, chap. 11. 20. *The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, &c.* alledging that none have usually such abundance of all outward things as the worst of men that carry themselves most insolently both towards God and man; and it is like that he instanceth the rather in *the tabernacles of robbers* as in relation to the Sabeans and Chaldeans that had robbed him of his cattle.

Verf. 7. *But ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee &c.* That which is most questionable in these words and that which follows in the two next verses is, how they have dependance upon that which went before. Some conceive that herein also Iob still proceed to prove that God doth nor allwayes either blesse the righteous with outward blessings, or else cut off and destroy the wicked; and two wayes there

there are which Iob might intend, whereby this might be learnt, even from the unreasonable and senselesse creatures: for 1. This may be clearly gathered from hence, that even amongst beasts, and fowl, and fishes, none fare better then those that are most fierce and ravenous, and live altogether by rapine and devouring those that are not so strong as themselves, and on the other side none fare worse then those that are best and gentlest, and least harmfull to others; those that live upon prey will be fat and in good liking, when others it may be are ready to famish for want of food, and we see in daily experience that the pheasant and partridge the fowler looks after, when the kite and vulture are never minded; and thus it is too with beasts and fishes, there are multitudes more killed daily of those that are gentle and harmlesse, then of those that are most mischievous and feed altogether upon the blood of others, yea and amongst the plants of the earth, we use to observe that ill weeds grow apace, and poysonous plants do often flourish and spread faster then those that are most usefull and most acceptable amongst men. Now since we may conclude with Iob that none can be ignorant, but that these things are done thus by the speciall Providence of God, vers. 9. *who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* we may gather from thence, that if God by his providence, doth for the glory of his own Name order it thus amongst the other creatures, why may he not also order it so amongst men, they being also the work of his own hand, and made for his glory as well as the rest. And again 2. It may be gathered from hence, that none have such plenty of the creatures, beasts, fowl or fish, none have so great a portion of the earth as the wicked usually have; so that all the creatures do proclaim the certainty of this truth. But then others again conceive, that because Zophar had such high thoughts of that which he had spoken concerning the incomprehensible wisdom and power of God, therefore Iob shews him, that every ordinary man might learn as much as that concerning God, though he had no other instructors then the dumb unreasonable and senselesse creatures; Zophar had said, to set forth the transcendent wisdom of God, that it was *as high as heaven, and deeper then hell*, &c. chap. 11. 8. Iob here answers him that there was no need to climb up into heaven, or to descend down into hell to find out this, since we may learn it from every creature that we behold with our eyes; by every beast, bird, fish or plant we may easily learn this, that the God that made them must needs be a God of infinite and incomprehensible both wisdom and might.

Vers. 11. *Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth tast his meat?*] As if he should have said, and so likewise doth the mind of man discern these spirituall truths concerning God, which are taught by the Creatures; that which the dumb creatures proclaim concerning the wisdom, power, and providence of God, the reasonable soul of man may as plainly and easily discern, as the ear discerns words, or the mouth tastes meats; These are not such hidden mysteries as you would pretend, they may be easily discovered even by the outward senses. Thus very many Expolitours understand this clause, and so take it as added by way of amplifying what is said in the foregoing verses, concerning the clear discovery that is made of Gods incomprehensible wisdom and power in every one of the crea-

tures. But yet there is another exposition that is given of these words, which is judged by many better then the former. *Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth tast his meat?* that is, as the mouth doth discern the tast of meats, what is sweet and what is sowre, what hath a pleasant, what an unpleasant relish, so is the ear to judge of words we hear spoken, to wit, whether they be true or false, what is wisely and what is foolishly spoken. And if we thus understand the words, then the drift of Iob therein must be, either to shew the reason why he did not immediately embrace all for truth which they had spoken (which it seems they expected he should have done, and therefore were offended that he did oppose them) it was because his ears were given him to hear what was spoken, that then he might judge of it, even as his mouth was to judge of the tast of his meat: or else to answer that which Bildad had said, chap. 8. 8, 9. *Enquire I pray thee of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their fathers; for we are but of yesterday and know nothing, &c.* shewing that we are not to be carried away merely with the learning or age of the speaker, but by the eare must judge of what is spoken, even as by the mouth we judge of the tast of meats that are set before us; or else rather by way of reprooving his friends, because they slighted and disregarded his words, yea because they misconstrued what he had spoken, and that for want of due pondering and considering his words, *Doth not the eare try words? and the mouth tast his meat?* as if he had said, ought you not to let your ears doe their office, which is to attend to that which I speak, and not thus to slight what I say, and so for want of well weighing my words to misunderstand and pervert what I have spoken? And indeed because Elihu useth the same expression, thereby to perswade Iob and his friends well to mind what he would say, chap. 34. 2, 3. *Hear my words, O ye wise men, and give ear unto me ye that have knowledge; for the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat*, this is that I conceive which Iob also chiefly intended in these words.

Verf. 12. *With the ancient is wisdom and in length of daies understanding.* Either this is added, as a farther illustration of that which he had said concerning the knowledge of God which may be learnt from the creatures, namely that hence it comes to passe that ancient men, that have many years observed what God hath discovered in the works of creation, are therefore better able to judge of these things then young men are; and some are of opinion, that Iob might herein covertly strike at some of his friends that were younger then he, and yet insulted over him, as if he were not worthy to speak to them. But yet because elsewhere it seems evident that these friends of Iob were very aged men, chap. 15. 10. *With us are bosh the gray-headed and very aged men, much elder then thy father*, saith Eliphaz; and Elihu speaking to these friends of Iob, chap. 32. 6, 7. *I am, saith he, young and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew mine opinion, I said, Daies should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom*, I should rather think that this is added, either in answer to that which Bildad had said, chap. 8. 8, 9. concerning enquiring of the aged (of which mention is made above in the foregoing Note) or at least in answer to the high opinion, which his friends might have of their great wisdom because of their years, wherein he first yields, that

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it is true indeed that *with the ancient is wisdom*, that is, they have had a fair advantage for the gaining of wisdom; but then adds in the following verse what doth plainly imply, that yet all the wisdom in man, however it is to be esteemed in itself, is no better then vanity if it come to be compared with the wisdom of God; and that therefore we ought not so to prize the judgement of men of great years, as therefore to reject any truth which God hath taught us.

Verf. 13. *With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsell and understanding.*] Some indeed conceive that Iob here expresseth what it is that men learn concerning God from the creatures; to wit, that *with him*, (that is, with God) *is wisdom and strength*, &c. But rather, as is noted on the former verse, this is added as by way of correcting or opposing what was said there concerning the wisdom of the aged; Nay, saith he, *with him*, that is, with God, *is both wisdom and power too*, and that in such a transcendent manner, that the wisdom that is in the wisest of men is not worthy the name of wisdom in comparison of that which is in God; he is essentially, infinitely, incomprehensibly wise and mighty; and this unsearchable wisdom he daily exerciseth in disposing all things that are done in the world.

Verf. 14. *He shattereth up a man and there can be no opening.*] That is, if he undertake to shut up a man for ever, either in prison or in any streights of distresse, or under the power of any sicknesse or calamity whatever, there is no possibility ever to find out any way to set such a man free.

Verf. 15. *Behold, he withholdeth the waters and they dry up, &c.*] That is, he withholdeth the waters from above, the rain, and then the waters beneath in ponds, lakes, brooks and rivers do soon dry up; or it may be understood without any such distinction of the waters above and the waters beneath, to wit, that if God commands that there shall be a drought and forbears to give a supply of water either by rain from above, or springs and fountains beneath, there will soon be no water left, which agreeth fully with that of the prophet Nahum, chap. 1. 4. *He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry; and dryeth up all the rivers; yea and then all things growing in such places are dried and parched up too; also he sendeth them out and they overturn the earth*, that is, the fruits and inhabitants of the earth where these floods of water come.

Verf. 16. *With him is strength and wisdom, &c.*] This is the very same that Iob had said before verf. 13. (for though in the original there be not the same words here and there, yet they are to the same purpose and meaning, and therefore are rendered by our Translatours with the same words) and two probable reasons may be given, why here he should so immediately repeat the same thing again; as 1. Because that verf. 13. might be only intended to shew what God is in himself, to wit, that he is a God of infinite wisdom and might; and then this here he might adde, either to shew that this wisdom and might of God is every moment discovered in his wise and wonderfull ordering of all things that are, and that are done in the world; or else that all the strength and wisdom that is in the creature comes from him and is at his disposing, so that he gives and takes it away as seems good in his own eyes, and 2. Because being now to instance in works of

providence, that are farre more above the reach of mans reason, then any thing he had yet spoken of, he repeats again here that which he said before concerning the wonderfull power and wisdom of God, thereby as it were, to curb men from quarrelling and contending with God about such things, which is most clear in the first particular he alledgeth in the words that immediately follow, *The deceived and the deceiver are his*, that is, they are both alike under Gods all-ordering power and command, who is the Sovereign Lord of the whole world, and are herein guided by his providence, and made to serve his counsels and glory; when one man seduceth another into any error, or any other way gulls and deceives him, there is a hand of God herein, it is by the decree, and appointment, and providence of God, that the one attempts to deceive and that the other is deceived by him. At this and such like truths naturally men are ready to startle, questioning how it can stand with the justice and holinesse of God, that he should have any hand in the ordering of such things as this, (and yet we see the Scripture doth often expressly affirm it, as Ezek. 14. 9. *If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet*, and 2 Thess. 2. 11. *God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie*) To prevent therefore mens cavilling at such truths as this, this clause is here prefixed again, *with him is strength and wisdom*, intimating that even these things could not be done without the concurrence of Gods almighty and all-ruling power, and that all that he doth he doth with great wisdom, though we cannot comprehend how it should be.

Verf. 17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoyled, and maketh the judges fools.*] The meaning of these words is plainly this, that God many times makes fools of the wisest of men, such as are counsellors and judges, who are usually esteemed the great Oracles of wisdom in the severall places and times wherein they live, according to that prayer of David, when he heard that Ahithophel that great Politician sided with his son Absalom, 2 Sam. 15. 31. *O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishnesse*, to wit, either by a reall depriving them of their wisdom and understanding (and in that sense some Expositours conceive that they are here said to be *spoyled*, that is, stripped of those abilities of mind, which formerly they had) or else by infatuating them so that they speak and doe those things, which one would think none but fools or mad men should speak or doe, or else by crossing them so in all their subtile plots and devices, that all their wisdom proves no better then folly; & indeed thus some understand the word (*spoyled*) in the first clause, namely that he causeth counsellors notwithstanding their great wisdom to be carried into captivity, spoyled and stripped of all their riches and dignity and power, whence it is that the vanquishing and captivity of Egypt is expressed thus, Esa. 19. 11, 13. *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools; the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish*. However because God is manifested by his vanquishing and ruining the great Politicians of the world, especially when they proudly opposed him and his kingdom, it may well be said that he leads them away spoyled, as Princes are wont to doe those they have vanquished in a way of triumph.

Verf. 18. *He loseth the bond of kings and girdeth their loins with a girdle.*] Three severall wayes this may be understood, to wit, 1. That when kings are in bonds, the Lord many times freeth them from their captivity and bondage (as he did Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 13.) and restores them to the Regall dignity again; for the girdle about the loines is sometimes mentioned in the Scripture as an ornament of princes, and therefore in allusion thereto it is said of Christ, Isa. 11. 5. *Righteousnesse shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.* See Jer. 13. 1, &c. or 2. That he many times degradeth kings and deposeth them from the Regall state (for by *the bond of kings* may be meant the Regall or military Belt wherewith they are girded, and so the loosing thereof may well signifie their being deprived of their Sovereignty) and that they are brought to the mean condition of other ordinary men, *he girdeth their loins with a girdle*; or 3. (which I like the best) that he often sets subjects free from the bondage of kings (for by *the bond of kings* may be meant that authority and power, whereby the people are held as bond-slaves in subjection to them) and then bringeth those kings to be themselves in a very low and mean, yea a servile and captivated condition; for because in the Eastern countries, where they wore long garments, in all preparations for travell or labour they used to gird themselves; therefore girding with a girdle is often mentioned in the Scripture as the posture and habit of servants, according to that of the Lord to his servant, Luke 17. 8. *Make ready wherewith I may sup and gird thy self and serve me*, and so also Luk. 12. 37.

Verf. 20. *He remooveth away the speech of the trusty.*] By *the trusty* understand men of sure credit, men of such sufficiency and faithfulness for instruction or advice, that princes and others may safely rest and rely upon them, men actually trusted or worthy to be trusted with publick affairs; and it is said that God *remooveth away the speech* of such trusty men, either when he takes away such men, and perhaps sends in their room either flatterers or fools, according to that, Isa. 3. 1, 2, 3. *For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts doth take away from Ierusalem and from Iudah—The judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, &c.* or else when such as were trusty before become weak or faithlesse, and so are unable to instruct or advise, or else teach falsehoods or give ill counsell; or when he causeth men not to give any credit to their advice, which he often doth in a way of punishment for the sins of a people.

Verf. 21. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the strength of the mighty.*] To wit, either by depriving them of their strength, or by crossing them so in all their enterprises that they are as men that have no power to effect any thing they go about. This last clause is in the Original *and looseth the girdle of the strong*; for because girding causeth strength, and men are the more steady and nimble when their armour or garments are girt close about them, especially in those countries where they wore long garments, hence this phrase of loosening the girdle of the strong is used for making the strong weak, or opposing them so that they are not able to doe what they endeavour, but are as men that are clogged and hampered with their long loose garments.

Verf. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darknesse and bringeth out to light the shadowes.*

down of death] Some referre this to Gods revealing to his prophets the interpretation of dreams and visions, and discovering things that should long after come to passe; others to his bringing to light the most hidden things, which seemed to be buried in perpetuall darknesse, such as are the secret plots and conspiracies of enemies, (which may also be called *the shadow of death*, because the dangers thereof are terrible and horrible as death;) yea some referre it to Gods rending asunder the earth with earth-quakes, whereby those inward depths of the earth are discovered, which otherwise would never have been seen. But doubtlesse the meaning of the words is generall, to wit, that there is nothing so secret but God doth many times bring it to light; and it may well be too which some conceive, that this particular is added the rather to intimate that by such discovering of the hellish secrets of many men, he maketh it evident that he doth not execute the judgements before mentioned merely to exercise a tyrannicall power over his creatures, but that he hath just cause to doe as he doth, though we know it not.

Verf. 23. *He increaseth the nations and destroyeth them; he enlargeth the nations and streighteneth them again.*] That is, he mightily increaseth the number of a people and then destroyeth them, and brings them to a handfull again; and so likewise he many times enlargeth their territories, dominion, power and wealth, and then bringeth them again into as great streights and as low a condition as ever before.

Verf. 24. *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, &c.*] By *the chief of the people of the earth* may be meant either the Princes and Rulers of each nation, or those that are the chief and choicest amongst a people for wisdom and courage, &c. and it is said that God *taketh away the heart* of these men, and *causeth them to wander in a wilderness*, &c. because he many times deprives them of their wisdom and understanding, & brings them into unavoidable streights, into a desperate lost condition, so that they are as men in a wood or wilderness not knowing which way to turn themselves, yea as blind and drunken men that grope at noon-day as if it were night, and thereupon enter upon waies which no wise man ever trod, and take up resolutions and counsells that are most pernicious to themselves and others. This I conceive is the true meaning of the words, yet some understand it literally that God takes away all heart and courage from them, and so causeth them to goe into desolate wildernesses to hide themselves.

CHAP. XIII.

Verf. 1. **L***oe, mine eye hath seen all this, &c.*] The drift of Iob in these two verses is the same, as in that he had said before chap. 12. 2, 3. (concerning which therefore see the Notes there) to upbraid his friends for despising him out of a high conceit which they had of themselves, by willing them to observe from what he had now spoken, that he understood as much concerning the justice, the wisdom, the power and providence of God as they did.

Verf. 3.

Verf. 3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.*] Zophar had said chap. 11. 5. *O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee, and that as deriding Iobs former confidence in wishing he might plead his cause with God; in-reference hereto therefore Iob here professeth that he was still of the same mind, Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God, as if he had said, I could say much more to you, but however confident you are, that it would go ill with me if God should grant me my wish herein, I still desire rather that I might plead my cause with the Almighty; not as with an adversary but as before my judge; not to accuse him for any thing he hath done to me, (which never came into my thoughts) but to justify my self against your false accusations, and modestly to desire to be informed by him why his hand is so heavy upon me, which as yet I profess I understand not: You judging of me by what I suffer, and misconstruing all that I speak, do most unjustly condemne me for an hypocrite; but now God is omniscient, and knows the integrity of my heart, and besides he is true and just and will therefore certainly bear witness to the truth, and justify his servant whom you condemne; so that though I know God in his majesty must needs be terrible to his enemies, yet trusting in mine integrity I should desire to plead my cause before him.*

Verf. 4. *But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.*] 1. Because they had affirmed that God never laid such sore afflictions upon any righteous man, as he had done upon him, and thence concluded that he was a wicked hypocrite; but yet withall had very cunningly and artificially composed their speeches with many fair flourishies and plausible pretences, that they spake what they spake merely out of zeal for Gods glory, to defend his unquestionable justice and holiness, and out of a desire to win Iob to repent of his wickedness, and so to seek reconciliation with God, thence is that expression, *But ye are forgers of lies*, much like that Psal. 50. 19. *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit;* and so also he retorts upon them that sin of lying, wherewith they had unjustly before charged him, chap. 11. 3. and 2. Because misjudging of him, and so not rightly applying the truth they had delivered, under a pretence of comforting him, they had added to his afflictions and done what in them lay to drive him to despair, and all their exhortations that he should repent, &c. were to no purpose, therefore he terms them *physicians of no value*, as being herein like to unskilfull physicians, who not considering or not understanding the disease of their patients, give them good medicines, but altogether improper for such a disease, and so do them more hurt then good. The expression is to the same sense with that where he calls them *miserable comforters*, chap. 16. 2.

Verf. 5. *O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdom.*] Zophar had protested that he could not hold his peace, and suffer Iob to run on as he had done, chap. 11. 3. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace? &c.* and it seems in relation hereto Iob now tells him, that considering how false and to no purpose that was that he had spoken, as was implied in the foregoing verse, it would be a part of greater wisdom if both he and the rest of his friends would hold their peace, and so hearken to what he should say to them, and that had they

continued silent as they were at first, when for seven daies together they sat by him and spake not one word to him, chap. 2. 13. they had never discovered so much folly as now they had done; which agrees fully with that of Solomon, Prov. 17, 28, *Even a fool when he holds his peace is counted wise, and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.*

Verf. 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God and talk deceitfully for him?*] They speak wickedly for God that under a pretence of pleading for God, do speak any thing that is evil or wicked, or which if it be well examined doth indeed tend to the great dishonour of God; and so also they talk deceitfully for him that maintain that which in their own consciences they know is not true, and yet they cunningly set a fair glosse upon it and carry the matter with a great shew of zeal for God, and for the defence of his justice: Now this Iob chargeth upon his friends, because under a pretence of pleading for God they accused Iob to be a wicked man, though they had long experience of him and knew to the contrary. and because they affirmed that God were not just if he should so severely punish a righteous man, which was indeed dishonourable to God, as if God might not justly correct the most innocent man, or do with his own creatures what seemed good in his own eyes? *Will you speak wickedly for God?* &c. as if he should have said, can you judge it right to patronise Gods cause with lies? Hath he need of any such defence? or do you think he will like it that you should plead his cause in such a manner?

Verf. 8. *Will ye accept his person, &c.*] That is, will you as by way of gratifying God speak that for him, which you in your own consciences know is not right and true? as those doe that accept the persons of great men, and so not regarding the cause but the person, will speak any thing in favour of them, though they know it to be never so false; And to the same sense we must understand the next clause, *will ye contend for God?* that is, will you thus contend and wrangle for God against that which you know to be just and right? To contend for the glory of God in a right manner is exceeding commendable; but that which Iob upbraids his friends with in these words is, that they should think, as it were, to doe God a pleasure by speaking that which was false in his defence.

Verf. 9. *Is it good that he should search you out?* &c.] As if he had said, you cannot be ignorant that God knows all that is in your hearts more exactly, then men can know any thing which with greatest diligence they search into; so that how zealous soever you seem for God, and how cunningly soever you frame your accusations against me, if that you have spoken have proceeded more from corrupt passion then true zeal, more from a desire to conquer, then to comfort me; if you deal not candidly and sincerely with me, if you charge me with that which in your consciences you know is not true, and that as it were to colloque and curry favour with him, or if you do indeed think in your hearts that God is unjust if he punisheth the righteous, God will find this out, and can you think that this will be any advantage to you? Take heed, you cannot mock and deceive God, *as one man mocketh and deceiveth another.*

Verf. 10. *He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons,*] If you unjustly

ly accuse me, that thereby you may seem to gratifie God, though you doe this never so secretly and cunningly under a pretence of maintaining his justice, he will reprove you and punish you for it; though from men this may be concealed, God will discover it and make you smart for it.

Verf. 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? &c.*] That is, shall not the majesty of God scare you from thinking to deal with God, as you would deal with a man as your selves?

Verf. 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.*] By their remembrances may be meant, either particularly their fame and memoriall after their death, or else more generally whatever was excellent and worthy to be remembred concerning them, as their great honour, power, wealth, their high esteem, and the memorable acts they had done whilst they lived. So that this is doubtlesse added as a reason of that he had said in the foregoing words, that the majesty of God might well scare them from thinking to deal with God, as they had done, to wit, because of their base and despicable condition in regard of that transcendent excellency that was in God: *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay*, As if he should have said, how dare such vile and contemptible creatures as you are, in whom all that is most memorable shall come to nothing, as ashes that are scattered with a puffe of wind and are seen no more, even your very bodies no better then earthen pots or heaps of clay, how dare you speak of God as you have done? Consider your condition what you are in comparison of God, and you will see your folly in thinking to come in with your lies to help him, as it were at a dead list. The expression is much like that chap. 4. 19. concerning which see the Note there. Some indeed understand this to have been spoken as by way of threatning, to wit, that because they had spoken so rashly and reproachfully of God, both themselves and their memoriall should utterly perish and come to nothing, even as when ashes, the only memoriall of wood burnt, are blown away, and so are as if they had never been; nor could there an after punishment be threatned to proud men that are so ambitious to have their names had in remembrance when they are gone. But the first exposition agreeth best with that which went before and that which follows after.

Verf. 13. *Let me alone that I may speak, and let come on me what will.*] Some think that Iob only intended hereby, that he was resolved to speak however his friends took it or what censure soever they should passe upon him. But it may better be referred to the determination of God. Iobs friends had advised him to forbear those speeches he had used, as out of compassion to him, least he should provoke God to lay his hand yet more heavily upon him; He desires therefore here that not taking thought in this kind for him, they would give him free liberty to plead his cause with God, and then let God doe to him what he pleased. Yet this he speaks not in a desperate manner, as not caring what became of him, but as out of assurance of Gods fatherly love, as is evident in that which follows verf. 15.

Verf. 14. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in mine hand?*] Because when a man is solicitous to keep a thing safe, he will carry it in his hand,

and will scarce let it goe out of his hand upon any occasion, therefore putting the life in the hand is interpreted by some for a sollicitous care of life; As if he had said; wherefore do I keep my life so close, as if I were loth to part with it? what need I take so much care for my life? since if I loose my life I know it shall be well with me: If God slay me, I will trust in him. But rather on the contrary putting the life into the hand may note a mans readinesse to die; And so here Iob might say that he put his life in his hand, either because he was in a manner a dying man, ready every moment as I may say to lay down his life, or else because he was so willing and desirous to die, and to give up his life. It is a phrase frequent in the Scripture, concerning which see the Note. Iudg. 12. 3. But now the first clause, *wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* is farre more obscure; but the most probable expositions that I meet with are these. 1. Some conceive that it was an ordinary proverbiall speech in those times to say of those that were desirous to die, that *they took their flesh in their teeth*, meaning that they were so weary of their lives, that they could find in their hearts to tear themselves in pieces, thereby as it were to open a passage to let forth their souls: and that therefore, as in relation to the frequent professions he had made how earnestly desirous he was to die, he asketh his friends here, *wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my hand?* that is, wherefore am I so eagerly desirous to die? think you that I speak it as out of despair? No such matter, No, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, as he adds in the next words. 2. Some hold that because men that are inwardly enraged and tormented in their minds are wont to tear their own flesh with their teeth, or at least to pine and consume away, and so in that sense may be said to eat their own flesh, as it is said of the slothfull fool that starveth himself with mere idlenesse, Eccles. 4. 5. *He foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh*, therefore Iob useth these expressions as by way of checking himself for being so immoderately disquieted in his mind for any thing, which either his friends said or he suffered: *wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* &c. as if he had said, why should I thus pine my self with grief, and eat up mine own flesh with sorrow, or why do I thus vex and fret and torment my self, as one that in the indignation and anguish of his soul is ready to tear his own flesh, and to give up the ghost? there is no cause at all why I should doe thus, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, and 3. Again some think that the ground of these expressions was, either because his flesh was so chapt and broken in severall places that he might bite out pieces with his teeth, or because he was so wasted, that all his flesh would scarce make one mouthfull, or else rather because his pain and misery was many times so extreme and insupportable, that ever and anon it made him ready to tear his flesh with his teeth, and so the meaning of these words, *wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* &c, must be that he desired to know of his friends either why such grievous intolerable punishments should be laid upon him, if as they said God did only punish wicked men, since he was not conscious to himself of any such horrible wickednesse that he had committed, or why he might not desire to plead his cause with God, since it was evident he did not complain without great cause.

Verf. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: &c.* That is, though I were at the

the point of death yet would I trust in him for help; yea though I were sure that God would slay me, yet would I rely upon his mercy, in full expectation that thereby I should only be brought to a better life. Now this he adds, either by way of checking himself for his former impatience, and resolving from henceforth what he would doe; or else to imply how strange it was, that notwithstanding this his trust and confidence in God he should be so severely dealt with; or to shew that though his miseries made him complain sometimes very bitterly, yet he did not despair of Gods love to him; or else to proove that he was not a wicked wretch as they pretended he was. And therefore is that too which he next adds, *but I will maintain mine own wayes before him*, that is, though I will rely upon his mercy whatever he doth to me, yet I will plead my cause and maintain mine innocency before him, and that in the integrity and sincerity of mine heart, as knowing that he searcheth the heart and the reins.

Verf. 16. *He also shall be my salvation, &c.*] That is, I know he will preserve me in these miseries, and in his good time deliver me from them, or at least that he will save me eternally hereafter. As for the following clause, *for an hypocrite shall not come before him*, that is added to shew a reason why he would maintain his waies before God, as he had said in the foregoing verse, namely, because he knew well that if he were an hypocrite God would not endure him; and this his friends had charged him with chap. 8. 13.

Verf. 18. *Behold now, I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.*] That is, now I have examined mine own conscience, and have weighed and digested what I shall say in mine own defence, whereas you condemn me for a wicked hypocrite, I know that herein God will justifie me: and so indeed it proved at last when God passed that sentence against his friends, chap. 42. 7. *ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Iob hath.*

Verf. 19. *Who is he that will plead with me? &c.*] That is, trusting therefore in the unquestionable justice of my cause, let who will undertake to plead with me, I am here ready to defend my self against them: But however plead I must my cause with God; *for now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost*, that is, being provoked and vexed, as I have been with the opprobrious speeches you have used against me, if I should not ease the grief of my heart by speaking, it would burst within me and so kill me.

Verf. 20. *Only do not two things unto me; then will I not hide my self from thee.*] That is, then shall I have no cause to hide my self from thee, then shall I not shrink from appearing before thee, but shall boldly come into thy presence to plead my cause. Now the *two things* he desires of God are those expressed in the following verse, to wit, the one that God would free him from the present miseries that lay upon him, wherewith being oppressed, distracted and disturbed it was not possible he should, with that freedom of mind as was fitting, intend what he should say and order his speech aright before God; and the other that God would secure him from the terrours of his majesty and power for the future, which alone was enough to overwhelm a man with fear, and to make the most eloquent man as one that is dumb and not able to speak a word. I know that some

learned Expositours do otherwise understand this place, namely, that the two things, which Iob here desired that God would not doe to him, were either 1. That he would not smite and dispute with him together; or 2. That he would not punish before he made known the cause why he did it, and that when the cause was made known he might have free liberty to answer for himself before he proceeded any farther against him; and accordingly the last words they understand thus, *then will I not hide my self from thee*; that is, then shall I willingly undergoe whatever thou shalt be pleased to lay upon me. But doubtlesse the first exposition is farre the best: that which he desires here is the very same he desired before chap. 9. 34. concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 22. *Then call thou and I will answer, or let me speak and answer thou me.*] That is, do thou call me to an account and object against me, and I will answer for my self, or else let me object and do thou answer; and thus he speaks as one willing to give his adversary all the advantage he can desire: A speech that hath so much boldnesse in it, that though no doubt it proceeded from a holy courage and confidence of his own integrity, yet withall methinks it argued that his passions were stirred, and had transported him beyond the bounds of that modesty, which should have been in him that pleaded with the great Creatour of heaven and earth.

Verf. 23. *How many are mine iniquities and sins? &c.*] Zophar had said, that if God would yield to speak to Iob, he could soon make him see that he had exacted lesse of him then his iniquity had deserved, chap. 11. 5, 6. and verf. 14. *If iniquity, saith he, be in thine hand put it farre away, and let not wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacles.* Iob therefore beginning here his plea with God, desires in the first place to know what those manifold and grievous sins were, which his friends seemed to charge him with, for which such sore and grievous punishments were laid upon him; implying that though his friends were still unsatisfied after all his protestations of his innocency, yet he was not conscious to himself of any such thing: and that if it were otherwise he desired it might be discovered fully to Gods glory and his shame, that he might repent, &c. See the Notes chap. 10. verf. 2, and 7. where there are expressions much to the same purpose with this.

Verf. 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?*] That is, canst thou think it will be any glory for thee to contend with such a poor weak wretch as I am, no more able to stand before thine indignation, then a leaf can stand before the wind or dry stubble before the fire? And thus too by the mention of his exceeding frailty and weaknesse he covertly seeks to move God to deal more gently with him.

Verf. 26. *For thou writest bitter things against me, &c.*] To shew that notwithstanding he was but as a leaf or dry stubble before God, yet God did set himself to break and destroy him, he sets forth here with what violence and severity he proceeded against him; *Thou writest bitter things against me*, that is, thou hast adjudged me to most grievous punishments, and such as seem to be the effects of a mind exceedingly embittered against me; for in this expression of writing bitter things against him, he seems to allude to the custome of Iudges in those times, who

who used to write down the judgement they passed against offenders, aggravating therein the offences for which they were so allotted to be punished, and then read it in publick when they came to pronounce sentence against them; which may seem the more probable if we compare this with other places, as that Ier. 22. 30. *Thus saith the Lord, write this man childlesse, &c.* and that Psal. 149. 8, 9. *To bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgement written;* As for the following clause *and makest me to possesse the iniquities of my youth*, that is also added to set forth the severity of Gods proceeding against him; and the meaning is, either that Gods dealing with him was as if he meant to make him bear now at once the punishment of all the sins that ever he had committed, even the iniquities of his youth, which he had long agoe repented of, and which by reason of the ignorance and imprudencie of that age are usually accounted most pardonable; or else rather that by the strange and grievous punishments he had laid upon him he made all his sins even those of his youth, which he had in a manner forgotten, to come fresh to his remembrance, and there to lie continually grating upon his conscience, which did with great terrour ever and anon suggest, that surely God had not pardoned those sins but did now call him to an account for them.

Verf. 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly to all my paths.*] Still Iob goeth on to shew that God proceeded with much severity against him as against some notable malefactor; for by putting his feet in the stocks, and looking narrowly to all his paths is meant, that God had brought him into such streights of afflictions, and had so hemmed him in with divers calamities, as if either he were afraid he should escape out of his hands, and so meant to make sure of him in that regard, or that he meant to look narrowly to him, to see that he should no way get any liberty or ease.

Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.] Either this is added as in relation to the foregoing clause concerning the putting of his feet in the stocks, namely that hereby there was a print made in his feet, the stocks eating into his flesh; and the meaning then is only this, that he bore in his flesh the impressions of Gods wrath, the marks of those pinching streights whereinto God had cast him, which it is like he meant of the sores and ulcers wherewith his body was overspread from head to foot; or else the drift of these words is to imply, that God did hunt him as it were, and follow him so close that he did in a manner tread upon his heels, even as prisoners have their keepers still close at their heels that they may not escape.

Verf. 28. *And he as a rotten thing consumeth, &c.*] That is, Iob; (for he speaks here of himself in the third person) as if he should have said, And thus poor Iob soon consumes away, as a rotten thing or as a moth-eaten garment; the drift whereof is covertly to imply, that there was no need that God should proceed with such violence against him, since an easier stroke would quickly make an end of him, and so withall to intreat God to take pitty of him.

CHAP. XIV.

Verf. 1. **M***An that is born of a woman is of few daies and full of trouble.*] He saith not *Man is of few daies*, but, *Man that is born of a woman*, which words are added. 1. To note that this is the condition of all mankind, every mothers child, none excepted, according to that Matth. 11. 11. *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater then Iohn the Baptist*, and 2. To note what the cause is why man is of such a fading, weak, and miserable condition, to wit, because he hath his originall from such a poor, weak, frail creature as woman is. Though man was weakned by sin as well as woman, yet because a greater degree of weaknesse was inflicted upon woman as a punishment of sin, (in regard whereof the Apostle Peter calls the woman *the weaker vessel*, 1 Pet. 3. 7.) therefore mans being born of a woman is made the chief ground of mans frailty; having his descent from one, who being defiled with sin lyeth under the curse of bearing so many weaknesse and sorrows, no marvell though he be born a poor, weak, helplesse creature, *few of daies and full of trouble*. Now this which Iob here saith of the frailty and misery of man, he speaks it as in reference to himself, thereby still to imply that he was fitter to be an object of pity and compassion, then of such fury and indignation as God had shown against him.

Verf. 3. *And doest thou open thine eyes upon such an one? &c.*] Though these words may be taken in a generall sense, to wit, that it was much that God should vouchsafe to look towards such a poor, base wretch as man is, either by way of favour to watch over him for his preservation, and to provide for him, or in any other respect (and therefore some understand it thus, that he acknowledged it a singular favour, that so miserable a wretch as he was should be admitted to stand and plead his cause before him, to which also they apply the following clause, *and bringest me into judgement with thee?*) yet considering both what went before and what follows after, it is more likely that Iob speaks here of Gods opening his eyes upon him to search into his sins, and to see how he might punish him for his transgressions; for as men are said to wink at a man when they will not take notice of what he hath done amisse that they might punish him for it, so they may be said to open their eyes upon a man, when they set themselves strictly to enquire into their offences and to bring them into judgement; and accordingly the meaning of these words seems to be this, that it was strange that God should think such a poor despicable creature as man is worthy his anger; or that he should so farre mind him as to take vengeance on him for his sins.

Verf. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*] That is, there is not one born of sinfull parents after the manner of men, but he must needs be sinfull as they are; or not one who can any way procure, that he that is born of parents polluted with originall sin should not himself be polluted and unclean: yea and it may referre to mens actions too, that a man unclean by nature cannot bring forth any clean thing, that is, any clean action; what sinfull man doth must needs be sinfull. Now this Iob adds. 1. To abase himself, and to make his heart stoop

stoop under the severity of Gods proceedings with him, since being so unclean it was no wonder though the most holy God should lay his hand so heavy upon him: and 2. To intimate that though God might most justly condemne such a filthy wretch as he was, if he should examine him according to the rigour of his righteous judgement (and by this implied confession of his spirituall uncleanness he did covertly condemne his friends, who charged him with saying that he was perfectly righteous and pure from sin) yet considering this was the inevitable condition of all men, who must needs be sinfull because they came out of the loins of sinfull parents, therefore he hoped and desired, that God would take compassion of him and not deal in such extremity with him.

Verf. 5. *Seeing his daies are determined, &c.*] This plea of Iobs is much like that of the Psalmist, Psal. 89. 46, 47. *Shall thy wrath burn like fire? Remember how short my time is, &c.* to wit, that since God had appointed that man should die, as the just reward of his sins, and had determined the set time of his death, which could not be farre off, he would therefore let that suffice, and not make that little time he had to live so extremely irksome with insupportable miseries; which is that he desires in the following verse.

Verf. 6. *Turn from him that he may rest, &c.*] An expression much like that, chap. 7. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from him?* as if he had said, Mark not so strictly what he is, or what he hath done, meddle not with him but let him be quiet, take off thine heavy hand and let him spend his daies peaceably without molestation, till he shall accomplish as an hireling his daies, that is, till he hath finished the time appointed him for his living here to serve thee in his generation, which being as the daies of an hireling, full of hard travell and sorrow, his coming to the period thereof must needs be welcome and acceptable to him. See the Note chap. 7. 2.

Verf. 7. *For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, &c.*] The plea he useth here is this, If it were possible for a man after death to live again here in this world, as a tree cut down will sprout up again, the hope that his life then might be more comfortable would enable him the more patiently to bear his present sufferings. But alas there is no hope of this. A tree indeed though it be felled down to the ground, yet may sprout out with fresh tender branches again.

Verf. 8. *Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground.*] That is, though the root through age be in a manner withered and shrunk, and no sign of life appear in the stock.

Verf. 9. *Yet through the sent of water it will bud and spring forth boughs like a plant.*] That is, like a young tree newly planted. As for that expression, *through the sent of water it will bud*, either thereby he intended to shew by what means the roots of such a tree may be as it were revived again, to wit, that if it be watered it will bud forth a-fresh, or else it is used to shew how little a thing will cause it to sprout out again, to wit, that if any moisture comes but near it, if it doe as it were but smell the waters, it will suck in moisture and sap, and grow up with new tender branches.

Verf. 10. *But man dieth and wasteth away; yea man giveth up the ghost, and where*

where is he?] As if he should have said, there's no hope of his living again here in this world: concerning which see the Note, chap. 7. 9. Indeed in the severall tearms that are here used to expresse mans dying and the order of them, there is some difficulty. Some conceive that in the first words, *But man dieth and wasteth away*, by mans dying is meant the same that is afterwards tearmed giving up the ghost, and then by wasting away is meant either his wasting away by sicknesse, (and if so then there is an *hysteron proteron* in the words, as if he had said, Man dieth being wasted away with sicknesse,) or else rather his wasting away by death, as if he had said, man dieth, and then consumes and rots away. But others take dying and wasting away in the first clause to be but preparatories and antecedents to mans giving up the ghost, which the particle *yea* seems to confirm, *man dieth and wasteth away*, that is, man decayeth and wasteth away by degrees, death creeping upon him daily by little and little, *yea*, at last *man giveth up the ghost* and then, *where is he?*

Verf. 11. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up.*] By *the sea* here may be meant any great confluence of waters; for such are usually in the Scriptures called seas, as for instance that which is called *the lake of Genesareth* Luke 5. 1. is also called *the sea of Tiberias*, Ioh. 21. 1. But however the greatest difficulty here is what is meant by the waters failing from the sea and the floods decaying and drying up; and to what purpose it is here alledged: Some understand it thus, that *as when the waters fail from the sea*, that is, when the sea fails to send forth waters through the pores of the earth unto the rivers, then the rivers and floods decay and dry up; so the naturall and radicall moisture being spent in a man, he dies, as it is expressed in the following verse, and so is laid in the bed of his grave. Again others give this to be the meaning of it, that as when the waters fail or passe away from the sea or rivers, to wit, either by evaporation, or by running over the banks into the land, or by gliding away in their severall channels, or by soaking into the earth and so drying up in times of great heat and drouth, these very waters thus failing or passing away do never return to their places again; so it is with man when he dies, he is taken away, and there is no possibility of his returning to his place again; for so it follows in the next verse.

Verf. 12. *So man lyeth down and riseth not, till the heavens be no more, &c.*] This phrase *till the heavens be no more* may be taken two severall waies, to wit, either that man being once laid in the grave shall never rise again, namely to live again here in this world, and that because the heavens shall for ever continue, whence is that expression Psal. 89. 29. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the daies of heaven*, and verf. 36, 37. *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me, &c.* or else that he shall not rise again till the generall Resurrection, when it may be said, that *the heavens shall be no more*, because if they shall not be wholly dissolved, yet at least they shall be so farre changed, that they shall be no more the same heavens that they were before, according to that Psal. 102. 26. *all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*, and that of the Apostle. 2 Pet. 3. 12, 13. *The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; never-*

verthelesse we according to his promise look for new heavens, &c.

Verf. 13. *O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret untill thy wrath be past, &c.*] 1. Many Expositours understand this of Iobs desiring to die, that he might be freed from those heavy effects of Gods wrath that now he endured, and be laid in the grave, (where he should be sure to be shelterd from all storms) till the indignation of God against him were over; and that the following words *that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me*, are either a farther enlarging of this his request, namely that God would appoint him a set time when he would lodge him in that longed-for bed of his grave, and that at that set appointed time he would not fail to remember to hide him there; (and if so we understand these words, it was unadvised passion and not grace that was breathed forth in this desire) or else are added to imply his expectation of being raised up again at the last day; and so the meaning of the words they take to be this, that in regard of the grievous calamities that he now suffered, he was most desirous to die, only then withall he desired, that God would not cast him off in the grave, but set him a time wherein he would remember him in mercy, and raise him up again, to wit, at the day of the generall Resurrection. 2. Others do otherwise understand these words, to wit, that Iob having before said, that when man dieth he is irrecoverably cut off from living any more in this world, he professeth here that were it not for that he should be glad with all his heart that he might dy, and be laid up in the grave, because there he should be hidden as it were from the wrath of God that now he endured, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, untill thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me*; as if he should have said, so that I might be laid in the grave only for a time, and that God would appoint me a set time, wherein he would not fail to remember me in mercy and to raise me up again to live here in a more comfortable condition, even as the stocks of trees that are cut down, that seem in the winter to lye dead in the ground, and yet in the Spring do sprout out afresh, then it would be a pleasure to me, to die, and to be laid up in the grave. And indeed this I conceive is more probable, then some judge it to be. 1. Because he speaks of Gods appointing him a set time, which seems to intend a prefixed time for his rising again in particular, namely to live here in this world, and cannot well be understood of that day which God hath appointed for the generall Resurrection of all mankind. 2. Because he speaks of it, as of a most unlikely and improbable thing, which he could rather wish then believe, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, &c.* and 3. Because this well agrees with the generall scope of Iobs speech in this place. 3. Some take it thus, that he desires that God would at a set time appointed lay him up in his grave, in the chambers of death; only he would not that God should then quite cast him off, but desires that God should even there remember him. And whereas according to this exposition he should desire death, without any expression of his desire to be raised up again from the grave; to this it is answered, that he speaks as a man distracted so with sorrowes, that he asks of God he well knows not what; eased he would be of his trouble, and out of his desire of that, he wisheth what came next to mind or lay uppermost in

his thoughts; let God hide him in the grave, or doe what he would with him to free him from his sad estate, so he did not utterly forget him. And lastly by *the grave* may be meant any place under ground, where he might be hidden a-live; such as were those caves and dens in the earth where the Saints in times of persecution were wont to hide themselves, and so were for the time as men buried a-live. Heb. 11. 36; and so then his desire is only, that he might be hidden somewhere under ground, where he might be in safe custody out of the reach of those troubles that now annoyed him, till the indignation of God were over, and that then at a time prefixed God would remember him and fetch him forth again. But which way soever we take these words, most probable it is that he useth this phrase of being hid in the grave, in allusion to the custome of those Eastern countries, where they used in those times to have great caves or vaults for their sepulchers or burying places, whereinto in times of danger they were wont to run and hide themselves.

Verf. 14. *If a man die, shall he live again? All the daies of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.*] As the former words so these also are divers waies expounded by Interpreters. Some say that the change here meant is that which Iob had wished or desired in the foregoing verse, to wit, his being raised out of the grave after he had been hidden there for a time, to live again here in this world; and accordingly they conceive that the first words were spoken by way of admiration, *If a man die, shall he live again?* Is that possible? and then that the next words were added as the Resolution of Iob upon this supposition, as if he should have said, Could this be, or let this be granted, and then surely *all the daies of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*, that is, I will willingly wait all the set time allotted for my abode in the grave, untill the change shall come of my being raised up again from thence; and thus they say he spake in reference to his foregoing words, *O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me*. Again others conceive that he speaks here of his change at the generall Resurrection of the dead; and so they take the first words to be spoken, either of mans living again in this world, and the interrogation to be a vehement negation, *If a man die, shall he live again?* No, I know he shall not; it is altogether impossible; and that thereupon he adds, *All the daies of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*; as if he had said, I am not therefore afraid to die, there being no fear of returning hither again after death, again to endure the miseries of this present world, but will gladly wait all my appointed time till my change at the Resurrection of the dead shall come; or else of mans living again at the day of judgement; and of those that understand it thus, some hold that the interrogation doth here intend an affirmation of that concerning which the question is propounded, *If a man die, shall he live again?* as if he had said, I know he shall, there will a day come when God will raise him up and restore him to life again; whereupon he inferres that he would wait in expectation of this blessed change, *All the daies of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*; and others conceive that it is spoken by way of doubting, and accordingly they make this to be the drift of the words, to wit, that the first words contain the temptation wherewith Iob was tempted, namely that

that he questioned whether man being dead could ever rise again, *If a man die, shall he live again?* Is this possible? and then that the next clause contains the Resolution of his faith overcoming that temptation, *All the daies of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*, as if he had said, yes I know there shall a change come after death, when they that are dead shall rise and live again, and so corruption shall put on incorruption, and therefore all my appointed time I will wait till that change shall come. But last of all there is another exposition, which to me seems best, as best agreeing with other foregoing passages, namely that by his appointed time here is meant the time allotted him of God for his living here in this world, according to that he had said before vers. 5. *His daies are determined, the number of his moneths are with thee, &c.* and so the sense of the words is this, that since being dead there was no hope of living again here in this world, there was nothing for him to doe but all his appointed time to wait upon God till his change come, that is, till God should be pleased to deliver him from this sad condition wherein he now lived, and put him into a more prosperous estate, or rather till the time of his departure out of this world was come, when he doubted not but God would receive him to his mercy.

Vers. 15. *Thou shalt call and I will answer thee, thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* That is, out of the love thou bearest me as thy creature, and much more as one in whom thou hast renewed thine own image, thou wilt not cast me off forever, but wilt receive me again unto thy self; which is spoken in reference to the former clause, *Thou shalt call and I will answer thee*, of which also there are severall expositions given by Interpreters, answerable to those they give of the foregoing verses; for 1. Some take it to be spoken as in reference to that which they conceive he intended vers. 13. where he speaks of his being hid for a time in the grave, namely that if that might be so, if God would hide him for a time till his indignation were over, and then would remember him in mercy again, then when God should call him forth, he would readily come forth unto him, hoping to live here in his favour again. 2. Some understand this also of the Resurrection, *Thou shalt call*, that is, thou shalt command me to arise from the dead, *and I will answer thee*, that is, I shall as in obedience to thy command readily arise and present my self before thee, not needing then to fear thy face as hypocrites will; and indeed though this phrase of Gods calling him, may be used in reference to the manner of Gods raising men from the dead, concerning which the Apostle saith, 1. Theff. 4. 16. *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, &c.* yet by the call of God may be meant simply the will and command of God, as where it is said that God called for a famine upon the land, Psal. 105. 16. that is, he commanded a famine to be in the land; and so our Saviour speaks of the Resurrection, Ioh. 5. 28. *The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, &c.* and 3. Some understand it of Gods calling him out of this world by death, and so conceive that Iob here professeth his readinesse to yield to Gods call herein, and that because he knew God would one day remember him in mercy and not utterly cast off the work of his own hands.

Verf. 16. *For now thou numbrest my steps, &c.*] This is added as a reason why he so earnestly desired to die, or to be hid in the grave, as he had said verf. 13. till Gods wrath and indignation was over; or why he had besought God that he would withdraw his hand and let him finish his daies in peace, verf. 6. namely because God did now at present proceed with such severity against him, as one that took strict notice of all his waies, that not one sin of his might scape unpunished. See chap. 10. 14. To which purpose also is that which follows in the next verse, of Gods sealing up his transgressions in a bag, that is, his laying them up in store, as evidences and indictments against him; of which see the Note, Deuter. 32. 34.

Verf. 18. *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought; and the rock is removed out of his place, &c.*] The drift of these words is either 1. To imply that God proceeded with as much fury and violence against him, as when he overturns mountains and removes rocks out of their places, &c. or 2. To intimate that if the strongest creatures, and those that seem most stedfastly settled in their places, cannot stand before the indignation of the Lord, much lesse could poor, weak man stand before it, and that therefore God needed not proceed with such overbearing violence against him as he now did; or 3. To bewail his continuing so long in so great miseries, that when the strongest creatures were not able to stand before Gods power when he meant to bring them to nought, and so the hope of man was destroyed by his hand, as is expressed in the last clause of the 19 verse, that is, all things wherein vain men hope, or all the vain things wherein men are wont to hope, yet he a poor, weak creature should hold out against so many and great afflictions, and live in the midst of so many deaths, or 4. To renew his old request that he might die, that since all things, even those that were the most like to continue, were often removed and wasted out of their place, so he desired it might also be with him; or 5. To intimate his fear lest his patience should fail, and thereupon to desire that God would in pity release him, *surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, &c.* as if he had said, mountains and rocks will fail, and how much sooner may my patience fail? *My strength is not the strength of stones*, as he had said before, chap. 6. 12. and therefore either remove my afflictions or remove me out of this world; or 6. To shew that God proceeding so severely against him, and not suffering any sin of his to passe unpunished (as he had said in the foregoing verses) as other creatures, that seem more surely settled then man is, do utterly perish by the mighty power of God, so it must needs be with man, he also must needs be cut off irrecoverably, *The mountain* (saith Iob) *falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place*, to wit, sometimes by extraordinary earth-quakes, sometimes by the violence of great floods and inundations of waters, *the waters wear the stones*, by continuall beating and dropping upon them, *thou wastest away the things that grow out of the dust*, namely when rivers or seas overflowing or breaking through the banks, do with a mighty torrent sweep away all before them, *and thou destroyest the hope of man*, that is, and thus after the same manner is man cut off and destroyed by death, and that as concerning any hope of living again here in this world irrecoverably; and this I conceive most probable

ble to have been the drift of Iob in these words, being the same in effect with that which he had said before vers. 11; 12.

Vers. 20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him and he passeth; thou changeest his countenance and sendest him away.*] That is, it is alwaies thus, be a man never so strong, die he must; if thou contendest with him, he must needs sink under thine hand and that irrecoverably, it being altogether impossible that he should resist the stroke of thine hand; his comelineffe and beauty thou soon turnest into a ghastly ashy paleness, and so sendest him packing out of this world.

Vers. 21. *His sons come to honour and he knoweth it not, &c.*] This may be meant either of man after death, as in reference to what he had said immediately before concerning mans passing away out of this world, to wit, that after that he never knoweth more what is done here in this world; whether his children live in prosperity or misery, it is all one to him, for he knoweth not how it fares with them: and then it is added to shew how absolutely men are by death cut off from all possible communion with those that remain behind them: Or else it may be meant of man when he is dying, to wit, either that through the anguish and extremity of pain and misery which he endures, he regards no earthly thing how nearly soever it concerns him; be his children in a prosperous or in a mean condition, he minds it not, it works in him neither joy nor sorrow, or else that this is one part of his misery, that dying he knoweth not what shall become of his children.

Vers. 22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.*] Those Expositours that understand the foregoing words of man after death, must needs find it too difficult to give a reason how after that this should come in, *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, &c.* Yet two severall waies they alledge how this may be inferred upon that which went before, though so understood, for 1. Some take the words to be a figurative and poetical expression of the sad condition of a man cut off by death, *his flesh upon him shall have pain*, (alluding to the worms gnawing the flesh of his body) and *his soul within him shall mourn*, that is, it shall be disquieted and grieved, because it is parted from the body; it is, say they, such a poetical expression, as that afterward chap. 21. 33. where it is said of man in the grave, *the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him*: and 2. Some make the connexion thus, that having said in the former verse, that man after death knoweth nothing what is done in the world, this that follows is added in this sense, *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn*, as if he should have said, But yet whilst he lives he shall have pain and sorrow; and therefore any man may judge whether it were not better for me to die then to live. But now understand the foregoing words of man dying, and then the dependance of this upon that is easie and clear; There he had said that man dying minds not how it is, or knows not how it shall be with his children; whereto he adds now, *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn*, that is, he shall be wholly taken up with the thoughts and sense of his own misery, the pain and sorrow that lyes upon him.

CHAP. XV.

Verf. 1. **T**hen answered Eliphaz, &c.] The three friends of Iob having all objected what they could against Iob successively one after another, and Iob having severally answered them all, it came now to Eliphaz turn, who began first to speak, again to reply upon what Iob had answered.

Verf. 2. *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East wind?*] That is, is it seemly for a man that pretends to such wisdom and knowledge as you do, to talk so idly and foolishly, so furiously, and presumptuously, and mischievously as you have done? for he alludes to those words of Iob wherein he seemed to condemn them of folly, at least to maintain that his knowledge was every way as much as theirs, chap. 13. 2. *What ye know, the same doe I know also, I am not inferiour unto you,* and again verf. 5. *Oh that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdom.* He compares Iobs words to the wind, to imply 1. That they had been vain and unprofitable, and nothing to the purpose, there was no substance and solidity in them, but they were merely a blast of words, which soon vanished and came to nothing, and 2. That they had been turbulent, violent, and furious, and uttered with a great deal of heat and choller; and he mentions *the East wind* particularly rather than any other, because that wind used to be in those countries most raging and tempestuous, and withall because it was usually very hurtfull to their corn, and fruit, and other things, as we use also to say, that the wind in the East is neither good for man nor beast, and so thereby Eliphaz might intend to imply also, that his words had been mischievous and hurtfull both to others and to himself, pernicious to others by way of ill example, and hurtfull to himself, in that they must needs blast all the hopes he might otherwise have had of Gods delivering him out of his miseries. In Iobs first answer to Eliphaz he had taken exceptions against him for slighting what he had spoken, as if there had been no weight of reason in any thing he had said, and that in these terms, chap. 6. 26. *Doe ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?* (concerning which see the Note there) Now as Bildad did immediately twit him with this, retorting upon him that very expression, chap. 8. 2. *How long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?* (where also see the Note) so likewise Eliphaz here remembring it seems those words of Iob, when he came now to speak again upbraids him with the same words, *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East wind?* as if he had said, you were not pleased that I esteemed your words no better then wind; but I pray what have your words ever since been better then so? A wise man one would think should never utter such vain and unprofitable things as you have spoken; and it is like he meant this of those passages in Iobs speech, where he had complained of Gods dealing so hardly with him, and where he had wished that God would hide him for a time in the grave, chap. 14. 14. and others of the like nature. As for that expression of filling his belly with the East wind, the meaning is, either that he did feed

feed and please himself with such windy frothy discourse, or rather that he did first conceive such things in his mind, and then afterward uttered them.

Verf. 4. *Tea thou castest off fear and restrainest prayer before God.*] Some Expositours understand this thus, that by many things that he had spoken he had in a manner laid a foundation of Atheisme, that men should neither fear God nor call upon his name; for if that were true which he had said, chap. 9. 22. that *God destroyeth the perfect as well as the wicked*, and so chap. 12. 6. that *the tabernacles of robbers prosper and they that provoke God are secure*, &c. who then would fear God or pray unto him? yea and some adde, that by his speaking so irreverently to God he had hereby given evil example unto others, after the same manner to cast off the fear of God, and in stead of praying to God to contend with him. But I conceive the meaning to be plainly this, that he chargeth Iob with casting off fear and restraining prayer before God, because he had spoken to God in such a bold and presumptuous manner, as if he had been speaking to one of his fellows, and in stead of humbling himself before God; and craving mercy and pardon, he had stood upon tearms of justifying himself, and had as it were challenged God, that he might argue with him and plead his cause before him.

Verf. 5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, &c.*] That is, thy mouth discovers and blazons abroad that base wickednesse and iniquity that is in thine heart, according to that of our Saviour, Matth. 12. 34, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*. And this is added as a proof of what he had said in the foregoing verse, to wit, that Iob had cast off the fear of God; as is likewise that which follows *and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty*, that is, thou dost wittingly talk in a crafty manner; and the craft Eliphaz intends is, either that he did in an hypocritical manner cunningly cover over the iniquity of his heart, to wit, by speaking at some times very modestly and humbly, though at other times he was ready as it were to fly in Gods face, as in those passages chap. 6. 24. *Teach me and I will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred*, and chap. 7. 20. *I have sinned; what shall I doe unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* and chap. 9. 2. *How should man be just with God?* or else rather that in a mere cavilling way he had hitherto sought to make good an evil cause.

Verf. 7. *Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?*] In these words Eliphaz seems to have respect to that which Iob had said chap. 12. 2, 3. *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you, but I have understanding as well as you. I am not inferiour to you; yea who knoweth not such things as these?* and to that verf. 12. of the same chapter, *with the ancients is wisdom, and in length of days understanding*: for apprehending that Iob had spoken those words, in a way of exalting himself in regard of his knowledge, and in regard of his age above them, and as thinking scorn that they should therefore compare themselves with him, and that thence it was also that he had sent them to learn knowledge of the brut beasts, chap. 12. 7. *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee*, &c. hereupon he now replies to this in a way of scoffing, *Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?* as if he should have said, what do you make of your self that you take so much upon you in regard of your knowledge, and in

regard of your years? Sure you were the first man that ever was born in the world, yea perhaps you were before the creation, and so are older then the hills, and having therefore lived in all the ages of the world, it is no wonder though you have gotten so much knowledge, that we are counted no better then fooles in comparison of you. Thus I say almost all Expositours understand these words; only indeed some conceive that Iobs friends were older then he, which they ground upon that which follows vers. 10. and that therefore Eliphaz could not suspect that Iob despised them because of his great age, but that rather he twits him on the contrary, because being younger then they, yet he vaunted himself in his great knowledge, as if he had been the first man that ever was upon the earth, and had been ever since treasuring up knowledge, and so must needs understand more then ever man did.

Vers. 8. *Hast thou heard the secret of God? &c.*] As if he should have said, hath God made you of his privy counsell, and so thereby admitted you to the knowledge of those secrets, which no man knows besides your self? whereupon he adds also, *and dost thou restrain wisdom to thy self?* that is, have you think you all the wisdom? and are all fools besides your self? and in the following verse, *what knowest thou which we know not? &c.* in all which Eliphaz doth plainly retort upon Iob what he had before said to them, chap. 12. 2, 3. *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you; but I have understanding as well as you, &c.* and chap. 13. 2. *what ye know, the same do I know also, &c.*

Vers. 10. *With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy father.*] Still he seems to aime at that which Iob had said, chap. 12. 12. *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of daies understanding;* but the meaning may be, either that some of these his friends were much elder then his father was, or then his father would have been, had he been still living (and it may be Eliphaz intended himself, who we may well think was the eldest of the three, because he spake first) or else that though they themselves were younger then Iob, yet he had no cause to despise them as he had done, since they had in their severall habitations many on their side, of their party and opinion, yea many masters and teachers, from whom they had received those truths which they had maintained, that were so very aged, that his father was younger then some of them.

Vers. 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?*] That is, say some Expositours, dost thou esteem the consolations of God such mean and contemptible things, that we should propound them to wicked men, such as thou art, or that thou shouldest think they belong to thee? No, surely; such holy things are not to be given to dogs; only perhaps you know something which others know not, or have some secret righteousness, which questionlesse none can discern in you but your self, and hence it is that you will not be beaten off from applying the comforts of God unto your self. But doubtlesse the true meaning of these words is, that Eliphaz here upbraids Iob for slighting the consolations of God, to wit, those which himself, and his other two friends had as from God propounded to him; that if he would repent of his wickednesse, and humbling himself under Gods hand would forsake his evil waies, and beg mercy

of him, God would then pardon his sins, remove the judgements that now lay upon him, and abundantly blesse him again. Iob had told them in expresse termes, chap. 13. 4. that they were *forgers of lies and Physicians of no value*: and happily in relation to that Eliphaz here upbraids him for despising those divine consolations wherewith they had sought to doe him good; *Are, saith he, the consolations of God small with thee?* as if he should have said, we have propounded the only way of comfort for one in your condition that God hath prescribed, and do you make so little account of the consolations of God? and thereupon he adds too, *Is there any secret thing with thee?* that is, doest thou know any better way of comfort, (which perhaps neither we, nor our fathers, nor any man else ever knew or heard of,) whereupon thou despisest that to which we have advised thee? Or, hast thou any secret Priviledge or unknown worth in thee and so thou hast no need of these consolations? Or, is there any secret sin or guilt in thee, which makes thee unfit to receive the comforts that have been tendered thee? Or, doest thou know any thing unknown to others, by warrant whereof thou thinkest, notwithstanding all that we have said to thee, that God may justly be blamed for dealing too hardly and severely with thee?

Verf. 12. *Why doth thine heart carry thee away? &c.*] That is, why doth the pride of thy heart, or the passions of thy heart transport thee so farre as a man besides himself, even beyond the bounds both of reason and of that modesty and reverence, wherewith it becomes men to carry themselves when they speak to the Lord their Creatour? As for the following clause, *and what do thine eyes wink at?* it is very hard to say what is meant thereby; and therefore every Expositour almost gives a severall exposition of it. Some by his winking with his eyes understand his frowning, and looking with an angry, and fierce furious eye; others an hypocriticall looking demurely in a way of seeming holinesse, as if he were silently praying to God, or had his thoughts taken up with some serious, high, and heavenly meditations, when indeed there was no such thing; others his closing of his eyes against the truth of those things which they had delivered; others of his fleering and looking with a flouting and and scornfull eye, as David also describes the scornfull behaviour of his enemies, Psal. 35. 19. *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause*: and last of all others understand it thus, *and what doe thine eyes wink at?* that is, what dost thou look at? or what dost thou aime at (alluding to those that shooting at a mark are wont to wink with their eyes) that thou art thus overborn by thy passions, and carried out of the way? which exposition of all the rest I like the best, because of the following words that have dependance upon these.

Verf. 13. *That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words goe out of thy mouth?*] That is, that when God afflicts thee, thou shouldest thus with an imbittered spirit turn again upon him and contend with him, and so shouldest suffer such proud, desperate speeches to proceed out of thy mouth, justifying thy self, and blaming God for laying his hand so heavily upon thee.

Verf. 14. *What is man that he should be clean, &c.*] As if he had said, It cannot be that poor wretched man coming out of the loines of sinfull parents

rents can be righteous, and pure, and clean from sin. See the Note chap. 14. 4.

Verf. 15. *He putteth no trust in his saints; yea the heavens are not clean in his sight.*] That is, the Angels, the holy inhabitants of heaven; for Expositours do generally understand both branches of this verse of the Angels, and so make this place fully parallel with that chap. 4. 18. (concerning which see the Notes) and say that Eliphaz presseth this argument again upon Iob, as being confident that hitherto in all that he had spoken he had given no satisfactory answer thereto. And indeed that by the Saints of God in the first clause the holy Angels are meant is the more evident, because they are elsewhere called Gods Saints, Deut. 32. 2. *The Lord came from Sinai— and he came with ten thousands of Saints* (of which see the Note there) and because the Saints here spoken of are opposed to *man born of a woman* in the foregoing verse, and therefore cannot be meant of holy men. But for the second clause, *yea the heavens are not clean in his sight*, it is more questionable whether that may not be meant, both of the Angels inhabiting the heavens, and of the heavens themselves, in that though the heavens be of a bright, and clear, and pure substance, free from that earthliness and dregs that is in all sublunary bodies, yet they are unclean and impure in comparison of that perfect purity that is in God; and indeed it seems the more probable that it is so, because the like expression Bildad useth afterward concerning the stars, chap. 25. 5. *yea the stars, saith he, are not pure in his sight.*

Verf. 16. *How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?*] This expression which Eliphaz here useth implieth severall particulars concerning mans naturall inclination to sin, as 1. That men are prone to sin as naturally, familiarly, and readily as they are to eat when they are hungry, or to drink when they are thirsty. 2. That they are as greedy to sin, as a thirsty man is to pour down water, yea to exceed therein, and 3. That it is as pleasing and delightful to men to sin, as it is to a thirsty man to drink a draught of water; to which purpose the like expressions are used in other places, as chap. 34. 7. *What man is like Iob, who drinketh up scorning like water?* and Prov. 4. 17. *they eat the bread of wickednesse, and drink the wine of violence.*

Verf. 17. *Hear me, and that which I have seen I will declare, &c.*] That is, that which I have found true by experience; to which he adds in the next verse, that as he had observed this himself, so he had heard it also from many wise men, that had likewise received it by tradition from their fathers; *that which I have seen I will declare; which* (saith he verf. 18.) *wise men have told from their fathers and have not hid it.*

Verf. 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.*] To make it evident that those wise men, or their fathers mentioned in the foregoing verse, from whom by tradition they had received that truth which Eliphaz was now to deliver, were witnesses worthy of all credit and esteem, they are said here to have been such *unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them*; whereby may be meant, either that they were the first heads of the world, to wit, in the dayes immediately after Noah, concerning whom it might well be said, *that the earth was given unto them alone, and that no stranger passed among*

among them, because they had indeed the whole earth divided amongst themselves alone, and so there was no stranger amongst them, that is, none but such as were well known one to another (the people of the world being then but very few, so that there was no need why they should invade or molest one another) or no stranger of a different religion, by whom they might be corrupted with errors. Or else the meaning may be, that they were men so famous and highly esteemed both of God and man for their wisdom, justice, courage, and all other heroicall vertues, that *unto them alone the earth was given*, that is, the dominion of the severall lands where they lived was by the voluntary consent of the people, and the all-ruling providence of God given unto them, *and no stranger passed amongst them*, that is, they so ordered themselves in their government, and God was pleased also so to blesse their discreet, just, and holy endeavours, that no forreign enemy did break in upon them, or molest and trouble them, but the people lived under their government in peace and safety. Both these expositions are very agreeable to the drift of Eliphaz in this place; but if we understand them according to the last exposition, besides their principall drift which is to shew how unquestionable the Testimony of those men was, whom he had mentioned in the former verse, as assertours of the truth he was now to deliver; they do also covertly imply the falsehood of that which Iob had maintained, to wit, in that he affirms them to have been wise men and good governours *unto whom alone the earth was given*, which is in direct terms contrary to what Iob had said, chap. 9. 24. *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.*

Verf. 20. *The wicked man travelleth with pain all his daies, &c.* That is, he is continually in distresse and sorrow, sometimes because of the calamities that God brings upon him, but alwaies by terrours of conscience, and distracting fears: for here Eliphaz undertakes again to make good what he had before said, chap. 5. 3. to wit, that the Lord doth alwaies pour forth his wrath upon wicked men here in this world according to their demerits, as in direct opposition to that which Iob had said, chap. 12. 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure*; and to that end he alledgeth here the continuall distresse and anguish of spirit, wherein they live even in their greatest prosperity: to which he adds, *and the number of years is hidden to the oppressour*. Now though there be severall interpretations given of these words; Some taking them thus, that God hath in his secret counsell appointed to the oppressour how long he shall live, and when he will cut him off; and others thus, That God will cut short the years of the oppressour, he little knows how suddenly: yet even this also is alledged I conceive to the same end, *and the number of years is hidden to the oppressour*, that is, he is alwaies in fear not knowing how long he shall enjoy his prosperous estate, or how soon he shall be cut off; for though good men know not how long they have to live no more then wicked men, yet this is peculiar to wicked men, that they are in continuall perplexity of spirit concerning their end; and this is that which Eliphaz intends in these words. But however observable it is, that in setting forth the misery of wicked men herein, Eliphaz doth particularly insist on the fears of the oppressour; for herein he doth doubtlesse covertly strike at that particular sinne

whereof he thought Iob was guilty, as having been a great man and a man of authority in the place where he lived, as we see he afterward tells him in expresse terms, chap. 22. 6. *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing.*

Verf. 21. *A dreadfull sound is in his ears, &c.*] That is, He is troubled with the sad reports of near-approaching evils; or he is ever and anon affrighted, as if he heard some sound or noise of danger: wherein it is very likely that he aimed at that which Iob had bewailed in himself, to wit, that *God scared him with dreams, and terrified him with visions*, chap. 7. 14. As for the following clause, *in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him*, that I conceive is added to shew that there is reason enough why he should be afraid when he seems to be in the safest condition, namely, because even when he is in his greatest prosperity, he shall suddenly be destroyed.

Verf. 22. *He believeth not that he shall return out of darknesse, &c.*] That is, as in prosperity he fears a day of darknesse and distresse that is coming upon him, so when that day is come, there's no perswading him that he shall ever any more see better day, he utterly despairs that ever he shall be delivered from that misery and distresse, those troubles and fears that are come upon him; and to shew also that his fears herein are not groundlesse, he adds, *and he is waited for of the sword*, that is, in stead of being delivered from his present misery, there is indeed a sword waits for him to cut him off.

Verf. 23. *He wandreth abroad for bread, saying, where is it? &c.*] Though the meaning of this may be, that being brought to extreme poverty he wanders about to beg his bread, or seeks by any sinister means to supply his want, being anxious and full of care where to get bread to put into his mouth; yet the most and best Expositours understand it more generally, to wit, that the wicked man in his greatest prosperity, even through the terrours of his conscience, apprehending that an evil day is coming, doth hunt about to store up for himself with as much impatience and greedinesse, as if he were in danger to perish for hunger, and yet all the while his own heart tells him that all his endeavours will be in vain, misery and destruction will at length come upon him, which is that Eliphaz intends in the following words, *he knoweth that the day of darknesse is ready at his hand*, that is, he is confident that it is nigh at hand, and that it will not be long ere he shall be cut off.

Verf. 24. *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid, &c.*] That is, both outward troubles and inward terrours of conscience shall affright him; *they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battel*, that is, with an unresistable power; for kings when they go forth themselves in person to war, are wont to go out with mighty armies, and in the battel have usually the flowre and strength of the army with them, and so ordinarily they are a great terrour when they come, and bear down all before them with a mighty violence.

Verf. 25. *For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.*] Here Eliphaz gives the reason why God doth so severely punish the wicked man, as is expressed in the foregoing verses, namely, because by his opposing

opposing the people of God, by his bold blaspheming of God, by his scornfull vilifying his threatnings and judgements, and his desperate opposing the will of God in all things whatsoever, he doth in a manner set himself to fight against God. Now in expressing this in the second clause, he mentions God by this attribute the Almighty, and *strengtheneth himself against the Almighty*, purposely to imply the folly of such daring boldnesse in those presumptuous wretches that are not afraid to lift up their hand against him who is an almighty God, and able therefore to doe with them whatever he pleaseth.

Verf. 26. *He runneth upon him even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers.*] Many of our best Expositours understand this of God; for, say they, Eliphaz having in the former verse set forth the impudence of the wicked man in fighting against God, he adds here that thereupon *He*, that is, the Almighty God, *runneth upon him*, that is, upon the wicked man, *even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers* (for the bucklers which they used in warre had alwaies thick bosses in the midst, out of which came a sharp piece of iron or steel like the head of a spear, by reason whereof an enemy could not run in upon a man armed with one of these bucklers without manifest perill to himself, and thence is this expression of running in upon the thick bosses of his bucklers) as if he should have said, even as when a mighty man is provoked by the insolency of one that is no body in his hands, he runneth upon him for all his bucklers and other weapons wherewith he is armed, and taking him by the neck throws him down and disarmes him, so doth the Lord usually deal with those insolent wretches, that dare thus exalt themselves against him; for all their great wealth, authority, and power, wherewith they think themselves safely shielded as with armour of proof, God runs in upon them, takes them by the neck or throat, and crushing them down to the ground, strips them of all those things whereon they rested with so much confidence: and indeed the like expression Iob useth in the following chapter, verf. 12. speaking of Gods severe dealing with him, *He hath, saith he, broken me asunder, he hath also taken me by my neck and shaken me to pieces.* But now others again understand this of the wicked man (and indeed considering the whole context as it is in our Translation I cannot see how it can be understood otherwise) having said in the former verse, that *he stretcheth out his hand against God, &c.* in these words yet farther to set forth his incredible arrogance and insufferable impudence Eliphaz adds that *he runneth upon him*, that is, upon God, *even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers*, meaning that notwithstanding the almighty power wherewith God is armed to destroy all those that rise up against him, yet such is the desperate daring boldnesse of these wicked wretches, that they make no more of rushing upon the pikes of his displeasure, then if they had to deal with some weak man, whom they could easily vanquish and subdue.

Verf. 27. *Because he covereth his face with his fatnesse, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.*] This is the reason that is given why the wicked man dares carty himself so proudly against God, to wit, because he is grown rich and great, and lives in much prosperity, pampering himself with pleasure, and so thereupon is puffed up with pride, and obdurate against all fear, even to the exalting of himself a-

gainst God his Creatour; for thus the spirit of God doth frequently in the scripture expresse the prosperity and pride of wicked men, as we may see, Deut. 32, 15. *I asunder waxed fat and kicked, &c.* Psal. 7. 19. *They are maled in their own fat, with their mouth they speak proudly, and so in many other places and that say some Expositours, because the fat in man hath no feeling, and the fatter men are the less subject they are to fear.*

Vers. 28. *And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.*] Many good Expositours understand this of the misery, which God at last brings upon those men, that do so proudly set themselves in defiance against God, as is expressed in the foregoing verses; and by their dwelling in *desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps*, they conceive is meant, either that through extreme poverty having neither house nor home, they are glad to get into any old ruinate houses there to lye and shelter themselves, or that through very terrours of conscience they get into such desolate and unfrequented places merely to avoid the society of men, or else that by the people that rise up against them, not able any longer to endure their oppression and tyranny, they are driven from the places where they have formerly lived, and so forced to hide their heads in such desolate and solitary places, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, who was driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts of the field. But I say as the Context runs in our Translation it is methinks evident, that this is also added farther to set forth that great prosperity of the wicked man, which is the cause of his exalting himself against God; for having said that *he covereth his face with his fatnesse*, &c. he adds here, *And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps*, wherein may be implied both their exceeding wealth and greatness, in that they were able to rebuild desolate cities, and ruinated great houses and castles, either merely to get them a name, or for the safety of their persons, as tyrants are wont to doe, according to the former expression, chap. 3. 14. *With kings and counsellors of the earth, which build desolate places for themselves*; of which see the Note there; and likewise their mighty oppression and tyranny, in that they dwelt in cities which they had made desolate and poor by their impoverishing the inhabitants; and in houses from which they had driven the inhabitants by their cruell dealing with them, and then seized upon them for their own use.

Vers. 29. *He shall not be rich, &c.*] Considering that Eliphaz speaks still of that wicked man, that exalts himself against God, because of his fat and great estate, as is expressed in the former verses, the meaning of these words *He shall not be rich* must needs be, either that he shall not attain that height of riches which he propounds to himself, or that he shall not continue rich; though he be rich for the present, yet he shall at last come to poverty, as is explained in the following clause, *neither shall his substance continue*; and therefore also is that clause added, *neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth* whereby either the same thing is expressed again in other words, to wit, that he shall not long continue in such a glorious condition, or else the meaning must be that he shall not continue his name upon earth by leaving his great estate and honour to his children, and his chil-

childrens children, which is the perfection of a worldlings greatnesse and glory.

Vers. 30. *He shall not depart out of darknesse.*] That is, he shall never get free from those miseries and sorrows which God shall bring upon him. I know indeed there are some Expositours understand this of the wicked mans not daring to go forth from those secret hiding places, whereto he hath retired himself, and that because through the inward terrours of his conscience, he is afraid as Cain was least every man should kill him. But the first exposition to me seems farre more easie and clear.

The flame shall dry up his branches, &c.] By the wicked mans branches many Expositours understand particularly his posterity; and so conceive that Eliphaz herein aimes at Iobs losse in that particular: but others do I conceive better understand this clause more generally, to wit, that the wicked man being here compared to a flourishing tree, by this that *the flame shall dry up his branches* is meant, that by the fire of tribulation or by the fire of Gods wrath, all his riches, and honour, and children, and whatever else it is that makes his estate so flourishing and glorious, shall be withered and dried up, yea that all his hopes, and designs, and endeavours shall be brought to nothing. As for the following clause, *and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away*, though the meaning thereof may be, as some take it, that together with the breath of his mouth he shall perish, or rather that he shall die or be cut off by the breath of his own mouth, that is, by the desperate and blasphemous speeches, which in his wrath and pride he shall utter and belch forth against God (an expression not unlike to that Esa. 64. 6. *We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like a wind have taken us away*) yet it may be better understood of the breath of Gods mouth (as referring to that which was said before vers. 25. *He stretcheth forth his hand against God, &c.*) by *the breath of his mouth shall he go away*, that is, after that God hath thus blasted his prosperous estate, he shall at last utterly cut him off and send him packing away by the breath of his mouth, that is, by his decree, or by the blast of his indignation, which is the same that the prophet elsewhere saith, Esa. 11. 4. *He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*; and which Eliphaz himself had said before, chap. 4. 9. of which see the Note there. And very probable it is that Eliphaz doth the rather use these expressions of flame and fire, and the breath of his mouth, as in reference to the fire that had consumed Iobs cattle and servants, and to the wind that had blown down the house upon his children.

Vers. 31. *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his recompence.*] As if he should have said, if any wicked man hopes or thinks it shall be well with him, he is certainly deceived; and therefore let not such a one trust in such vain hopes, or in any vain thing whereon he builds his hopes, his sinfull courses, his present prosperity, riches, or honours, any humane counsels or means; for if he doth he shall find that these things will prove vain and nothing worth, and so vanity and misery shall be his recompence. And herein it seems Eliphaz covertly strikes at the confidence Iob had expressed, chap. 13. 15, 16.

Though

Though he slay me yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation, &c.

Verf. 32. *It shall be accomplished before his time, &c.*] This may be read, *It shall be cut off before his time*, and then it must be referred to the tree, whereto he had compared the wicked man, verf. 30. saying, *the flame shall dry up his branches*, (which may seem the more probable because of the following clause here, *and his branch shall not be green*) and then the meaning is, that the wicked man shall die an untimely death; or else to the wicked mans trusting in vanity, or the vanity whereon he trusts, whereof he had spoken in the words immediately foregoing, and then the meaning is much to the same effect, to wit, that the wicked mans confidence shall be cut off and come to nothing *before his time*, that is, before his daies be expired, or by his untimely end. But if we read it, as it is in our Bibles, *It shall be accomplished before his time*, then it must be referred to the last words of the foregoing verse, *Vanity shall be his recompence*, and so the meaning must be that the recompencing of vanity to him that trusts in vanity *shall be accomplished before his time*, that is, before his daies be accomplished, he shall live to see his pride have a fall, his own eyes shall behold the vanity of his confidence, or in the cutting him off before his time, this shall be accomplished; *and his branch shall not be green*, that is, nothing that he possesseth or undertaketh shall prosper; or, his children shall be in a withering condition.

Verf. 33. *He shall shake off the unripe grape as the vine, &c.*] That is, the wicked man shall be as the vine that shakes off her unripe grapes, and as the olive tree that casts off her flower; or, God shall shake off his unripe grapes, as the unripe grapes of a vine are shaken off, &c. But however that which Eliphaz intends here is, either that his children shall die in their young and tender years, or at least that they shall die an untimely death (for because of the sad end of Iobs children Eliphaz is still harping upon this string) or rather that all his substance, his hopes and endeavours, shall betimes be blasted, and shall never come to maturity.

Verf. 34. *For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, &c.*] That is, though hypocrites have never so great families and attendants, though they have never so many companions and friends, they shall all be cut off and so their house shall become desolate: *and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery*, that is, the houses of bribe-takers; or the houses that are filled with bribery, or built by bribery, or the gain of any such like course of injustice or deceit.

Verf. 35. *They conceive mischief and bring forth vanity, &c.*] That is, they conceive mischievous devices, they plot mischief in their minds against others, but in the conclusion all these devices prove vain and ineffectuall, and usually bring mischief upon themselves. Indeed this clause may be read also thus, *They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity*, as we find it also expressed, Isa. 59. 4. and then the meaning must needs be, that they contrive mischief against others in their mind, and then act that which they have so conceived. And accordingly we must conceive of the last clause, *and their belly prepareth deceit*, to wit, that it is meant either of the wicked mans contriving in his mind how he may deceive others, or else of his plotting those things in his head, whereby whilst he thinks to hurt others he doth only in the conclusion delude and deceive himself. CHAP.

C H A P. XVI.

Verf. 2. **I** *Have heard many such things, &c.*] In these first words of Iobs answer, either he taxeth his friends, and Eliphaz in particular, who had last replied upon him, for running over the same things again and again, even to wearinesse and irksomenesse, and those too such things as he had heard many and many a time from others, and which therefore he knew as well as they, as that God is just, and that God doth use to destroy wicked men, and to pour forth his wrath upon them even here in this world, &c. (Iob would have them know that his case was so extraordinary, that such extraordinary things as they had so often repeated did no way suit his condition) or else for the bitterness of their language. Eliphaz had in his last words very terribly set forth the vengeance of God upon wicked men, and that as applying all to him; whereupon Iob answers, *I have heard many such things*, for such terrours and threatnings, and scornfull exprobrations I have had enough of them, but not a word of true comfort; whereupon he adds, *miserable comforters* (or as it is in the margin) *troublesome comforters*) *are ye all*, to wit, because in stead of comforting him, for which they pretended they came to him, they had rather added to his afflictions, and had rather increased then allayed his sorrows. And herein it is likely that he had respect to that which Eliphaz had said, chap. 15. 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?* for it is as if he said, They are poor consolations which I have received from you, who have all with so much bitterness and scorn thunderd out the judgements of God against me, as against a base hypocrite, and so in stead of comforting me have indeed done what in you lay to drive me to despair.

Verf. 3. *Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?*] That is, that thou shouldest thus reply upon me again the second time? Or, that thou shouldest answer me after this manner, as thou hast done? That which he demands of him under these words *what emboldeneth thee?* may be 1. Whether he had any thing farther to say, whether he had any other arguments to bring, which had so much strength or solidity in them, that thereby he should be encouraged to answer again; (thereby implying that hitherto there was no force of reason in any thing he had spoken) or 2. Whether he knew any thing by him, that should embolden him thus to charge him with hypocrisie; or 3. Whether any thing he had spoken had given any such just advantage to Eliphaz, that thereby he should be encouraged to reply again upon him? or whether he thought by this renewed onset to weary him out, and make him yield at the last.

Verf. 4. *If you were in my soules stead, I could heap up words against you and shake mine head at you.*] That is, if you were in that distresse that I am in, I could multiply harsh and bold uncharitable speeches against you, as you have done against me; (it is an easie matter for men in prosperity to make large declamations against those that are in misery) yea I could in a way of scorn and derision shake my head at you, for that this last clause must be thus understood is evident, be-

cause usually in the Scripture the shaking of the head is mentioned as a gesture of despight and scorn, as 2. Kings 19. 21. *The daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn, the daughter of Ierusalem hath shaken her head at thee, &c.* and so also Psal. 22. 7. Mark 15. 29. Lam. 2. 15. and in many other places.

Verf. 6. *Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged; and though I forbear, what am I eased?*] Expositours have found it very hard to say how these words come in, in this place. Some conceive that having said in the foregoing verse, that had they been in his condition, and he in theirs, he would have spoken comfortably to them, and thereby would have allayed their grief, *I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief*, because they might have replied upon him, If you be so good at comforting others, why do you not apply these consolations to your self? to prevent this objection, he answers, that his condition was so miserable, and the hand of God was so heavy upon him, that whether he spake or held his peace it was all one with him, if he spake it did not ease his grief, and pain, and misery, and if he held his peace, his sorrow did the more burn and boil within him. Again others conceive that having said how he would have comforted them if they had been in such misery as he was, here now he shows how sad his condition was, that had only such friends with him as did what they might to discourage and discomfirt him, *Though I speak*, saith he, *my grief is not asswaged*, that is, if I pour out my complaints to you, or seek to justify my self, you then alledge, that these miseries are an evident proof that I am a wicked man, and that thereupon it is that God doth proceed in such extremity against me, *and though I forbear, what am I eased?* that is, though I speak not but keep in my grief, that doth me no good, because then you take my silence as an acknowledgement of my guilt, and so break forth the more violently against me. And this I take to be the most probable dependance of these words upon that which went before.

Verf. 7. *But now he hath made me weary, &c.*] That is, God hath made my life wearisome to me; for that this is meant of God is evident in the following clause, where by an Apostrophe he turns his speech directly to God, *thou hast made desolate all my company*, which he saith because God had slain his children and many of his servants, as is related in the first chapter, and his wife and friends had either forsaken him, or carried themselves as enemies to him. And thus now he breaks forth into a large and pathetical description of his miseries; the drift whereof is, either to manifest what just cause he had to complain so bitterly as he had done, thereby to move God and his friends especially to pity him, and not to be so harsh against him as they had been, or else to disprove what Eliphaz had with many flourishing words sought covertly to prove in the foregoing chapter, namely that God doth only pour forth his wrath upon wicked men as he had done upon Job; for whilst Job acknowledgeth here that his condition was just such as Eliphaz had described the wicked mans to be (to which end he useth many of the very same expressions speaking of himself, which Eliphaz had before used, as here saying *thou hast made desolate all my company* in reference to that which Eliphaz had said, chap. 15. 34. *the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate*) and yet afterward

maintains that notwithstanding he was not a wicked hypocrite, vers. 16, 17. *On my eye-lids is the shadow of death; Not for any injustice in mine hands; also my prayer is pure, &c.* by this instance of himself, who being a man that feared God, was yet outwardly in as sad a condition as any wicked man could be, he quite overthrows all that Eliphaz had said.

Vers. 8. *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witnesse against me: and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witnesse to my face.*] Eliphaz having set forth the prosperity of the wicked man by his fatnesse, chap. 15. 27. *He covereth his face with his fatnesse, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks,* Iob here on the contrary sets forth his misery by his leanness and wrinkles, his body being consumed by those extremities of pain, and sickness, and sorrow which he had undergone, and so his skin shrivelled and wrinkled thereby; Now for the better understanding of this, we must know; first, that he useth this expression that his wrinkles and his leanness did bear witnesse against him, either because they did abundantly testify how exceeding grievous the miseries were which he had suffered; or else because consequently in the apprehension of his friends they did witnesse against him, that by his wickednesse he had provoked God to such wrath and indignation against him, as is noted before upon a like expression, chap. 10. 17. 2. That for that phrase he useth of his leanness rising up in him, *my leanness rising up in me beareth witnesse,* either thereby is meant only that his leanness was in him a witnesse against him, according to a like expression, Matth. 11. 11. *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater then Iohn the Baptist,* for there hath not been a greater then Iohn the Baptist, or else he doth allude to the rising up of witnesses when they addresse themselves in the place of judgement to give witnesse against a man, or else he hath respect to the staring out of his bones in a ghastly manner because of his leanness, in regard whereof it might be the better said, that his flesh consuming, his leanness did rise up in him; and 3. It is said, that his leanness did bear witnesse to his face, because there it was most apparent to the eyes of all men, and did openly as it were bear witnesse against him.

Vers. 9. *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me; he gnasheth upon me with his teeth, &c.*] Most of our best Expositours hold, that as in the former verses, so here also, Iob still speaks of God, expressing his indignation against him, and his severe dealing with him after the manner of men by these words of tearing him in his wrath and gnashing upon him with his teeth. And if we so understand the words, we must know that this language was the effect of that distraction, that was upon his spirit by reason of the extremity of his sufferings: it was the voice of his flesh not of Iob himself, the voice of his sense not of his faith. But because in the following verses it is clear that he speaks of men that hated him, into whose hands God had delivered him that they might afflict him; *They have gaped upon me with their mouth, &c. God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked,* therefore it seems to me most probable which others hold, that he speaks here of men that hating him did tear him in their wrath and gnash their teeth upon him: and so we must also understand the last clause of this verse, *Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me,* that is, mine enemies look grimly and

fiercely upon me. Because when men are inflamed their eyes will glitter and sparkle, as it were, and their looks upon him, against whom they have conceived such indignation, will be sharp and piercing, like a new whetted sword, they will look upon him, as we use to say, as if they would look through him, thence is this expression, *Mine enemy sharpneth his eyes upon me.*

Verf. 10. *They have gaped upon me with their mouth, &c.*] By this their gaping upon him may be meant either 1. Their violent endeavouring his utter ruine, as if he had said, they run upon me with open mouth as if they meant presently to destroy me and eat me up; for so the same phrase is used Psal. 22. 13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion,* or 2. Their outcries against him, their clamorous contradictions, and revilings, and reproaches wherein with full mouth they fell upon him; or 3. Their flouting and deriding him, as Psal. 35. 21. *Yea they opened their mouths wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.* And indeed to the same purpose also are the following words, *they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully*: for it is not necessary, that we should think because of these words, that his enemies did indeed smite his aged, pale, and wrinkled face with their hands or fists: in regard it is a proverbiall speech, whereby any reproachfull or contemptuous usage is meant, as we see Lam. 3. 30. where these words, *He giveth his cheeks to him that smiteth him* are explained more clearly in the following words, *he is filled full with reproach*; and 2 Cor. 11. 20. where the Apostle would tell them that they could suffer their false teachers though they used them never so scornfully and disgracefully, he expresseth it thus, *ye suffer it if a man smite you on the face.* And indeed to imply this is the word *reproachfully* here added *they have smitten me on the cheek reproachfully*; the meaning is, that they had done him all the shame they might, and had used him with all the scorn and contempt that possibly they could.

Verf. 11. *God hath delivered me to the ungodly, &c.*] That is, to the Sabeans and Chaldeans, chap. 1. and others that since Gods hand was so heavy upon him had used him despitefully.

Verf. 12. *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder.*] This Iob adds because in this regard his condition was farre the sadder and the more to be pittied, that having lived formerly in so great prosperity, free from cares, and griefs, and fears, unexpectedly on a sudden all was destroyed and brought to nothing. Neither is there any contradiction betwixt this, and that which he had said before, chap. 3. 26. *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet*; for there Iob speakes of the spirituall frame of his heart, to wit, that he was not secure, though he was then free from trouble; but here now he speaks of the temporall frame of his outward estate, in which he had ease, and was free from trouble, no man molesting him.

He hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, &c.] As before so here also he useth the same expression, which Eliphaz had used before in setting forth Gods dealing with wicked men, chap. 15. 26. *He runneth on him, even on his neck, &c.* of which see the Note above verf. 7. As for the next clause, *and set me up for his mark,* See also a former Note chap. 7. 20.

Verf. 13.

Verf. 13. *His archers compassed me round about, &c.*] The *Archers* he speaks of are either those men, whom God had made use of for the afflicting of Iob, and to imply how many they were, and that every man almost friends and foes had a sling at him, he saith they compassed him round about; or else those diseases which God had laid upon him, and then this compassing him round about implies the variety of bodily infirmities, wherewith God had smitten him, and that round about him, all his body over he was full of ulcers. As for the following words, *He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground;* Some by the cleaving of his reins asunder understand, that God had mortally wounded him, and that his miseries were incurable; others that his strength was quite wasted and consumed, which lyeth chiefly in the reins and loines of a man; and others that he was tortured with the stone in the kidneyes, and so his paines were so extreme as if his very reins were cleaving asunder, or at least that his sorrows and paines were most exquisite, like the paines of those that are tortured with the stone: and by the pouring out his gall upon the ground they understand, either that his extreme miseries made him pour forth the bitterness of his spirit in bitter complaints, or else that the wounds that God had given him were mortall and incurable. But I conceive the drift of these words in generall was to imply the exquisite, incredible, and insupportable pains and sorrows he endured even in the inward parts of his body, that his very bowels and vitall parts were wrackt and torn within him, so that the torment he endured was insufferable and that without intermission or remission night or day.

Verf. 14. *He breaketh me with breach upon breach, &c.*] That is, he heaps afflictions, plagues, and miseries upon me thick and three-fold, as we use to say, one in the neck of another: which may be meant of those sad tydings that were brought to him, chap. 1. one messenger coming in still with a fresh report of his losses before the other had well made an end of speaking, or else of the griefs and diseases which did every day still encrease upon him, and the ulcers that did continually break out a-fresh in his body. As for the following clause, *he runneth up on me like a giant,* therein he seeks to imply how exceeding heavy Gods hand was upon him, and with what fury and unresistable violence he proceeded against him.

Verf. 15. *I have sowed sackcloth upon my skin, &c.*] Some conceive that he saith of the sackcloth that he wore, that it was sowed upon his skin, because it did cleave to his ulcerous body as fast as if it had been sown to his skin; but I conceive this phrase, *I have sowed sackcloth upon my skin* intends no more but this, that he had put on sackcloth sowed together next his skin, which being full of boyles and sores, whether scabbed or raw, it must needs be very terrible to him; and that hereby he seeks to set forth how he had humbled himself under the hand of God, and that consequently he was not guilty of advancing himself against God, as Eliphaz had covertly charged him, making that the cause why God layed his hand so heavy upon the wicked man, chap. 15. 25. And to the same purpose also are the next words, *and defiled my horn in the dust;* for thereby is meant either that he had sprinkled dust upon his head (concerning which custome see the Notes Iosh.

7. 6.) or else rather, that he was content, laying by all the thoughts of his former greatnesse, and pomp, and glory, to sit down in the dust that he might humble himself before the almighty; (for that the word *horn* is thus frequently used in the Scripture we may see in the Notes upon 1. Sam. 2. 1.) yea both these expressions concerning his sackcloth, and his defiling his horn in the dust may be only used as figurative expressions, to signifie that he had greatly abased and humbled himself, even as those doe that cloth themselves with sackcloth, and throw dust upon their heads. And thus, because men are wont the more to pity those that are in affliction, when they see they are penitent, and do melt and humble themselves under Gods hand, he useth this as another argument to move his friends to pity him, and doth covertly tax them of cruelty that could be so harsh to one, whom they saw in so mournfull a manner humbling himself under the strokes of the Almighty.

Verf. 16. *My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the shadow of death.*] By this *shadow of death* on his eyelids may be meant, either that shadowy blacknesse or darknesse, which will be on the eyelids of those whose eyes are sunk in their heads by grief or sicknesse, as we see in the hollow eyeholes of dying men, or of a dead mans scull, in allusion whereto it may be called *the shadow of death*, or else that darknesse and dimnesse of sight which is also usually the effect of some extreme grief or exceeding much weeping, as we see in that complaint of the Church, Lam. 2. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears*: for because such a mistynesse and dimnesse of sight doth usually come upon sick men when death approacheth, even this also may be justly tearmed *the shadow of death*.

Verf. 17. *Not for any injustice in my hands; also my prayer is pure.*] Not as thinking himself free from all sins, but only from that grosse wickednesse and secret hypocrisie wherewith his friends had charged him, Iob here professeth his innocency in regard of his upright walking both towards God and towards man; (and consequently that he knew that Gods hand was not so heavy upon him in regard of any such wickednesse that he had committed) 1. Towards man, in the first clause, *Not for any injustice in my hands*, where by injustice is meant all oppression, all fraudulent or unjust dealing whatsoever, and it may well be that in clearing himself of this he had respect to that which Eliphaz had said, chap. 15. 34. *The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.* 2. Towards God in the second clause, *also my prayer is pure*, whereby he meant that he did sincerely worship God as God had appointed, and that his prayers proceeded from a pure conscience and faith unfeigned, wherein also he might have respect to that bitter charge of Eliphaz, chap. 15. 4 *yea, thou castest off fear and restrainest prayer before God.* And this he doth, either thereby to move his friends to pity him, (for when righteous men suffer much, that have not deserved it by any wickednesse of theirs, all men are the readier to commiserate their sufferings) or else to disprove all that Eliphaz had said concerning the Lords punishing wicked men only, as is noted before verf. 7.

Verf. 18. *O earth cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.*] A Poeticall and pathetical expression this is; and Expositours differ much in their judgement

ment concerning the meaning of it. Some take it to be an imprecation wherein he wisheth that his body might lye unburied after he was dead, if that were not true which he had said concerning his innocency: and others take it as an earnest asseveration, that he desired not to die as the brut beasts do, (which through guilt of conscience all hypocrites must needs desire) whose bodies when they dye are covered in the earth there to rot and consume and never to rise again, but that he certainly expected and earnestly desired the Resurrection of his body, when he knew he should appear before God and his innocency should be cleared. But I see not how according to either of these expositions there can be a good sense given of the last clause, *and let my cry have no place*. But two other Expositions there are given of these words, which seem to me far the most probable. The first is, that Iob doth herein professe his desire that his calamities and the cause thereof might be made known before the heavens and before all the world, *O earth cover not thou my blood*, that is, cover not the blood and corruption that issueth out of my ulcers; or rather, hide not my misery, sorrows and sufferings, *and let my cry have no place*, that is, let there be no place found that should hide my cry from coming up into the presence of God: for this, they say, he desires, not so much that his miseries might be known to men, as that God might take notice of them, and so might judge and plead his cause against those that derided and falsely accused him. The other is, that these words contain a vehement protestation of his innocency. Having said in the foregoing verse that he suffered not for any injustice in his hands, &c. because he had often thus professed his innocency, and his friends he saw did not believe him, therefore he breaks forth into this vehement and patheticall expression, *O earth cover not thou my blood*, that is, if by oppressing the poor or any other way of injustice I have drawn the guilt of blood upon my self, let not the earth cover or hide that bloody wickednesse, but let it be discovered, and let it cry to heaven for vengeance, as did the blood of Abel against Cain; (whereunto it is very likely that Iob did allude; and indeed oppression and such like bloodsucking sins are often intended in the Scripture where it speaks of blood, as Habak. 2. 12. *Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood and establisheth a city by iniquity*) *and let my cry have no place*, that is, let not the cry of that my oppression find any hiding-place, but let it be known to God and man (and so indeed the word *cry* is sometimes used in the Scripture, as Isa. 5. 7. *he looked for judgement, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry*) or rather, *and let my cry have no place*, that is, when I cry in my extremities let not God nor man regard it; yea and when I call to men for help, or pray to God for mercy, let me not prevail either with man or God, but let just vengeance fall upon me according to that, Psal. 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*.

Vers. 19. *Also now, behold, my witnesse is in heaven, &c.*] This word also may be referred either to his acquaintance, as if he should have said, though there are many that if they would speak the truth can witnesse for me, that I have lived holily and righteously, yet however my comfort is that God is my witnesse that it is so; or else to himself, as if he had said, what I have protested concerning mine innocency God also in heaven who from on high beholds all things can and I know will witnesse for me that it is true.

Vers. 20.

Verf. 20. *My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.*] That is, God being my witnesse, who knoweth exactly the innocency of my life and the sincerity of my heart, though my friends scorn and deride me, yet I can comfort my self in God; to him I appeal who is my Iudge, to him I look up, and with tears do pour out my complaints and requests before him, who is indeed my only stay and comfort.

Verf. 21. *O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.*] This is in a manner the same that he had desired before, chap. 9. 34, 35. and 13. 3, and 20; concerning which see the severall Notes there: only these words may be understood as a desire, either that himself might plead his cause with God, or else that some other might doe it for him, and may imply his hope that some body might be found that would undertake to maintain his innocency, and then God passing judgement, either he should know wherein he had erred, and so might amend it, or else by the judgement of God openly pronounced he should be clearly acquitted before all that should hear it.

Verf. 22. *When a few years are come, then I shall goe the way whence I shall not return.*] Concerning this expresseion see what is noted before chap. 7. 9, 10. Neither is there any thing farther difficult in these words, but only their dependance upon that which went before, wherein every Expositour is almost in a severall mind. Some conceive that these words are added by way of comforting himself, in that by his death which hastened so fast upon him, here would an end be put to all his miseries. Others as an aggravation of his friends cruelty, of which he had spoken before, verf. 20. *My friends scorn me*, &c. because they took no pity of a man, ready as it were to give up the ghost. Others, as an argument to move God to allay his miseries, and not to lay his hand so heavy upon one that is dying already; Others by way of clearing himself from not speaking sincerely in that protestation he had now made concerning his innocency; for having death before his eyes, as ready immediately to seise upon him, what likelihood was there that he should speak against his conscience? Others as by way of correcting what he had spoken concerning his innocency; as if he should have said, why do I stand protesting mine innocency or wishing I might plead my cause with God? It is altogether in vain and to no purpose, since I am in a manner a dead man already; And last of all, others conceive that herein a reason is given, why he had desired in the foregoing verse that his cause might be pleaded before God, to wit, because he perceived he had but a short time to live, and he desired before his departure, that either he might know what it was wherewith God had been provoked to deal so severely with him, that so he might repent of it, or else that God might acquit him from that wickednesse and hypocrisie whereof his friends had accused him, that so he might die in peace and leave a good report behind him, for the comfort and edification of others of Gods people.

CHAP. XVII.

Verf. 1. **M***Y breath is corrupt, &c.*] Some read this as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *My spirit is spent*, and so make his complaint to be, that his vitall spirits were in a manner quite wasted, and so consequently his life also that was preserved thereby. But taking it as it is in our Translation, the meaning must needs be, that his breathing was stopped and marred, or rather that his breath was infected and stunk through some inward putrefaction; and so some Expositours understand that also, chap. 19. 17. *My breath is strange to my wife, &c.* And indeed it is clear that the drift of his words here was to shew, that by the decay of his body he might plainly see that his death could not be farre off; to which purpose is that also which follows, *my daies are extinct*, that is, the light of my life is in a manner quite extinguished, according to that Prov. 24. 20. *the candle of the wicked shall be put out.* As for the last clause, *the graves are ready for me*, the only doubt is why it is expressed in the plurall number. But for this to me it seems farre most probable that his meaning herein was plainly no more but this, that it would not be long ere he should be lodged in some one of those houses of darknesse, which are the last home of all men living. As when it is said of Iehoram king of Iudah that he was not buried in the sepulchres of the kings, 2. Chron. 21. 20. the meaning is only that he was not buried amongst their sepulchres: so when here Iob saith, *the graves are ready for me*, the meaning is only, that the place of buriall, the house of graves, as I may call it, was ready to receive him, to wit, because it could not be long ere he should be carried thither.

Verf. 2. *Are there not mockers with me? &c.*] Here Iob returnes to complain of his friends (as indeed men in affliction are wont sometimes to bend their speech one way and sometimes another) inferring it as a strange thing, that notwithstanding he was in so sad a condition, ready every moment as it were to drop into the grave, yet they did nothing but mock and deride him; and so by that means did what in them lay, continually to vex him and provoke him to anger and indignation against them; for so much the following clause imports, *and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* to wit, that night and day their scoffs and deriding of him did evermore afflict him; for by that expression of his eye continuing in their provocation he sought to imply either 1. That the eye of his mind was continually upon their scornfull carriage of themselves towards him, the remembrance of their scoffs did continually molest him, many times keeping him awake when he should have slept, and sometimes perhaps troubling him in his very dreames; Or 2. That they did thus continually provoke him to his very face, he was constrained to see himself continually mocked and derided by them.

Verf. 3. *Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee, &c.*] A very obscure passage this is, insomuch that amongst the severall Expositions that are given of it, it is very hard to say which is the right. Some conceive that Iob speaks here to Eli-

phaz,

phaz, and desires that by a pledge and a surety he would give him assurance, that he would referre his cause to Gods judgement, and that he would make good what he had said, to wit, either concerning the wickednesse and hypocrisy where-with he had charged Iob, or concerning the certain prosperity of the righteous and the calamities of the wicked, or else concerning that flourishing prosperity which he had promised to Iob, if he would repent and turn unto the Lord; *Lay down now*, saith Iob, *put me in a surety with thee*, as if he should have said, if you be so sure that I am a wicked man and an hypocrite, and that therefore all these evils are come upon me that I suffer, and that if I repent then I shall have all things according to my hearts desire again, *Lay down now* a pledge or a pawn that shall be forfeited, if you do not appear and make this good, *put me in a surety with thee*, that shall undertake for thee that this shall be done, and so let our cause be pleaded before an equall judge or umpire; and accordingly also they hold therefore that the last clause must be taken, either as a challenge to the rest of his friends, that they would, if Eliphaz would not, undertake this his challenge, *who is he that will strike hands with me?* (for in those daies they used to confirme any agreement made between man and man by clapping or clasping of hands together, thereby as it were binding themselves one to another, whence is that of Solomon, Prov. 6. 1, 2. *My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, &c.*) or else as a denyall that any surety could be found, that would upon these conditions undertake for Eliphaz or his other two friends; *who is he that will strike hands with me?* as if he should have said, I would gladly see the man that would upon these terms make an agreement with me; but alas who is he that will doe it? Again, 2. Some think that as in the following verses, so here also, Iob directs his speech to God, and that (out of an over-violent desire to have his innocency cleared, as being exceedingly netted with the unjust aspersions which his friends had cast upon him) he doth here as a man besides himself presse God to *lay down* a pledge, and to *put in a surety* that would undertake for God, to wit, either that Iobs cause should be tryed before God and not men, and that God and not man should determine of it; or else that God would condescend to have the cause between God and him equally argued and heard, as between one man and another, and that God should stand to what was determined after it had been thus argued, *Lay down now*, *put me in a surety with thee*, as who should say, I know, O Lord, that poor mortall man cannot contend with thee, and that if he should, he must needs be soon overwhelmed with thy majesty and glory, and therefore I desire that thou wouldest *lay down* a pawn and *put in a surety*, who may undertake for thee, that laying aside thy majesty, thou wilt suffer me to plead my cause with thee; and agreeably hereto they hold that the last words are added to imply, either how desirous he was that such a surety might be found that would undertake this for God, *who is he that will strike hands with me?* or else how unlikely it was that any could be found that would undertake it. 3. Because it seems very hard that Iob should as it were professe that he would not trust God without a pawn and a surety, and that he should speak so immodestly and arrogantly to God, therefore some other Expo-

sitours hold that Iob desires God to appoint him a surety, that should undertake for the clearing of his innocency against the calumnies of his friends, or rather that should engage himself to plead both for God and him against his unjust friends; and therefore they say it is said *put me in a surety with thee*; that is, one that may be a surety both for thee and me: whereupon he adds also, either to imply his desire that this might be, or his fear that it would not be; *who is he that will strike hands with me?* And indeed such a one as this Exposition intends, Elihu did afterwards appear to be, when he undertook to umpire the businesse betwixt Iob and his friends. But now 4. Others understand this of Christ the promised Messiah, *Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me?* that is, let that which I now desire be determined and established; appoint Christ who is with thee in heaven, and hath already agreed with thee to be the surety of poor sinners, appoint him I say to plead my cause and to stand up for me as my surety, and then I am sure no man will dare to contend with me. And indeed these two last Expositions do best agree with the context.

Vers. 4. *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding; therefore shalt thou not exalt them.* That he might not be thought over-bold and over-confident in desiring that his cause might be examined and tryed, or in appealing as he had done to God, from his friends, he gives in these words as a reason why he did so earnestly desire this, and why he was so fearlesse of having his cause any way tryed, to wit, because God had *hid their heart from understanding*, that is, he had hid understanding from their heart, he had given them over to blindness of mind, how wise soever they thought themselves, to wit, in that particular controversie which was now in debate betwixt Iob and them; Gods providences towards Iob were mysteries, and riddles to them which they could not unfold, and so accordingly they were in the dark, as concerning those points which had been argued betwixt him and them, and were not able to discern between truth and error, and therefore saith he, *shalt thou not exalt them*; where by not exalting them is meant, either that God would not honour them with letting them determine his cause, but would take the matter out of their hands into his own, or at least put it into some other hand; or else that God would not give them occasion to exalt themselves over him, by giving sentence on their side; however they now triumphed over him, as if they had got the victory, yet when their cause came to be heard, he knew well that then God would take his part against them, and determine the cause for him and not for them, and then they should have no cause to exalt themselves.

Vers. 5. *He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.* Concerning this expression of the failing of their eyes see the Notes, chap. 11. 20. and Deut. 28. 32. the meaning is, that God will not only punish such flatterers in their own persons, but even in their children also, who through Gods just judgement do tread in their fathers steps. But the great question concerning these words is, why Iob speaks here of Gods punishing those that flatter their friends, since his friends (of whom he is now complaining) were so farre from flattering him, that they did rather revile him and falsely accuse him, and to this

five answers may be given 1. That he may therefore accuse them of flattery, because having alwaies spoken him so fair in the time of his prosperity, they were now so bitter against him in the hour of his adversity. 2. That the flattery he intends was, that when they might so plainly perceive that he was irrecoverably spent, a dying man, as we use to speak, yet they could tell him such long stories of the prosperous estate he should enjoy here in this world, if he would repent and seriously seek Gods face and favour, as that his estate should be like the morning, that he should outshine the very Sun, and be a great man again, chap. 5. 19, 20, and 8. 5, and 11. 15, 16, &c. 3. That the flattery which here he covertly strikes at was, not their flattering him but their flattering of God; if God would punish those that flatter their friends, they could expect no better who to curry favour with God, and under a flattering pretence of maintaining Gods justice, had most unjustly condemned him; which is that wherewith he had before charged his friends, chap. 13. 8, 10. of which see the Notes there. 4. That he spake not this to charge them with flattery, but to clear himself from desiring to be flattered; least they should think that he complained of their harsh dealing with him, because he desired they should flatter him, to prevent this he gives them to understand that he was so farre from this, that he was assured that if men flattered their friends God would destroy both them and their posterity, and 5. That he spake not this as a threat against his friends for their flattering of him, but as a threat against himself in case he should have flattered them; he would not have them offended at his plainnesse of speech in reprovng them, and telling them that God had hid their hearts from understanding, &c. and that because he knew well how severely God was wont to punish those that flattered their friends, not in their own persons only, but also in their posterity.

Vers. 6. *He hath made me also a by-word of the people, and afore time I was as a tabret.*] Here Iob returns to his wonted complaints of the sad condition, wherein to God had brought him. Reading the last clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and before them I was as a tabret*, it is as if he had said, before their face or in their sight, they being witnesses of it, *I was as a tabret*; or else it is to the same purpose with the first clause, *He hath made me also a by-word of the people* (concerning which see the Note, Deut. 28. 37.) for the meaning is, that they played upon him as a tabret, or that they made a laughing-stock of him, deriding him and sporting themselves with his misery, according to the like expressions which we find elsewhere, as Lam. 3. 14. *I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day*, and Psal. 44. 13. *Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us*. But if we read it as it is in our Bibles, *and afore-time I was as a tabret*, then the meaning must needs be, that whereas formerly report gave a pleasant sound of him to all mens ears, now men scoffed and flouted at him in every place; Or, that now they talked reproachfully and scoffingly of him in every corner, whereas in former times they rejoyced in his company, and it was a delight to them to be where he was.

Vers. 7. *And all my members are as a shadow.*] As if he had said, My body is no body indeed but as it were the shadow of a body; and this he might say, either with

with respect to his exceeding great weaknesse, by reason whereof all the members of his body were in a manner uselesse to him, they had the outward appearance and shape of members, but they could not do the office of such members, he could not make any use either of hands or feet, &c. or else because his whole body was so consumed and wasted, that his members had as it were no substance in them, they were so meager and wan that he looked more like an apparition, then one that had a true body, and should his friends see him they could not know him, but would take him for the shadow of Iob, rather then for Iob himself. But now if you read this clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and all my thoughts are as a shadow*, then the meaning is, that his thoughts did suddenly vanish and passe away as a shadow; and indeed men in great distresse are wont to be full of various distracting thoughts, their minds running sometimes upon one thing sometime on another, which may well be that which Iob here complains of, to wit, that there was no stability in his thoughts because of his miseries.

Verf. 8. *Vpright men shall be astonied at this, &c.*] Some Expositours make the sense of these words to be this, that even upright men shall be astonied to see one, whom they judged a holy and righteous man, to be so severely punished, and shall thereupon raise up themselves against him as against an hypocrite; and accordingly also they expound the following verse, *The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger*, to wit, that the righteous afflicted man, though thus misjudged by his godly friends (which is indeed the forest of all tryalls) shall for all this hold on his way, and shall become more strict and more zealous in the wayes of godlinesse then he was before. But the commoner and as I conceive the better Exposition is this, *Vpright men shall be astonied at this*, that is, wise and godly men (such Iobs friends were) shall stand amazed at my strange sufferings, and shall hereupon condemn and deride me in my miseries; and that especially upon this ground, that I should for all this persevere in my dependance upon God, and maintain mine innocency and integrity against them; *and the innocent shall stirre up himself against the hypocrite*, that is, men of a holy life and pure conscience shall hereupon rouse up themselves, to wit, either 1. To take his part and maintain his cause against those hypocrites, that did so deride and falsely accuse him, or 2. To oppose those base hypocrites, that by his sufferings should take occasion to blaspheme God, to harden themselves in their wickednesse, and to make a mock of godlinesse, or 3. To encourage themselves by this example not to faint in the like case, if it should come to be their portion, but stoutly to maintain their integrity against those that unjustly condemned them; And so likewise they understand the following verse, *The righteous also shall hold on his way, &c.* to wit, that good and holy men will not be beaten off from the waies of righteousness, by seeing them that walk in those waies so sorely afflicted, despised, and derided, but will rather become the more zealous, and gather the more strength hereby to comfort and encourage themselves against such temptations. So that the drift of these words also was, to shew that his grievous miseries was no proof that he was a wicked man, and that God hath

other holy ends for which he brings such sore calamities upon men, besides the punishing of them for their sins.

Vers. 10. *But as for you all, doe you return and come now, &c.*] This may be either spoken by way of advice to his friends, *doe you return*, that is, give over this erroneous conceit which you have hitherto maintained, change your minds, *and come now*, that is, close with me in that which I shall say, or hearken to that which I shall now deliver: or else as a challenge farther to argue out the businesse between them, (which seems the more probable because in that sense this very expression, *Return I pray you* is used before, chap. 6. 29. of which see the Note there) *But as for you all, doe you return and come now*, that is, come and let us again argue the cause between us; were there never so many of you, I challenge every one of you to prepare your selves and to alledge the utmost you can for the justifying of that you have undertaken to maintain: *for I cannot find one wise man among you*, that is, in this particular you speak not wisely, I shall easily make it appear that in this which you affirm, that God would not afflict me thus were I not an hypocrite, you erre grossely, and speak as men that are altogether ignorant of the wayes of God; And it may well be which some think, that because Eliphaz had now returned, as I may say, to reply upon him, and because he saw perhaps his other two friends eager to fall upon him the second time, therefore it was that he now bids defiance to them all, *But as for you all, doe you return and come now, &c.*

Vers. 11. *My daies are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.*] As if he had said, what do you tell me of comfortable daies? though I have done what I could to comfort my self with hope and expectation of being freed from the miseries which for the present I suffered, and with entertaining purposes of doing this or that when I came to be in a better condition (as indeed men in misery are wont to catch at any thing, that may give them any hope of being delivered out of their troubles,) yet I see all is in vain, my life is in a manner at an end, all the thoughts and purposes of my heart this way are broken off, to wit, either by death which will put an end to them all, or else by divers other distracting thoughts, which my pain and other miseries do continually suggest, and which will not suffer my thoughts to be long stedfastly pitched upon any thing, especially any thing that should comfort me. Now though some conceive that this is rendred as a reason, why they should hearken to him and be warned by him, to wit, because being a dying man he had not much more to say, nor was well able to utter what he had purposed to speak, his pain and misery interrupting him, and the thoughts of his heart being through distemper full of distractions; yet I rather think that the drift of these words is clearly to shew, how vain a thing it would be for him, a dying man, to expect any such glorious condition here in this world as they had promised him, if he would repent and turn again unto the Lord, and that because this agrees fully with that which follows.

Vers. 12. *They change the night into day, &c.*] That is, these distracting thoughts (of which mention was made in the foregoing verse) or my friends by causing such distraction in my thoughts, make me passe the night without any rest as if it were the day: *the light is short because of darknesse*, that is, *the light of my joy*

joy is short because of the darknesse of my afflictions; or rather, *the light is short because of darknesse*, that is, when the day comes it seems presently to be gone again, so that I do very little enjoy the benefit of the day, and that either because it seems over-clouded with the darknesse of my afflictions, or because I am streight way afraid of the dolefulnesse of the night that is coming after it.

Verf. 13. *If I wait, the grave is mine house; I have made my bed in the darknesse.*] That is, if I should wait in hope to see an end of my miseries, yet at last I am sure the grave must be my house, there in the darknesse of the pit I must lay me down to rest. Thus some Expositours understand these words. But I rather understand them thus, *If I wait, the grave is my house, &c.* that is, if I should wait for that glorious change to which you say God would restore me, if I would repent and beg mercy at his hands, I should certainly flatter my self in vain, and that because I am a dying man, and so the grave is the house where I must immediately be lodged, and in the darknesse thereof I am ready to lay down my self to rest.

Verf. 14. *I have said to Corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister.*] It is the opinion of a learned man, and not altogether improbable, that because great men in those times had certain vaults, where the bodies of all their family were successively laid, and placed in such order, that when their children went in to them, they were able to say which was their grandfather and grandmother, their father and mother, &c. therefore Iob to imply that he should not be buried in such a way of state, but should be laid after the manner of meaner men in an ordinary grave, he saith here that in stead of being thus laid up with the ancestours of his family, he should only have rottennesse and wormes for his father, and mother, and sisters, in his buriall place. But the more ordinary exposition of these words I take to be the better by farre, to wit, that Iobs drift therein is, as in those before, to shew that he was hopelesse of life, and had in his thoughts given up himself, and that willingly, to the grave, *I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister*, as if he should have said, In stead of those my near friends with whom I have lived, in the house of the grave, whether I am going apace, corruption and worms are the near allies, the father, mother, brothers and sisters with whom I must dwell; And indeed to corruption and the worms he might the rather give these tearms of his nearest allies, because he himself had his originall from the earth, and was no better, in regard of that corruption whereinto he should be turned in the grave, then the grave-bred worms. But however by these expressions Iob would shew that he was so farre from looking upon death as an enemy, or a stranger, that he was upon fair tearms with death as with his nearest allyance, yea that he was well acquainted with death, and took delight and contentment in death, as men do when after a long journey they return home to father, and mother, and brethren, and sisters.

Verf. 15. *And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?*] That is, when I shall be thus laid in the grave, what will become then of the hope you would give me of a prosperous estate here in this world, since doubtlesse no man shall ever see me have a good day again here in this world? It is as if he should have

have said, It had been fitter you should have propounded to me the blisse and glory, which after death I might expect in heaven; for I were indeed in a sad condition, if I had no more hope in heaven, then I can expect here in this world.

Verf. 16. *They shall go down to the barres of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.* Two severall waies these words of Iob may be understood, 1. As an answer to the last words of the foregoing verse; having said there, *As for my hope, who shall see it?* He answers himself here in these words, *They shall goe down to the barres of the pit, &c.* as if he should have said, I look every hour to be laid in the grave, and therefore if there be any good to be hoped for by me, I must expect it there, and so they that will see my hope must passe through the gates of death, and goe down with me into the grave, that so they may there behold it, when we shall there lye at rest together in the dust, 2. As a farther illustration of the vanity of those hopes, which his friends had propounded to him, *They shall goe down*, saith Iob, *to the barres of the pit, &c.* that is, truly all the hopes that you have propounded to me, or that I can conceive of living in prosperity again in this world, shall be all buried in the grave, and there both I and they shall perish, when we shall all rest together in the dust.

C H A P. XVIII.

Verf. 2. **T**hen answered Bildad the Shuhite.] As Bildad spake next after Eliphaz, when they first began to argue with him, so now again in replying, he keeps his turn, and speakes next after Eliphaz, as he did before.

Verf. 2. *How long will it be ere you make an end of words? &c.*] Many learned Expositours hold, that in this and the following verse Bildad speakes, not to Iob, but to his two companions Eliphaz and Zophar, or at least joyntly both to Iob and them (and that because in the Originall it is expressed indeed in the plurall number) and that the drift of these words is to blame them, because they had hitherto multiplyed words one against another, but all little or nothing to the purpose, and that thereupon he addes the following clause, *mark and afterward we will speak*, that is, let us be sure that we mark and well understand one another, and then we may the better hope to carry on our dispute to some good effect. But because 1. His joyning his friends with himself in that clause, *mark and afterwards we will speak*, seems rather to imply that he doth not direct his speech to them. 2. His friends having still pleaded the same thing against Iob which he himself doth here in his following speech, to wit, that God doth alwaies destroy wicked men, there was no colour why he should blame his friends for multiplying words nothing to the purpose, and 3. Iob in the first words of his next reply seems directly to strike at these words of Bildad, as spoken to him, chap. 19. 2. yea, saith he, *How long will ye vex my soul and break me in pieces with words?* in these regards I rather think that Bildad spake this only to Iob, and that it is expressed in the plurall number, either because there were some friends at this dispute, that
sided

sided with Iob though Iob only spake; or else rather because it was a propriety of speech which the Hebrews used, to speak sometimes in the plurall number though they speak but to one; It seems therefore to me most probable, that Bildad did with these words interrupt Iob before he had made an end of speaking, and because Iob had been still larger in answering them then they had been in their arguing against him, therefore he upbraides him for being so full of words, *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?* as if he should have said, will you never have done? How long will it be ere you give over this multiplying of words, I say mere words, nothing to the purpose, and that have no substance nor solidity in them? *mark and afterwards we will speak*, that is, observe what we say and then we shall willingly proceed to argue the cause farther with you. And herein he doth also covertly tax Iob, that hitherto he had not well observed or not well understood what they had said, and that thereupon it was that he ranne on, and would still defend his cause, though there was no strength at all in any thing he spake.

Verf. 3. *Wherefore are we counted as beasts and reputed vile in your sight?*] As is noted in the foregoing verse, many hold that this also was spoken by Bildad to his two friends; as if he had said, Why should you suffer your selves to be thus scorned and despised, and that even to your faces? (for that must needs be the meaning of those words *and reputed vile in your sight?*) But taking it as spoken to Iob, and that those words *in your sight* (which in the originall are expressed in the plurall number) were spoken with respect to those standers-by that sided with Iob, as is said in the former verse, then the words do clearly contain an expostulation with Iob for slighting all that they had spoken, *wherefore are we counted as beasts and reputed vile in your sight?* that is, why are we scorned and despised, as if we were mere bruits that had no understanding? And indeed many things Iob had spoken whereto Bildad might have respect in these words, as when he said that God had *bid their heart from understanding*, chap. 17. 4. and verf. 10. *I cannot find one wise man among you*; and when he had termed them *miserable comforters*, chap. 16. 2. and sent him to the beasts to be instructed by them, chap. 12. 7. *Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee*, &c.

Verf. 4. *He teareth himself in his anger.*] In relation to that which Iob had said, chap. 13. 14. *wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* or to that which he had said, chap. 16. 9. *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me*, Bildad here chargeth Iob with this, that he did even tear himself in his anger; as if he should have said, Whereas Iob complains that his enemy that hateth him teareth him in his wrath; the truth is that he teareth himself, though he would seem to deny it; and his meaning is, either that he carried himself like a mad man, who in their distraction are wont often to tear not their garments only, but their own flesh also; or else that through the impatience of his spirit, and his inward vexing and fretting he did continually torture and tear himself.

Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?] Some Expositours understand the first clause thus, *shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* that is, if you be cut off and perish, must all the glory of the world needs

perish with you? you make ado about your dying, as if the whole earth would be left desolate and without an inhabitant, if you should be taken away; why, what do you make of your self, that such a matter should be made of it, that you are like to be laid shortly in the grave? *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* if you die, must all the world needs die with you? But the commoner and better exposition of these words is, that Bildad doth here check Iob for maintaining that, which would overthrow the settled course of Gods providence in the government of the world, *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* &c. as if he had said, To justify you, who will not yield that your wickednesse hath brought these miseries upon you which you now suffer, or because of your complaints and outcries, that you are innocent, and that you are unmeasurably and unjustly afflicted, shall we say that Gods providence hath forsaken the earth, or that God scared by your clamours will overturn the whole course of nature, which he hath established by an unchangeable decree? Surely the decree of God, that it shall be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked, is as firm and sure, as that the earth shall be inhabited, and that the rocks and mountains shall stand firm in their places; and therefore you may as well hope that God should give over the government of the world, that the earth should be forsaken or the rocks be removed out of their place, as that God should prosper the wicked or make the righteous miserable. As when we talk of those things, which we judge impossible, we use to say, Yes, shall we look for stars in the sea or fishes in the heavens? so to imply how impossible it was which Iob maintained, that he was innocent notwithstanding Gods hand was so sore upon him, what saith Bildad, *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, and shall the rock be removed out of his place?* Iob had given Zophar Bildads friend such a sarcasticall check, chap. 12. 2. *No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you.* And here now Bildad replies upon him with the like kind of speech.

Verf. 5. *Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.*] This is here set down as that unchangeable course of Gods Providence, which as Bildad implied in the foregoing verse would not be altered for Iobs sake, *yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out,* &c. as if he should have said, Never think that God will change the constant way of his governing the world for you: *yea, assure your self* though the wicked man may live in a glorious and prosperous condition, yet it shall not long continue; this splendour of his shall quite be extinguished, so that there shall not so much as a spark of it remain: all his designs to keep up himself in his former glory shall come to nothing. Concerning this metaphoricall expression of light for prosperity, See the Notes also upon 2 Sam. 22. 29. and Esth. 8. 19.

Verf. 6. *The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.*] That is, all the honour and bravery of his household and family shall be turned into woe and misery, and the glory that he hath raised shall in and with himself expire and come to an end. And indeed if by the putting out of the wicked mans candle (or lamp) be meant, not only that his prosperity should be turned into misery, but also that himself should be cut off by the hand of God, it is very probable that Bildad might herein allude to that which Iob had said, chap. 17. 1.

My breath is corrupt my days are extinct, and meant hereby to let Iob know, that therein it fared no otherwise with him: then all wicked men must expect to fare.

Verf. 7. *The steps of his strength shall be streightned.*] There are two particulars may be implied herein, to wit, 1. That the misery that should at last befall the wicked man should make him leave that pride of his stately going, which he used whilst he was in the height of his former power and glory; and 2. Principally that he should not carry on his affairs with such speedy successe as formerly he had done, but in every thing he undertook, yea when he was carrying on his designs with greatest strength, he should fall into troubles and meet with unremoveable streights and difficulties, concerning which see the Note also, 2 Sam. 22. 37.

Verf. 8. *For he is cast into a net by his own feet: &c.*] Thus he compares the wicked man to some wild beast, some beast of prey: and affirms that through his brutish blindnesse he should even throw himself into dangers and mischiefs; and then the following clause, *and he walketh upon a snare* is added, either to imply that it is no wonder he is so caught, and that because whereever he goes he is in continuall danger of some mischief or other; or else to imply that striving to get out of the snare wherein he is caught, he should only farther intangle himself, falling still into more and more snares every step he takes.

Verf. 9. *The grin shall take him by the heel, &c.*] That is, he shall be suddenly and unexpectedly intangled when he was most confident of his safety because of his great power, and riches, and the wise ordering of his affairs; *and the robber shall prevail against him*, that is, shall overmaster and destroy him. And it is likely this is here added, because robbers used to lay snares and traps for them that passed by; and when they were taken therein then they fell upon them and slew them; and that he had respect herein to those plundering Sabeans and Chaldeans, that had robbed Iob of his cattell.

Verf. 10. *The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.*] The meaning of this is only this much, that the wicked man is alwaies in danger of hidden mischiefs, which he never foresees or fears. But yet some conceive that he rather speaks of a snare laid for him in the ground, either as alluding to the custom of robbers in those times who used to lye lurking in holes, and dens of the earth, and so were as a snare in the ground, leaping out on a sudden from thence and surprising them that passed by; or else to imply that it was a deadly snare, and such as should lay him in the dust, in the grave.

Verf. 11. *Terrours shall make him afraid on every side and drive him to his feet.*] Because Iob had complained of the terrours wherewith he was often affrighted, chap. 7. 14. *Thou shalt not see me with dreams and terrifyest me through visions,* and chap. 6. 4. *The terrours of God do set themselves in array against me,* therefore doth Bildad mention this here as one of the judgements which God brings upon the wicked man, to wit, that he should be so affrighted with variety of terrours from God, from Satan and his own conscience, that they should make him run up and down as a distracted man, desiring any where to hide himself but not knowing where. And

thus as before he compared the wicked man to beasts in regard of the nets, snares, and traps that are laid for them, so here he compares his terrors to hounds where-with such beasts are pursued by huntsmen, which appears the more clearly by the following expressions.

Verf. 12. *His strength shall be hunger-bitten, &c.*] Some understand this of the consumption of his wealth, *His strength*, that is, his great and mighty estate, *shall be hunger-bitten*, shall waste, and consume, and be eaten up; Again others understand it of his children, *His strength*, that is, his children, (who are the strength of their fathers according to that Psal. 127. 4. *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of the youth*, and that Gen. 49. 3. where the first-born is called the beginning of the fathers strength) *shall be hunger-bitten*, that is, shall pine away for want of food. But because in the following verse he speaks of the wasting of the wicked mans own strength, I conceive it is so also to be understood here, to wit, that though the wicked man be never so great, yet God would bring him to that condition that he should even famish for hunger. And accordingly also we must understand the following clause, *and destruction shall be ready at his side*, that is, sudden and unavoidable destruction shall wait continually upon him, ready every moment to seize upon him.

Verf. 13. *It shall devour the strength of his skin, &c.*] By the strength of his skin is meant the flesh and fat of all his members, which bears up his skin and makes it look fresh and fair, to which some adde also the sinews and bones: and that which Bildad saith shall devour the strength of his skin is that destruction mentioned in the former verse, *destruction shall be ready at his side*, or the famine and hunger, whereof it is also there said that *his strength shall be hunger-bitten*. And the same I conceive is meant also by the first-born of death in the following clause, *even the first-born of death shall devour his strength*; for though by the first-born of death some conceive the devil is meant, because he was the first condemned to die; or because he had the power of death, Heb. 2. 14. and generally Expositours hold that thereby is meant the bitterest, cruellest, terriblest, and strongest of all deaths, that which amongst all the waies of dying carrieth away the preheminance, which is the strength of death and hath in it a double portion of dying, when the agonies of death are most dreadfull upon a man, so that all the while he is dying, he is as one that is tortured upon a rack; (and indeed because the first-born had a double portion, and were the chief among their brethren, and were esteemed the strength of their parents, Gen. 49. 3. *Ruben thou art my first-born, my might*, &c. therefore the strongest and chiefest of all things whatsoever are usually tearmed the first-born, as Esay. 14. 30. the poorest and most beggarly of men are called *the first-born of the poor*) yet I conceive that principally Bildad intended hereby that one particular way of dying, which indeed must needs be of all the most grievous, to wit, when men die by famine or hunger, being starved to death for want of food.

Verf. 14. *His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours out of his body; his bodily strength whereon he trusted shall be utterly destroyed; Or, every thing wherein he placed any confidence shall be utterly

terly rooted out of his dwelling place, namely his riches, children, &c. and it shall bring him to the king of terrors, that is, this rooting his confidence out of his tabernacle, or his broken confidence, the despair he shall fall into upon the rooting out of his confidence, shall bring him to the chiefest and greatest of all terrors, or to death, which is indeed to a naturall man the most terrible of all troubles, as a heathen could say, and so consequently also to the devil, who in regard of the terrors wherewith he at last affrights those wicked men, whom at first by his flattering temptations he drew into sin, and in regard of those eternall torments wherewith he shall torment them, may well be called the king of terrors.

Verf. 15. *It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his, &c.*] That is, the king of terrors mentioned in the foregoing words; Or rather, destruction, misery, and want, (whereof he had spoken before verf. 12.) shall dwell in his tabernacle. As in reference thereto he had said before, verf. 13. *It shall devour the strength of his skin,* so in reference thereto again he saith here, *It shall dwell in his tabernacle because it is none of his,* that is, Destruction shall take possession of his dwelling place, because he got it by unjust means, and so indeed in right it is none of his. As for the following clause, *brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation,* the meaning of it is, either 1. That God should utterly burn up his dwelling place, to wit, either with storms of thunder and lightning from heaven, which is of a sulphureous nature, as by the favour thereof may be sometimes discerned, or with very showers of fire and brimstone; or 2. That God should make the place of his habitation barren and desolate, salt and brimstone being usually esteemed signes and causes of barrenness in a land, according to that Deut. 29. 23. *The whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown nor beareth, nor any grasse groweth therein,* & this may seem the more probable because of the word *scattered* which is here used, *brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation;* or 3. That God should destroy him and his with some strange and horrible judgement, as once he did Sodome and Gomorrha; for thus (as in allusion to that) the Scripture is wont to expresse unusuall and stupendious judgements, as Psal. 116. *upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest;* and so again, Ezek. 38. 22. and that Bildad did allude to that destruction of Sodome and Gomorrha, we may the rather think because Iob and these his friends dwelt not farre from those parts and lived not long after the time when those cities were destroyed, so that the memory of that judgement must needs be fresh amongst them. And yet withall it is likely that he did covertly also put Iob in mind how his cattel and servants were consumed with fire from heaven, chap. 1. 16.

Verf. 16. *His roots shall be dried up beneath; and above shall his branch be cut off.*] This may be inferred as an effect of that which he had said before, *brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation,* to wit, if that be understood of the barrenness of the land wherein he dwelt. But I conceive the plain meaning of these words to be this, that he shall utterly be destroyed root and branch, he and all that belongs to him, according to that, Mal. 4. 1. *All that doe wickedly shall be stubble; the day comes that shall burn them up; saith the Lord of hosts; it shall leave them neither*

root nor branch; for the wicked man is here compared to a blasted tree, as before, chap. 15. 30. of which see the Note there.

Verf. 18. *He shall be driven from light into darknesse, &c.*] Herein may be comprehended, that by the miseries that God shall bring upon him, he shall be violently turned out of a prosperous condition into an estate of dismall and dolefull distresse, and dishonour, and sorrow; but yet doubtlesse the chief thing intended herein is, that he should be at last also driven from the light of this world into the land of darknesse, the grave, yea into that utter darknesse of hell: for therefore to explain these words is that following clause added, of being *chased out of the world.*

Verf. 19. *He shall neither have son nor nephew, &c.*] That is, he shall leave no posterity behind him, neither son, nor sons son; wherein he plainly strikes at Iob, that had lost all his children.

Verf. 20. *They that come after him shall be astonied at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.*] At his day, that is, the day of his destruction, that observable day, when God shall at length render to the wicked man according to his works, according to that, Psal. 137. 7. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Ierusalem;* and Psal. 37. 13. *The Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming:* The meaning therefore of these words is, that the judgement of God upon the wicked man shall be so grievous and fearfull, and thereupon so notorious, that it should be famous in succeeding times, and the very report of it should astonish those that live then, though they never saw it, even as it did affright those that went before, or, that lived with him, who were eye-witnesses of the vengeance that was inflicted on him.

Verf. 21. *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*] That is, of every ungodly man; concerning which see the Note, 1 Sam. 2. 12. It is as if he had said, Certainly, as sure as God is just, this is and this will be at last the portion of all wicked men and hypocrites, that do not truly fear God; to this their stately dwellings shall at last be brought, and to this all their great wealth and pomp shall come; and therefore do not deceive thy self Iob; by thy present condition it is evident what thou hast been; and if thou wilt not hearken to thy friends to repent and turn unto the Lord, thus as all other wicked men doe, thou must expect to end thy daies.

C H A P. XIX.

Verf. 2. **H**ow long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?] Because Bildad began his Reply with that disdainfull expostulation, *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?* chap. 18. 2. Iob, addressing himself here to answer him, begins after the same manner, and retorts the expostulation upon him and his other two friends, Nay, saith he, *How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?* therein giving them to understand, how his soul was vexed and his heart torn within him, and even broken to pieces with the bitternesse of their words, as knowing well that all they had spoken of wick-

wicked men they intended of him, so that all his bodily sufferings were not so bad to him, as those their sharp reproaches, wherewith his very soul was galled and wounded, and so consequently also upbraiding them hereby for their uncharitableness and cruelty, that could one after another lay on such load upon one that was already in such a sad afflicted condition, and willing them as it were to consider whether he deserved to be blamed, for not giving over speaking for the justifying of himself, or they for not giving over to cast such unjust reproaches upon him.

Verf. 3. *These ten times have ye reproached me, &c.*] That is, many times, again and again: see the Note, Gen. 31. 7. *You are not ashamed that you make your selves strange to me;* or as it is in the margin, *that you harden your selves against me;* in which words he blames them, and that as for a fault of which they might well be ashamed if they had any shame in them, to wit, either because they were so hard-hearted as to use him so reproachfully being in so sad a condition, and never to regard the mournfull complaints whereby he had endeavoured to move them to pity; or else (if you read this clause as it is in our Bibles) because having been his old acquaintance and friends, they carried themselves towards him, as if they had been mere strangers to him, both in that they showed no more love to him, nor did no more compassionate him in his miseries, then if they had been mere strangers; and likewise in that a stranger, that had never known any thing of his close and strict walking with God in a holy and righteous life, could not have censured him more uncharitably then they had done, who had long intimately known, and had been often eye-witnesses of his religious and just conversation.

Verf. 4. *And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my self.*] The meaning of these words any one would take to be clearly and plainly this, *Be it indeed that I have erred,* Suppose, though I cannot yield indeed that it is so, that I have done some evil through ignorance or infirmity wherewith God hath been provoked to this displeasure against me; or suppose that I have now in my arguing with you spoken something that is not fitting, *mine error remaineth with my self,* I suffer for it and not you, or I am like to smart for it and not you, and therefore you need not trouble your selves with it. Indeed because this is usually the speech of men desperately wicked, when they shake off the reproofs of those that wish them well, Trouble not your selves any more with me, if I doe any thing I should not doe, it is not you but I that must suffer for it; and so it could not well stand with the piety of Iob to answer thus, therefore some Expofitors give another sense of these words, which is this, *And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my self,* that is, suppose that my life hath not been in every respect such as it ought to have been, or that in my pleading with you I have maintained any thing that is false and erroneous, truly in this error I do and must for any thing I see still remain, since you have no way convinced me, nor informed me better; Or thus, suppose that in pleading my cause against you, I have forgotten my self, and spoken something unadvisedly, my fault here-in must lye upon my self; but what is this to the purpose, for that which is th

great Question between us, whether or no the miseries I now suffer be laid upon me for my former wickedness; you quarrell at me for being so full of words and so violent in my discourse; but what is this to the question in hand? But yet, considering 1. That the best are sometimes overborn with temptations and passions in such great distresses as Iob was now in, and the drift of this book is to set down as well how he was tempted, as how he did suppress and overcome his temptations, and 2. That his aime in these words was not to reject any just reproof or admonition of his friends, but to tax them for their bitter reviling speeches, I see not but that the first exposition is most approveable, *And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself*, as if he should have said, Though I have erred, it is nothing to you, let me alone to bear what God hath laid upon me, and do not you adde to mine afflictions by deriding and flouting me, and charging me with many false devised calumnies. Because they had alledged nothing that had any solidity in it either to comfort or convince him: therefore he wills them to consider that though he had erred, if it were so, he smarted for it, and this could give them no just ground to use him so as they had done; so that he speaks this, I say, as taxing the frivolousness, and bitterness of that which they had spoken, and as professing that it was more easie for him to endure what he suffered, then to bear their flouts and reproachfull speeches.

Verf. 5. *If indeed ye will magnifie your selves against me, and plead against me my reproach, &c.* By their magnifying themselves against him is meant, that being in a prosperous and flourishing condition themselves, they did proudly insult over him that was in misery, and as it were trample upon him; and by pleading against him his reproach, is meant their alledging against him, as the only argument whereby they sought to prove him a wicked man and an hypocrite, the heavy punishments which God had inflicted on him; for these they are which he terms his reproach, because with these they reproached him, as making them such clear evidences of his former wickedness. The greatest difficulty in these words is, why upon this he saith here, he inferres that which follows in the next verse, *If indeed*, saith he, *ye will magnifie your selves against me, and plead against me my reproach*, that is, if ye be indeed seriously resolved to triumph over me, and to plead the judgements that God hath laid upon me thereby to prove me a wicked man, then *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me about with his net*: And to this there may three answers be given, 1. That by alledging this of Gods dealing with him he sought to imply, that the grievousness of his sufferings might well wring from him those complaints, which they judged so excessive, and that therefore they had no cause so to triumph over him as they did. 2. By putting them in mind that it was God that had brought those miseries upon him which he now endured his aim was to imply, that when God did correct a man thus, he did it not that others should insult over him and vex him with scornfull and reproachfull speeches, but rather that they should pity him and comfort him, and take warning thereby to look to themselves, that the same judgements were not inflicted upon them too, and 3. That he first yields in these words, that it was true indeed that God had dealt with him just as they had said God used to

deal with wicked men, and therefore whereas Bildad had talked so much of the nets, and snares wherein wicked men were taken, he useth here the same expression, *know now that God hath overthrown me and hath compassed me with his net*, and then afterwards prove, that yet notwithstanding it did not follow thence that he was a wicked man.

Verf. 7. *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard, &c.*] The originall word here translated *wrong* may also be translated *violence*; and then the meaning may be only this, that he cryed out of the violence of Gods proceedings against him, in that the miseries he had brought upon him were so exceeding great; but reading it as it is in our Bibles, *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard, &c.* then the meaning must be, that he cryed out of the injuries that were done him by men, the robbers that had spoyled him of his estate, or his friends that insulted over him and derided him in his misery, and vexed him and reproached him, as he had before complained. Some Expositours I know understand it, that he had complained bitterly of wrong done him by the Lord, in that the miseries he had laid upon him were no way proportionable to any offence he had committed against God, making this the height of his misery, that though he cryed out of these things, yet neither God nor man regarded his cry nor afforded him the least comfort or help; And all they say for Iob herein is, that in this his corruptions did too farre prevail over him, as over the best they will sometimes doe in the hour of temptation. But methinks it is too harsh to charge this upon Iob, & thus to understand his words; neither is there any just reason that can be given, why it may not be understood only of the wrong that had been done him by men.

Verf. 8. *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot passe, &c.*] That is, he hath brought me into inextricable miseries, out of which ther's no hope nor possibility to escape; and to the same purpose is the following clause, *and he hath set darknesse in my paths*, that is, I cannot see which way to turn my self, to wit, either because he was so amazed with his sorrows and terrours, or because his troubles were so desperate. The like expressions Iob had used before, chap. 3. 23. of which see the Note there.

Verf. 9. *He hath stript me of my glory and taken the crown from my head.*] By his glory and his crown some understand his children, according to that, *Hos. 9. 11. their glory shall flee away as a bird; from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*, and that *Prov. 17. 6. childrens children are the crown of old men*; Some his wealth, and great estate, according to that *Gen. 31. 1. where Jacobs riches are called his glory* (of which see the Note there) and that *Prov. 14. 24. the crown of the wife is their riches*; some the dignity and authority which formerly he had in the place where he lived, as having borne some place of magistracy amongst them, whence it is that he saith afterward chap. 29. 7., &c. *when I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street, the young men saw me and hid themselves, &c.* some the good report and esteem he had before amongst all that knew him, whereof he was now stript; as being despised and in great disgrace, every one accounting him a wicked man and an hypocrite. But I conceive the words must be understood generally, to wit, that God had bereaved him

of all that had formerly been an honour and an ornament to him.

Verf. 10. *He hath destroyed me on every side, &c.*] That is, every way, and in every thing: and therefore he addes, *and I am gone*, that is, I am in a manner a dead man, ther's no hope of me: for so we find the same phrase used, Psal. 39. 13. *O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I goe hence, and be no more*; yea because of the following clause, *and mine hope hath he removed like a tree*, it may seem that in these words, *he hath destroyed me on every side*, he alludes to those, that when they intend to grub up a tree by the roots, do dig up the ground and hew it round about on every side; and so thereupon inferres that there was no more hope of his recovery here in this world, then there was of a tree digged up by the roots.

Verf. 11. *And he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.*] That is, He doth not correct me as a father, but deales with me as if he looked upon me as an enemy. And this is one thing for which Elihu condemnes Iob, chap. 33. 8, 10. *I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, --- he counteth me for his enemy.* Yet the words do not import, that God concluded that Iob was his enemy, but that he proceeded against him as if he had taken him for an enemy.

Verf. 12. *His troupes come together, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verse said that God counted him as an enemy, here he proceeds accordingly in the same metaphoricall expression, and shews how God did as it were lay siege against him, *His troupes come together* (which is meant not only of the Chaldeans and others that had robbed him of his estate, but generally of those armies of Afflictions that did together break in upon him) *and raise up their way against me*, to wit, as pioners are wont to make waies even, and large, and passable for armies that are to march that way, or as souldiers are wont to cast up trenches, and to raise up batteries and galleries, that they may get in to a city which they have besieged, *and encamp against me round about*, that is, they block me up from all possibility of escape and hope of relief; for all these figurative expressions are to set forth, how very many, how violent, and of how long continuance his afflictions were, encamping about him as souldiers in a siege.

Verf. 13. *He hath put my brethren far from me, &c.*] Even this may be added also with respect to the former metaphor: as if he should have said, My brethren, friends, and others that should have been as auxiliary forces to have aided me in my streights, God hath also quite taken off from helping me: they come not near me, or their hearts are alienated from me.

Verf. 14. *They that dwell in my house, and my maids count me for a stranger.*] If amongst those of his house he comprehended those also, whom by way of hospitality he had entertained and harboured amongst those of his family, his complaint is herein the juster and sadder, that they to whom he had shown so much mercy or kindnesse should so little regard him; and of his maids he makes particular mention, because they in regard of their sex being naturally of a more tender and pitifull disposition, it was the more strange that they should carry themselves so strangely and unmercifully towards him, regarding him no more then if they had no relation at all to him.

Verf. 16. *I called my servant, and he gave me no answer, I entreated him with my mouth.*]

month.] That is, When I called my servant, so far was he from doing what I would have had done, that he would not vouchsafe to give me an answer; yea though instead of commanding him, I entreated him, not by others sent to him, but with mine own mouth, all this would doe no good, even to my face he would slight and scorne me.

Verf. 17. *My breath is strange to my wife, &c.*] Almost all Expositours understand this of his wives loathing to come nigh him, because of the ill savour of his breath by reason of the putrifaction of his lungs and other infirmities that lay upon him. But I rather conceive that by his *breath* is meant the words he spake to her, his complaints and entreaties, (to which also may be added his sighs and his groans) *My breath is strange to my wife*, as if he should have said, even when I speak to my wife I spend my breath in vain, she that lay in my bosome regards not my complaints and entreaties, my sighs and cries, no more then if she had been a mere stranger to me: And indeed so much is clear by the following clause, where he adds, by way of explaining what he had said before, that his breath was strange to his wife, *though I entreated for the childrens sake of mine own body*; that is, though I besought her even for the conjugall bonds sake wherewith we were tyed together, and for the childrens sake which God had bestowed upon us, as the pledges and means of our mutuall love one to another. Indeed a great question it is amongst Expositours, what children these were for whose sake Iob should beg for respect from his wife in this time of his misery, since at the very first of his troubles both his sons and daughters were slain by the fall of the house upon them where they were feasting together; and to this some say, that he had other little children that were not then slain; and others, that it is meant of his childrens children. But because the Text, seems expressely to mention all his store of children where it saith that he had seven sons and three daughters, chap. 1. 2. (which were all cut off together) and 2. Because in many passages Iob seems to complain that God had rooted out all his posterity, therefore I rather think that he meant this of those his children at first mentioned; nor can I see why it should seem strange, that he should mention the children God had given them whilst they lived together as man and wife, as an argument whereby to persuade her not to despise him, though at the time when he spake this God had taken them away.

Verf. 18. *Yea young children despised me, &c.*] This may be read as it is in the margin, *yea the wicked despised me*, this being a sore affliction to the righteous servants of God, when they are made a laughing stock to an ungodly crew; But reading it as it is in our Bibles, *yea young children despised me*, by *young children* we must understand those that we call young ones or youths, the younger sort of men; see the Note 1 Kings 3. 7. or at the utmost boyes and girles, not the young sort of children. And we must know that even this is mentioned as an aggravation of his misery, 1. Because children are naturally more pittifull to them that are in misery, and withall afraid to despise grave and aged men, and 2. Because it must needs very much vex and fret such men when every boy and girle shall despise them. As for those words *I arose* in the following clause, *I arose and they spake against me.*

Some think that, thereby is meant that so soon as he showed himself, perceiving in what a condition he was in, they presently began to revile him, and to speak against him what they had heard others say; some again think the meaning to be this, that though he arose up as by way of respect to them, yet they despised and reproached him; others, that when he arose to goe away from them, (as not able to endure such contempt, and yet not willing to contend with them) as soon as his back was turned he might presently hear how they did reproach and revile him: and others, that when he arose to reprove them for despising him, then they spake against him. And indeed these three last Expositions I conceive the most probable.

Verf. 19. *All my inward friends abhorred me, &c.*] It is in the originall, *the men of my secret*, that is, those to whom I imparted all my secrets, *and they whom I loved*, to wit, most dearly, *are turned against me*. In this doubtlesse he aimes particularly at his three friends, as upbraiding them for dealing so unfriendly yea unmercifully with him.

Verf. 20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, &c.*] Reading this clause according to the Translation that is set in the margin, *My bone cleaveth to my skin, as to my flesh*, the meaning is clear, to wit, that he was so pined away, that being nothing but skin and bones, his bones did now cleave to his skin, as formerly they did to his flesh. And thus I conceive the words must be understood, though they be read as they are in our Bibles; yet some would have them understood thus, *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh*, that is, to the skin of my flesh, or the skin of my body; or to my skin, which is my flesh: for so that which is translated Psal. 102. 5. *My bones cleave to my skin*, is in the originall, *My bones cleave to my flesh*. As for that which follows, *And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth*, it is all one as if he had said, that to say true he had no other skin left but the skin of his teeth, to wit, his lips (for so some understand it) or the skin of his gums, the skin of his body being all over rather a scab then skin, as being overspread in every part with boiles and ulcers; And therefore indeed some Expositours say, that when the Devil filled the body of Iob with sores and ulcers, he left his lips and other the instruments of speech free, purposely that he might be able with his mouth to blaspheme God.

Verf. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, &c.*] As if he should have said, If you will approve your selves friends as you pretend to be, let this which I have said move you to pity me and comfort me, and do not still condemne me for an hypocrite, and adde affliction to the afflicted. As for the reason that is added, *for the hand of God hath touched me*, see the Notes, chap. 1. 11, & 2. 5.

Verf. 22. *Why do you persecute me as God and are not satisfied with my flesh?*] This which Iob here upbraids his friends with, to wit, that they persecuted him as God, may be understood two severall waies; either 1. That when God afflicted him, they did so too; they did as it were joyn with God in afflicting him, and making his life burdensome to him: when God punisheth any man or men, though the punishments be never so justly inflicted, it is the duty of those that behold them thus punished to pity them, and be tender over them; neither must they

they by any means insult over them; but rather, reflect upon themselves, and be afraid of themselves, as considering that God may as justly lay his hand upon them, as he hath done upon these whom they behold in such misery. Now that therefore for which he blames his friends here may be only this, because when Gods hand was heavy upon him, they instead of pitying him did also set themselves against him, and by their hard usage and bitter reproaches did adde to his affliction, forgetting themselves to be men subject to the same miseries; or 2. That they did afflict him in the same manner, as God did, to wit, in that, 1. As God did persecute him incessantly and without intermission, bringing calamities upon him one in the neck of another, without affording him any breathing time, so did they follow him with reproach upon reproach, and censure upon censure, not yielding him any rest: and 2. In that they persecuted him as an enemy, as God did, and in as heavy a manner; As God had laid load upon him so did they; as God had appeared in a way of wrath against him, so did they: and so he doth as it were intimate that their scorns, and scoffs, and calumnies were as grievous to him, as all the other miseries that God had laid upon him: or 3. That they arrogated that to themselves which belonged only to God, to wit, either because they did in so masterly a manner condemne him for an hypocrite, which none could know but God only, who is the searcher of the heart and of the reins; or else rather because they did causelessly persecute him; *why do you persecute me as God?* as if he had said, However God in regard of his absolute Sovereignty over men may deal with them as seems good in his own eyes, and so may lay what afflictions he pleaseth upon me, merely because it is his will so to doe, though there were no other cause at all; yet you have no such power over me; and therefore shew why it is that you do thus persecute me; what? will you make your selves Gods? And then for the next clause, wherein he chargeth them that they were not satisfied with his flesh, *Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?* the drift thereof I conceive is to imply, either that it was a high degree of cruelty in them, that not content with the grievous miseries he had endured in his body, even to the utter wasting and consuming of his flesh, (besides that he was stripped of all other outward comforts whatsoever) they should also seek as they had done, to wound and afflict his spirit also; as if he had said, Though God afflicteth my mind and my soul, and hath filled my soul with terrors, yet why should you force on my affliction as farre as God doth? or else, that in regard they were not satisfied with all those insufferable miseries that he lay under, but did still prosecute him with so much bitterness, they were herein like beasts of prey, that when they have eaten the flesh of the poor creatures they prey upon, cannot be satisfied therewith till they have quite devoured them, and after they have eaten the flesh do also gnaw and crush the bones asunder. And indeed all cruell oppression, and crushing of the poor and afflicted, is usually expressed in the Scripture by that phrase of devouring them and eating up their flesh, as Psal. 27. 2. *My foes came upon me to eat up my flesh*, and Gal. 5. 15. *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

Vers. 23. *O that my words were now written, oh that they were printed in a*

book, &c.] Though some referre this particularly to that following passage, verse 25. wherein he makes indeed a most clear and glorious confession of his faith in Christ his Redeemer, and his hope concerning the resurrection of the dead, and life eternall, worthy to be taken notice of by all that should live in succeeding times, yet I rather think he meant it of all that he had spoken in that dispute that had been betwixt him and his three friends, yea and of all that he should afterward speak. To shew, how clear his conscience was, and how confident he was of the justice of his cause, and to manifest withall that he had not spoken so rashly and unadvisedly, and much lesse so desperately and blasphemously, as they pretended he had, (though some words might slip from him in his passion that were not altogether to be justified) he wisheth that his words were written and printed in a book, &c. For hereby he intimates that he was so farre from declining the judgement of any man living, that he was willing it should be known both to the present and future ages, as being assured that whoever in succeeding times should read what he had suffered, and what had passed betwixt him and his friends, they would pity his condition, and acquit him from all those false accusations they had charged upon him. Yea and therefore he wisheth that his words were not only written and printed in a book, but also *vers. 24. that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever:* And however some Expositours understand this, that herein he wisheth that his words were graven with an iron pen in plates or leafs of lead, yea in the rock for ever; yet others think that according to our translation the ground of this expression must needs be, either that in those times they were wont to make their graving tools of iron tempered with lead as now a-daies they are tempered with steel; or else that when they desired to grave any thing in stone for a perpetuall monument, they used to cut the letters with an iron pen or graving tool, and then to fill up the cuts or furrows of those letters with lead that they might be the more plain and legible, and that hence he speaks of having his words *graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever.*

Vers. 25. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.] Some of our best Expositours (as Calvin, Mercer and others) understand this merely of Gods delivering Iob out of that sad and forlorn condition wherein he now lay, to wit, that he knew that however he was little better at present then as a man that is dead and buried, yet he had a Redeemer that should rescue him at length out of this condition, even the ever-living God, who *is the first and the last, Esa. 48. 12.* and therefore shall be after all men are vanished and gone, and shall shew forth his power in the quickening and reviving of poor men, dust and ashes, even when they are fallen into the lowest and most desperate estate and condition. And indeed it cannot be denied 1. That God is many times called our Redeemer, in the Scripture, as *Esa. 63. 16. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer.* 2. That an estate of extreme misery and affliction is often expressed in the Scripture by that of death; men in such a condition are often spoken of as dead men, yea as men that are buried and turned into dust, and that to imply that such a condition is to men as bitter as death, that it bereaves them of
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all the comforts of this life, and is past all hope of recovery. I was, saith the Apostle 2. Cor. 11. 23, *in deaths oft*. And so Psal. 88. 4, 5. *I am counted with them that goe down into the pit — free among the dead*, and Psal. 22. 15. *Thou hast brought me, saith David, into the dust of death*, and 31. That the deliverance of such men out of such an extreme low and forlorn condition is often tearmed a quickning, and a reviving, and a raising of them up from the dead, as Psal. 71. 20. *Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth*, and Isa. 26. 19. speaking of the bringing home of the Jews out of Babylon, *Thy dead men, saith the Prophet, shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust*. See also Psal. 85. 6, and Hof. 6. 2. But yet 1. Because Iob had hitherto disclaimed all hope of being delivered out of that forlorn condition wherein he lay, and of being restored to any estate of prosperity and happinesse again (though his friends had often assured him, that if he would repent, it would be so) affirming that his hope was gone, and that he was in a worse condition then a tree that is cut down, of which there is hope that it may sprout again. See chap. 16. 22, and 17. 1, 11, 13, &c. and therefore it is no way probable, that he should be now on a sudden raised to such a height of hope concerning Gods raising him to such a prosperous condition, contrary to all his former discourses; and 2. Because there are some passages in the following verses, which cannot well be understood of a resurrection of his outward estate, as, that it is spoken of as a strange thing, that he should see his Redeemer with the same eyes that he had then, and some other of the like nature, therefore, I say, if we joyntly consider of that which is said here with that which follows in the two next verses, I cannot see how it can be otherwise understood then of Christ the promised Redeemer, who indeed is most properly tearmed our *Goel*, as it is in the originall, our Redeemer (it is the same word that is used Levit. 25. 25. for the next kinsman that was to redeem the estate of his decayed brother: of which see the Note there) and that because he taking our nature upon him, became, as it were, our near kinsman, our brother, Heb. 2. 11. *flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone*. So that I conceive the drift of Iob in these words was, by this profession of his faith to prove, that notwithstanding his sufferings and miseries were so grievous, as he had now acknowledged, yet he was farre from being a wicked man and an hypocrite, as they had charged him to be; *I know*, saith he, *that my Redeemer liveth*, that is, I that am so severely condemned by you, and am now in such a miserable condition, even I do certainly believe, that there is a Redeemer to come, that he is *my Redeemer* (for there is much emphasis in that word *my*) and that he lives, as being the ever-living God, the first and the last, yea the fountain of life to all that shall believe in him, and so shall one day redeem my person from destruction and maintain my cause against all those false aspersions you now cast upon me. And then for the last clause, *and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*, either it is meant of the second coming of Christ to judgement, to wit, that he should then appear upon earth, and that as a conquerour, trampling upon the grave as a conquer'd enemy, and raising all flesh by his almighty command out of the dust, yea and as a judge appearing in his glory, to passe.

passed sentence upon all both quick and dead; or else (which some rather think, and it seems very probable) it is meant of his first coming, (as the following words in the next verses are meant of his second coming,) to wit, that in the latter daies (that is, in the daies of the New Testament,) this his Redeemer should be made man, and in mans nature should live and dwell upon the earth, and being there slain should rise again, and stand again upon the earth triumphantly, and so should, as the Redeemer of his people, vanquish death and accomplish the work of mans redemption. And indeed that the daies of the Gospel, from the time of Christs incarnation to the end of the world, are frequently called in the Scripture *the latter daies*, or, *the last daies*, cannot be questioned; see Isa. 2. 2. Hos. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 1. of which, two reasons are usually given, to wit, 1. Because all was then accomplished, which had been prophesied concerning the work of mans Redemption; that was the perfection of all times, or as the Apostle calls it, Gal. 4. 4. *the fulnesse of time*, and 2. Because the whole time of the worlds continuance being divided into three great Periods, the 1. From the creation to the Law; the 2. From the Law to Christs Incarnation; the 3. From that to the day of Iudgement, this which contains all the daies of the Gospel is the last of the three. But however very observable it is which some Expositours have noted, to wit, that Iob was so strengthened and cheared up with the consideration of this which here he saith, concerning the hope he had in his Redeemer, and concerning the resurrection of his body, and the blisse he should then enjoy, that after this we meet not with any word he spake, arguing any such fainting and impatience of spirit, as many which before this came from him.

Verf. 26. *And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*] Though being laid in the grave worms must destroy not my skin only but even this whole body, (such as it is rather the shadow of a body, then a body indeed) yet by that my Redeemer, who shall arise from the grave and live again in despite of death, even this my body when dead shall be raised again, and reunited to my soul, and then to my great joy *in my flesh* face to face *I shall see God*, and so shall enjoy the presence of my God and my Saviour for ever and ever. As is noted in the foregoing verse, some indeed understand this of Gods delivering him out of his present afflictions, to wit, that though his skin and flesh were at present eaten up as it were with worms, yet God would restore his flesh again, and so in his flesh he should behold God manifesting himself as a father to him. But I say the words are farre clearer if we understand them of his seeing God at the resurrection.

Verf. 27. *Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.*] Even this also some understand of his seeing God to his great advantage, raising him from the sad estate whereinto he had cast him, and restoring him to a comfortable condition again; therefore those words *and mine eyes shall behold and not another, though my reins be consumed within me*, they understand thus, that though his reins, that is, all the strength and vigour of his body were in a manner utterly consumed, his body being little better then a rotten carcase, yet he would look to God and his eyes should be

be fixed upon him in hope and expectation of help and deliverance, and not upon any other. But still I say, I rather understand all these passages of his hope of seeing God when his dead body should be raised up at the generall Resurrection. And so taking the words as meant of his seeing God at the Resurrection, we must know, 1. That he saith, *whom I shall see for my self*, because he should see him for his own advantage, as his own God, and his own Saviour, not as the wicked should see him, namely, as reconciled to others, not to them, as a Redeemer to others not to them; and 2. He saith that his own eyes should behold him, *and not another*, to set forth, that he should not at the Resurrection have a new body created, but that he should be raised with the very same numericall body, wherein he had formerly lived upon the earth: and then 3. That the last clause, *though my reins be consumed within me*, may be meant either of the present consumption of his body, or else of the utter wasting of his body in the grave, to wit, that though he was so wasted that his very inmost parts his reins were consumed, and much more would be consumed when he came to rot in the grave, yet he knew well that at the Resurrection he should be raised up perfect again, and then with those his eyes he should behold his Redeemer. I know that some Expositours do otherwise understand this last clause, that at the Resurrection he should behold his God and Redeemer to his great happinesse and comfort, though his reins were consumed within him, that is, though when he came to live with God in heaven there should then be an end of all his naturall desires. But the former exposition I judge far the better.

Verf. 28. *But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?* If we read this last clause as it is in the margin, *and what root of matter is found in me?* the meaning is then plain, to wit, that there was no cause in him why they should persecute him as they did. But reading it as it is in our Bibles, *seeing the root of the matter is found in me*, it is very hard to say what Iob intended hereby. Some would have these last words, *seeing the root of the matter is found in me*, to be a part of the recantation which Iob here adviseth his friends to make, as concerning their violence against him hitherto, to wit, that they should not only say, *why persecute we him?* but also that they should every one of them severally adde by way of judging themselves, *seeing the root of the matter is found in me*; that is, seeing the fault is in me; I have by my groundlesse surmises and jealousies, and unjust censuring of him provoked him to passion in his great distresse, and so have been the cause of all these hot debates we have had with him. But the truth is that the words can hardly be drawn to justify this Exposition. And almost all Expositours agree in this, that in the first clause Iob tells his friends, that in reason they ought to check themselves for persecuting him as they had done, and that then in the second clause a reason is given by Iob, why they ought so to check themselves, to wit, because the root of the matter was found in him, as if the words had been transposed thus, *But seeing the root of the matter is found in me, ye should say, why persecute we him?* Well, but yet still this passage is very obscure, because it is so hard to say what he meant by this *the root of the matter is found in me*, every Expositour almost being herein of a severall judgement. for 1. Some understand

derstand hereby the sound and solid reason wherewith he had maintained his cause, and so they make the sense of these words to be this, that they might well condemne themselves for persecuting him as they had done, since all things being well weighed, they could not but see, that the cause which he maintained had a root of unquestionable justice in it, it was well grounded, neither had he spoken any thing for which he had not brought very sound and substantiall arguments and reasons, 2. Others by *the root of the matter* understand his sufferings, or the inward sense he had of the evils which lay upon him, as if he had said, There is no reason in the world why you should persecute me as you doe, seeing the root, the foundation of all our arguing is found in me, that is, I am he that suffer the miseries, about which there have been such disputes between us; and so they make this passage parallell with that above, vers. 4. *And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my self.* 3. Others take it thus, You ought not thus to persecute me, seeing if you search the matter to the root and the foundation, it will be found that I am innocent, and that there is therefore some other cause of my misery, which is hidden from you, and that it is not for any wickednesse of mine, as you would have it, that God hath brought these calamities upon me. 4. Others again conceive that by *the root of the matter* is meant the integrity and sincerity of his heart towards God, which was the root both of that profession of godlinesse which he had hitherto made, and of that confidence wherewith he had now pleaded his cause before God; or else his faith whereby he was rooted in God, and which was the root from whence had sprung the purity of his conscience, the holinesse and uprightness of his life and conversation, and those words of truth, which he had uttered hitherto in the defence of himself; and so they conceive Iobs plea in these words to be this, that seeing the profession which he had made of his innocency was not a counterfeit, vain, ungrounded flourish, but was the fruit of that sincerity and faith unfeigned, that was rooted in his heart, it was an act of most grosse injustice and arrogance in them, so to persecute, to censure and revile him as they did. And last of all, many hold that it was his faith in Christ his Redeemer, and his hope of seeing God face to face at the Resurrection of the dead, whereof he had in the foregoing words made such a glorious profession, which here he terms *the root of the matter* that was found in him; and so they make the drift of these words to be this, that in all reason it was fit they should blame themselves for persecuting him as they had done, even because of this profession he had made of his faith, seeing this faith in the Redeemer is the root of all true religion and piety, and the very ground-work and foundation of salvation, neither can there be any danger of condemnation for him, that hath this faith rooted in his heart.

Vers. 29. *Be ye afraid of the sword, &c.*] As if he should have said, If not out of pity to me, yet at least for fear of the sword of Gods vengeance upon your selves, give over your bitter calumnies and cruell dealing with me. Because you are at ease and free from all afflictions, you make nothing of passing most uncharitable censures upon me, and threaten me continually with the vengeance of God; but take heed, you had best look to your selves, since there is doubtlesse a sword of divine

divine vengeance, which for your unjust and cruell dealing with me, that am in so sad a condition, may soon make you as miserable as I am. As for the words that follow, *for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword*, though some understand this of God, to wit, that when God is provoked to wrath by such iniquities as these, wherewith he had charged his friends, it brings the sword of his just vengeance upon men; yet I rather think Iob meant it of the wrath of his friends against him, to wit, that such wrath and fury as that, wherewith they had broken out against him, doth usually bring the wrath of God upon men; *that ye may know*, saith he, *there is a judgement*: the meaning whereof is, either that when the sword of Gods vengeance should fall upon them, then they should by experience find that there is a just God that judgeth the earth, that doth order and govern all things wisely and justly here in this world, a God that would judge those that did so unjustly judge others, and that would severely punish those that did so unmercifully adde affliction to the afflicted; To which some adde also, that by that present judgement upon themselves, they might know there would be hereafter a day of generall judgement, when God would judge the world in righteousness, and so the sin of those that do here judge their brethren unrighteously should be both discovered and punished; Or else that Iob gave them this warning, that knowing now (which men are apt to forget) that there is a God that will thus judge the actions of men, they might take heed of provoking him to wrath, that so they might not come to know it experimentally hereafter.

CHAP. XX.

Verf. 2. **T**hen answered Zophar, &c.] This is the second, and indeed the last reply of Zophar, who now as before took his turn in the third place; for though Eliphaz and Bildad did afterward reply again the third time upon Iob, yet Zophar after this spake no more. And observable it is that notwithstanding Iob had in the foregoing chapter made such a sad relation of the wofull condition wherein at present he was, chap. 19. 6. &c. and had so earnestly besought his friends, that they would take pity of him, verf. 21. and had made such a full and glorious confession of his faith, verf. 25, 26, 27. and had threatened them with the sword of divine vengeance, if they proceeded on still with such fury against him as they had done, yet all this moved not Zophar, but that he again fell upon Iob with as much violence as ever.

Verf. 2. *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make hast.*] It seems Zophar did here interrupt Iob before he had made an end of speaking, and so in these words he gives a reason why he could no longer keep silence; *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make hast*, as if he should have said, Whereas I resolved to have replied no more, or whereas I was desirous to let you goe on without interrupting you, till you had made an end of your own accord (as I know civility requires I should doe) truly that which you have spoken hath stirred up those thoughts in me, that do even compell me to speak; doe what I can I am not able still to bear what I hear, nor to forbear uttering what I

have thought to say; being as one in travell, I must not stay any longer, but must however it be taken break in upon you. And so this word (*therefore*) may be either referred, 1. In generall to all that Iob had answered in the foregoing chapter, either by way of justifying himself, and professing his hope of beholding to his joy, his Redeemer, when his dead body should be raised from the grave, or by way of blaming his friends for their unfriendly and unmercifull dealing with him; as if he had said, Finding how erroneous thou still art in this great point of Gods dealing with man, therefore I could not forbear but I must again answer thee. Or 2. More particularly to those severe censures which he had passed upon them for their dealing so harshly with him; which may seem the more probable, because in the following verse he seems to make these censures (which he terms reproaches) the ground of this his Reply, *I have heard*, saith he, *the check of my reproach*, and (therefore) *the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer*; Or else 3. It may be referred yet more particularly (as many hold) to the very last words that Iob had spoken, chap. 19. 29. There Iob had warned his friends to take heed lest the sword of divine vengeance did not fall upon them for their fury and wrath against such a distressed afflicted man as he was; for, saith he, *wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgement*: Now Zophar being exceedingly nettled with these words, breaks out presently as in relation thereto, *Therefore doe my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make hast*, as if he should have said, Whereas you think to stop our mouths by threatening us with the judgements of God, so farre am I from being terrified herewith, that this above all forceth me to speak, so that now I am not able to hold my peace any longer: And three reasons may be conceived why Zophar should, upon those words above others, be so much stirred in his spirit, that he could no longer forbear. 1. Because he might judge this most insufferable, that he that lay under such judgements of God himself, should yet be so confident that he was in the right, as to threaten them with the judgements of God for speaking against him; perceiving how he wrongfully applyed the judgements of God, it was time to make him see his error herein. 2. Because he might apprehend, that he had now a notable advantage to convince him from his own words, since if *wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword* (as Iob said) what cause had he to be afraid of this sword of divine vengeance, that had in so much fury and wrath uttered so many bitter speeches against God, and so scornfully despised the admonition of his friends? and 3. Because he might be eager to put him in mind, that if there were judgement and a sword of divine vengeance for wicked men, he might thence know what himself was, whom this sword of God had already so sorely wounded. However observable is the expression which Zophar here useth, *My thoughts cause me to answer*; for hereby he would seem to imply, that though he should speak zealously, yet he should not speak rashly, because he had seriously bethought himself of what he meant to say.

Verf. 3. *I have heard the check of my reproach, &c.* That is, the checks and taunts wherewith to my reproach thou hast upbraided me, and scorned the truth of God which hath been spoken to thee; for though some Expositors referre this

this particularly to that sharp expression of Iob, chap. 19. 23, *why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?* as if he should have said, *What? Do you charge me with persecuting you, with eating up your flesh? Are you not ashamed to cast such base reproaches upon us? And others to that before mentioned vers. 29. where he had threatned them with the sword of divine vengeance; yet I should rather understand it generally, either of Iobs stiffenesse in maintaining still the truth of his cause, and the innocency of his person, which Zophar esteemed a reproach to them; or of all those tart passages in Iobs speeches, wherewith Zophar apprehended himself to be reproached, he still applying that to himself, which Iob had spoken in common to them all. As for the following clause, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer, by the spirit of his understanding may be meant, either the spirit of God enlightening his mind, and causing him to understand, or his soul by which he was enabled to understand, or the force and strength of his understanding, or the highest, and chiefest, and most refined part of the understanding, that which is most free from the dregs of passion; But however doubtlesse the drift of Zophar in this expression was, either to imply that he meant to answer Iob with reason, and understanding, and not in passion and anger, as Iob had still replied upon them; or else rather to shew that the reason why he could not forbear speaking any longer, was because he did clearly understand, that it was the truth which they maintained against Iob, and was able by evident reason to convince him, of his folly in reproaching his friends as he had done for that which they had spoken, and of the wickednesse which they had charged him with.*

Vers. 4. Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, &c.] As if he should have said, I appeal to thine own conscience; canst thou be ignorant of that which the experience of all ages hath approved to be true, ever since God first made man and placed him upon the earth? to wit, (as it follows in the next verse) *that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?* And well it may be, that when Zophar spake this he had in his thoughts, how God punished Cain the son of Adam, and Ham and his cursed posterity immediately after the flood.

Vers. 6. Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds.] That is, though he overtop all men in riches, honours, authority, and high esteem, and be gotten up to the highest pitch of outward prosperity and glory, insomuch that hereupon he exalts himself in his pride as a little God upon earth, and think his condition as unchangeable as the heavens; we have the like expression Matth. 11. 23. *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell.*

Vers. 7. Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung, &c.] This expression of Zophars may imply three things, to wit, 1. That God should slay him and so he should become a loathsome stinking carcase, his body being turned wholly to rottennesse and putrifaction. 2. That when God began to execute his judgments upon him, he should become loathsome, base, and abominable unto all men, so that none should vouchsafe to save him, but he should be cast out with the

detestation and abhorring of all, and 3. That he should perish utterly both he and his, according to that which is said of Ieroboam, 1 Kings 14. 10. *I will take away the remnant of the house of Ieroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone* (concerning which see the Note there) And likely enough it is too, that Zophar might herein allude to the dunghill whereon Job now sat, chap. 2. 8. and to the complaint he had made in the foregoing chapter, that God had stripped him of his glory, and taken away the crown from his head, and that all his nearest friends, &c. despised him and stood aloof from him, and so intimated to him that it was not strange at all that it was thus, since it was the usuall portion of the wicked man thus to perish *as his own dung*, that is, mans dung, the most loathsome of all dung. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *they which have seen him shall say, where is he?* for this implies 1. That he should be utterly cut off and not be seen any more, and 2. That they that had seen him with admiration in his height of prosperity, should wonder to see afterward how on a sudden he was quite perished and gone, not so much as any memoriall being left of him, and should speak of him in a way of scorn and contempt.

Verf. 8. *He shall fly away as a dream, &c.*] That is, he shall suddenly perish and come to nothing: for by the flying away of a dream is meant, either the utter forgetting of a dream, when a man dreams and waking on a sudden, it is gone and there is no remembrance at all left of it; or else the vanishing away of those appearances and visions, which the fancy presents to a man in his sleep; look as when a man dreams of great treasures, or dainty feasts, or other things, but on a sudden the dream vanisheth, and so when he wakes all comes to nothing, there is no such thing as he dreamt of (which is sweetly expressed by the Prophet Isaiah, chap. 29. 8.) so shall it be with the wicked man, his prosperity shall suddenly vanish to nothing, and so he shall utterly perish. Job had wished chap. 19. 23, 24. *That his words were written, that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever;* perhaps in allusion to this Zophar here tells him, that instead of being thus remembred in after times, he should so utterly perish, that there should be no memoriall left of him, no more then there is of a dream when it is quite vanished and gone.

Verf. 9. *Neither shall his place any more behold him.*] This may be meant of those amongst whom he had formerly lived, to wit, that the men of his place should never see him or observe him any more; or else of the place it self wherein he had lived, concerning which see the Notes chap. 7. 10, and 8. 18.

Verf. 10. *His children shall seek to please the poor, &c.*] If we read this clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *The poor shall oppress his children*, then the meaning is, either that the poor should by violence take from his children, what he had by fraud or oppression taken from them; or that his children should come to such extreme poverty & misery, that even the poorer sort of people should be able to oppress them. But if we read it as it is in our Bibles, *His children shall please the poor*, then the meaning must be, either that his children (forced thereto by the sentence and for fear of the sentence of the judges, or otherwise) should labour to appease the poor, by restoring to them what their father had unjustly taken from them; or else that they

they should fall into such lamentable beggery and want, that they should be glad to curry favour with poor men, that from them they might get some small succour. As for the second clause, *And his hands shall restore their goods*, that is added to shew, that many times not the children of the wicked man, but the wicked man himself is forced to restore the goods he hath unjustly wrested from the poor: And yet it is not necessary that this should be limited, at least to the wicked mans restoring to the former owners what he had unjustly taken from them: for even first when he dies and so must part with, and deliver up all that he had so injuriously gotten, or 2. When others shall by force or oppression wrest from him what he had by the same evil means wrested from the poor, or 3. When by his own improvidence or folly he shall waite what he had with such greedinesse and cruelty raked out of the estates of the needy, in all these respects it may be figuratively said, that *his hands restore their goods*. And so this may be added as a reason of his childrens poverty, mentioned in the foregoing clause, to wit, that he could not leave them the goods he had gotten so ill, being forced as is before said to restore them again.

Verf. 11. *His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lye down with him in the dust.*] Two severall waies this may be understood; for 1. The meaning may be that in the sins of his youth, he perseveres even to his old age, the sins into which he fell in his youth being inwardly settled and rooted in him, as if they were soaked into his bones and marrow, shall be as strong in him, and bear as full sway over him in his old age, as they did in his youth; and so *it shall lye down with him in the dust*, whereby is meant, either that he shall die in his sin without repentance and without pardon, and so his sin, though nothing else, shall goe with him to the grave, the guilt of sin lying still upon him, eating his flesh and damning his soul; or else that all his violence, and oppression, and other sins shall there have an end together with himself, there they shall as it were perish with him, and be buried in the grave. And 2. By the *sin of his youth* may be meant the punishments of his youthfull sins; and then the sense of the words is this, that God should punish him in his old age for the sin of his youth; only this expression of *his bones being full of the sin of his youth* may also imply. 1. The grievousnesse of the plagues wherewith he is punished for the sins of his youth, whether we understand it of bodily punishments or of the pains of a tortured conscience, to wit, that they should seise upon the whole man, and as it were shake and break his very bones within him; for thus sore sufferings and torments are usually expressed in the Scripture, *My bones are burnt as an hearth*, saith the Psalmist. Psal. 102. 3. and again Psal. 109. 18. *As he cloatheth himself with cussing like as with a garment, so let it come into his bowels like water and like oyl into his bones*. 2. That they should be abundantly poured forth upon him, and 3. Perhaps also the quality of them, that his body yea even his very bones should be rotted with the luxury and intemperance of his youth; and accordingly then the meaning of the last clause *which shall lye down with him in the dust* is plain and easie, namely that these punishments should never leave him till they had brought him to the grave.

Verf. 12. *Though wickednesse be sweet in his mouth, &c.*] This may be meant generally

nerally of any wickednesse whatsoever, which the wicked man commits; or particularly of the wickednesse of oppressing the poor, and wresting their estates unjustly from them; and to the full drift of this passage is this, that though wickednesse yield much sweet delight to the corrupt nature of man for a time, yet afterward it will work him extreme pain and sorrow, and in the conclusion will certainly destroy him. *Though wickednesse be sweet in his mouth*, that is, though a wicked man may take as much delight in his wickednesse, as a sensuall Epicure may take in some poysoned sweet meat, that at first may exceedingly please his tast, *though he hide it under his tongue*, and vers. 13. *Though he spare it and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth*, that is, though he be loth to confesse, condemne, repent of and forsake his sins, but seeks by many deceitfull waies and pretences to excuse them (and so may the more properly be said to hide them *under his tongue*) that he may still continue to delight himself therein, even as a glutton will not be brought to spit out the sweet meat that he hath in his mouth, yea is loth presently to swallow it down, and therefore eats it sparingly, champing it and rowling it up and down in his mouth, and so lets it goe down by little and little, that he may the longer please his palat with the sweet tast of it, yet, vers. 14. *his meat in his bowels is turned*, that is, it is turned to be quite another thing then it seemed to be in his mouth, *it is the gall of asps within him*, that is, his sinne will at length prove bitter to him (as we see in nature, that those meats that are sweetest to the tast turn most to bitternesse and choler in the stomach) yea it will bring miserable pains and torments upon him, both in regard of outward punishments which God shall inflict, and inward torture of conscience wherewith he shall be vexed, and so shall at length utterly destroy him, even as the sweet meat which did so please the glutton, when it is gotten down into the stomach, doth there cause most griping insufferable torments and at last kills him, to wit, as being mixed with the most violent incurable poyson, the poyson of asps, which is here called *the gall of asps*; either because the gall of those serpents is their poyson, or rather because his poyson proves as bitter in the operation of it, as the meat wherewith it was mixed was sweet to the tast.

Vers. 15. *He hath swallowed down riches and he shall vomit them up again, &c.* The riches which he hath gotten with so much greedinesse he shall with no little anguish and shame part with again, as men that have overladen their stomachs, or rather that have eaten some poyson or other, are wont soon to vomit it up again, not only the poyson it self, but all besides that is in their bellies: so shall it be with the wicked oppressour; either by the terrours of his own conscience, which shall make him even sick of what he hath so unjustly gotten, and restless till he rid himself of it, or by some other means, God shall forceably bereave him, not only of his ill gotten goods, but of all his estate besides.

Vers. 16. *He shall suck the poyson of asps; the vipers tongue shall slay him.* That is, it shall be with him as with a man that is poysoned with the most violent and incurable poyson, the poyson of asps or the tongue of the viper, to wit, in regard of his vomiting up the ill gotten goods he hath swallowed down, or in regard of the torment he shall endure, and that it shall at last bring him to a miserable end.

Vers. 17.

Verf. 17. *He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooke of honey and butter.*] As if he had said, When the wicked man hath gotten a great estate by rapine and oppression, many flocks of sheep and herds of cattel, he is then ready to promise himself abundance of felicity and content, that he shall take in the enjoyment of these things, how he will feast himself, and how he will swim in all kind of pleasures and sweet delights; but all this shall prove but a dream, he shall not enjoy the least of this which he hath fancied to himself. Some, I know, understand this thus, that he shall not have the least share in that plenty of good blessings, which God promised to his people; as conceiving that Zophar herein alluded to that promise made to Abraham of the land of Canaan, as of a land flowing with milk and honey: yea some understand it of his never seeing those infinite joyes, which God hath reserved in heaven for the portion of his people, according to that expression Psal. 36. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the farnesse of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.* But the first Exposition I take to be far the best.

Verf. 18. *That which he laboured for shall be restore, &c.*] That is, That which he hath gotten with much adoe, and a great deal of pains, in the waies of oppression and fraud, he shall be forced to restore, or shall part with it again, (see the Note verf. 10.) yet this may also comprehend what he hath gotten by his labour in an honest way, and so may be added purposely to imply, that in revenge of his rapine, he should be stripped not of his ill-gotten goods only, but also of that which he had gathered together by his lawfull labours. As for the following clause, *and shall not swallow it down*, it is not contrary to what he had said before, verf. 15. *He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again;* because the meaning here is only, that God should suddenly ease him of all that he had greedily gathered together; before he had well swallowed it down, he should be forced to vomit it up again; it should never be converted to his own personall benefit, or the benefit of his family. *According to his substance shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoyce therein*, that is, he shall be fully as poor, as before he was rich and great; or rather he shall, by way of Gods forcing restitution from him, part with all that he hath even to a very farthing, and so as he hath begger'd others, he shall be utterly begger'd himself, and little joy he shall have of all that he hath scraped together.

Verf. 20. *Surely he shall not feel quiernesse in his belly.*] That is, he shall scarce at any time enjoy the least hearts-ease; to wit, either because of his insatiable thirst after riches, or his carking care to keep what he hath gotten, or rather because of the terrours of his conscience for his ill-gotten riches, or because of those continuall vexations wherewith he shall be hourly pursued, for the daily losse of that which he had taken such pains to get.

Verf. 21. *There shall none of his meat be left, &c.*] Some read this, as it is in the margin, *There shall be none left for his meat, &c.* as if he had said, He shall have none of his posterity left to eat what he leaves behind him, and so there shall be none to look for his goods when he is gone. But it is better translated, as it is in our Bibles, *There shall none of his meat be left*, that is, he shall not have so much as a

crust left to feed himself; *therefore shall no man look for his goods*, that is, his children or friends need not trouble themselves to gape after or strive for his goods when he is gone, because there shall be nothing left for them; Or, *there shall no man seek to rob or spoile him*, as formerly, because he shall have nothing left for himself.

Verf. 22. *In the fulnesse of his sufficiency he shall be in streights*, &c.] Two severall waies this may be understood: to wit, 1. That in the fulnesse of his prosperity he shall be in as great streights as the poorest, either because of terrours of conscience, or because of his continuall fears of loosing what he hath gotten, or because of the unquietnesse of his spirit, in regard of his greedy covetous desires, as not having yet what he would have. Or 2. That when he hath gotten such abundance, that, with the rich man in the Gospel, he begins now to say, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry*, then on a sudden the wrath of God shall fall upon him, and by means thereof he shall come into great streights and troubles: for thereto agrees also the following clause, *every hand of the wicked shall be upon him*; that is, every ungodly, unconscionable man, even those haply that were before his friends or servants, shall oppresse and spoile him; and so he shall be crushed as he before crushed others, and as his hand was almost against every man, so every mans hand shall be against him.

Verf. 23. *When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him*, &c.] That is, when he thinks to sit down in quiet, and to satiate himself in the enjoying of what he hath gotten, before he can do it, God shall pour out his judgements upon him, the sad effects of his fierce fury and indignation; which is compared to a showre of rain in the following clause, *and he shall rain it upon him*, to wit, 1. because the judgements should come upon him from heaven; 2. because they should come upon him suddenly and with great violence, as showres of rain usually do in the midst of a fair day; 3. because they should seise upon him on every side in great abundance, as when a man is all over wet with a showre of rain; and 4. because they cannot be prevented or kept off, no more then the rain can be stopped that it shall not fall from the clouds. The expresseion is much like that, Psal. 11. 6. *Vpon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest*. As for the last clause, wherein it is said these judgements of God should be poured upon him *while he is eating*, that is added as an aggravation of the misery of the wicked man, that these judgements should come upon him when he is or would be most free, and fearlesse, and pleasant; even as it is said of the Israelites, when they lusted for flesh, and God gave them quails, Psal. 78. 30, 31. that *while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them*. And it may well be that Zophar had respect therein also to the death of Iobs children, by the falling of the house upon them, where they were eating together.

Verf. 24. *He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through*.] That is, God fighting against him as a man of war, he shall be so pursued with his judgements, that seeking to avoid one evil, he shall fall into another, or seeking to avoid a lesser evil, he shall fall into a greater; as when a man flees from the iron weapon, the sword or the spear, (against which a man well armed may

may more probably defend himself) and then an arrow from a bow of steel strikes him through, the stroke thereof being unresistable and deadly.

Verf. 25. *It is drawn and cometh out of the body, &c.*] This is meant, I conceive, of the sword of Gods indignation, or of the arrow shot out of *the bow of steel*, mentioned in the foregoing verse; and the words may be understood two severall waies: first thus, *It is drawn*, that is, it is drawn out of the sheath, or out of the quiver, *and cometh out of the body*, that is, being thrust or shot at the wicked man, it pierceth him through and through, and so cometh out of his body; and so the drift of these words must be to shew, that when God begins to avenge himself upon the wicked man, he will be sure to strike home, he will soon make an end of him: or secondly thus, *It is drawn and cometh out of the body*, that is, after the wicked man is stricken through with it, being drawn it cometh forth out of his body: to which purpose also is the following clause, *yea the glistering sword cometh out of his gall*, that is, it pierceth through his very entrails; and the meaning is, that with terrible judgements (for that is intended in the glistering of the sword) God would irrecoverably destroy him. Neither can it well be questioned, but that in this expression Zophar did purposely aim at that complaint of Iobs concerning Gods dealing with him, chap. 16. 13. *He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.* As for the last words, *terroures are upon him*, thereby is meant, that when God shall thus begin to contend with him, partly by the affrightments of his own guilty conscience, and partly by the severity of Gods proceeding against him, as apprehending that he means to slay him, or that he hath already given him his deaths wound, he shall be even overwhelmed with terrours and fears.

Verf. 26. *All darknesse shall be hid in his secret places.*] There may be severall expositions given of these words, and all very probable: as 1. That by *his secret places* is meant the places where he hides and stores up his wealth; and so the meaning of these words should be this, that all sort of calamities should be stored up together with his treasures; as if he should have said, The wicked man shall never enjoy his wealth, because the wrath of God shall rest upon it. 2. That by *his secret places* is meant his heart or soul; and so the meaning of the words to be this, that all kind of dismall fears, and terrours, and despairing thoughts shall fill his heart and possesse his soul, and 3. That by *his secret places* is meant whatever places he should goe to, or means he should use to hide or secure himself from danger; and then the meaning of these words is this, *All darknesse shall be hid in his secret places*, that is, wherever, or by what means soever the wicked man shall seek to hide or secure himself, the darknesse of all kind of terrours and fears shall still goe along with him, yea the darknesse of all kind of grievous calamities shall even there seise upon him. But this last I take to be far the best Exposition.

A fire not blown shall consume him.] That is, say some Expositours, a soft gentle fire, to wit, judgements that shall consume him secretly, by degrees, and as it were without any noise. But rather by *a fire not blown* is meant a fire not of mans kindling, and that needs not mans blowing, because it will be sure to burn fiercely enough without that: Or, sudden unexpected judgements, which come upon

men in some strange manner, no man knows how; they are consumed thereby, but no account can be given by whom or by what the fire was kindled. Some understand it of the eternall unquenchable fire of hell, which indeed would agree well with the words; for there needs no bellows to kindle that fire, *the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone shall kindle it*, Isa. 30. 33. But it appears not any where else, that Iobs friends do ever speak of any other but temporall judgements. Again, others understand it metaphorically, of a burning fire of terrours kindled in the conscience; and others likewise of fire sent immediately from God, such as was that wherewith Sodome and Gomorrha was consumed, and that which burnt up Iobs sheep and servants, chap. 1. 16. as we see that Iobs friends are often wont closely to hint unto him the judgements, that had fallen upon him and his. But I conceive it may be understood more generally, either of the wrath of God it self, which is the kindler of all penall fires, or of any grievous judgements wherewith God in his wrath doth usually consume wicked men; for any fore calamities sent from God are oft in the Scripture compared to fire, as in Ezek. 20. 47. *Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched, &c.* but especially, as is before said, of strange, sudden, and unexpected judgements.

Verf. 27. *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, &c.*] That is, judgements coming from heaven upon him shall proclaim him to be a wicked man. And it may be Zophar did hereby intimate the strange fire and wind whereby Iobs cattel and children had been consumed. *And the earth shall rise up against him*, to wit, as an enemy, or as a witnesse, when all earthly things shall be ready to execute Gods vengeance upon him. Yea and because Iob chap. 16. 18, 19. had appealed to heaven and earth for the justifying of himself, *O earth cover not thou my bloud, and my witnesse is in heaven*; therefore in reference thereto it may well be conceived, that Zophar here tells him that both heaven and earth should testify against him, and should condemn him.

Verf. 28. *The increase of his house shall depart, &c.*] That is, both his posterity and estate shall be transmitted into other hands, or they shall suddenly perish and come to nothing, see 2 Kings 20. 17: *and his goods shall flow away*; of which the meaning may be, either that they should be suddenly gone, or that they should waite away by little and little, as some waters do insensibly ebbe and sink by little and little.

Verf. 29. *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, &c.*] As Bildad before concluded his reply upon Iob, chap. 18. 21. *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God*; so doth Zophar also here conclude his, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God*: as it were purposely to imply, that however angry Iob had seemed to be that Bildad should so peremptorily conclude, that such misery was alwaies the portion of wicked men, yet he both did and would maintain the truth of that which Bildad had said. *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, &c.* that is, this is the messe which God serves in to their table, these are the miseries which befall wicked men, and that not by chance, but by the just and unresistable appointment

ment of God; men may blesse them, but God will surely curse them: they may have great inheritances, and oppressing others may divide the spoile amongst themselves; but this is that which God hath allotted them for their portion, and which they shall be at last as sure of, as of their just inheritance.

C H A P. XXI.

Verf. 2. **H**ear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.] As if he should have said, You pretend that you came to comfort me; but indeed you have added to my affliction. Well, yet if ye would but now at length give me the hearing with patience and meeknesse, and observe diligently what I shall say, not interrupting and slighting me as you have done, this should be to me instead of your intended consolations, or, I would take it as an evidence that you did indeed seriously desire to comfort me. And this he doubtlesse spake, because Zophar had immediately before interrupted him, and would not suffer him to goe on to speak out his mind: and withall to imply how confident he was of his cause.

Verf. 3. *Suffer me that I may speak, &c.*] That is, Let it not be burdensome to you to hear me a while; yea though that which I shall say should prove irksome and troublesome to you, yet bear with me, and do but patiently suffer me to speak my mind. And this he might the rather presse, because his friends had often taxed him for speaking too much, as we may see chap. 11. 1. and 15. 2. *And after that I have spoken, mock on;* which last words are added, not as giving way that they should mock him in his misery, or deride those words of truth which he should speak; but to imply that he verily hoped, that if they would hear him speak, he might convince them so that they would soon give over mocking (for this his confidence in what he had to say was a good inducement to move his friends to hear him;) or at least, if that could not be, that he was then resolved to bear what he could not help, and as near as he could that he would not be troubled with their scoffs.

Verf. 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man? &c.*] As if he should have said, No, I do not bemoan my self to man, but to God; though I speak to you, yet it is out of a desire to approve my self to God, that God may hear, and that God may help. *And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?* that is, if my complaint were to man, I should then indeed have cause enough to be troubled: God is the searcher of the heart, and knows my innocency; men know it not, and therefore passe uncharitable censures upon me: In God there is much mercy and pity; man is mercilesse and cruell: God can help me and ease me of my troubles; man neither can help, nor will comfort me. Some, I know, understand this otherwise, to wit, as if he proved his hope in God by his enduring those insupportable miseries that lay upon him, *If it were not so, why should not my spirit be troubled?* as if he should have said, Had I not hope in God, how could I have sustained my self all this time? Many deaths would have been easier to me then that which I have suffered; and therefore, that I have not been quite overwhelmed before this time,

but do still cleave to God, and trust in him, it is surely an argument that I have a greater support to bear up my spirit, then any thing in man could afford: and therefore, since you see that I plead my cause as before God, I beseech you hearken to me. But the first Exposition agrees best with the words.

Verf. 5. *Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth.*] This may be understood, as if he had said, Mark me, and you will be astonished, and will lay your hand upon your mouth; or else plainly, as is expressed in the words, by way of counsell, *Mark me, and be astonished, &c.* Some referre those words *Mark me* to the miseries he suffered; others to the blamelesnesse of his conversation in former times; others to that which he meant immediately to say concerning the prosperity of many desperate ungodly men: But I conceive it is best to comprehend them all in those words, *Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth*; that is, whereas you slight what I suffer, and make nothing of it, do but weigh well the insupportable grievousnesse of my miseries, and withall how innocently and uprightly I have formerly lived, and do but then also compare herewith that which I shall now say concerning the prosperity of many atheistical ungodly wretches, and then even with astonishment admire the wonderfull proceedings of God in his Providence, to wit, that such vile wretches should live in such height of prosperity, and that one that hath lived as I have done should be so sorely plagued as I have been; and be silent, do not run on in judging so rashly as you have done, that all who are thus afflicted must needs be wicked men: for that by laying of the hand upon the mouth is meant a resolution of being silent, and a restraining of our selves from speaking what we are otherwise inclinable to say, is evident in other places, where the same phrase is used, as chap. 29. 9. *The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth*; and Pro. 30. 32. *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy self, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*

Verf. 6. *Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.*] Some Expositours referre this likewise only to the remembrance of his grievous sufferings, and so conceive that the drift of Iob herein was to imply, that if the remembrance thereof did so afflict him, it were a signe of too much inhumanity in them, if they could see their friend in so sad a condition, and not be moved with it. But I rather think that it must be referred to all for which he said in the former verse that they might be astonished; *Even when I remember I am afraid, &c.* that is, when I remember what I shall now tell you, to wit, how it fares many times with those that are most desperately wicked, and withall how I have endeavoured to approve my self to God in all my waies, and what notwithstanding I have now suffered, I am afraid, and my very flesh doth tremble to think of it, nor know I what to say of these hidden waies of Gods proceedings.

Verf. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?*] Iob propounds this by way of Question, *Wherefore do the wicked live? &c.* either to imply how strange it seemed to him that God should so prosper wicked men, and that he could not conceive wherefore it should be; according to that of the Prophet, Ier. 12. 1. *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* or else as by way of replying upon that, which
his

his friends had so often objected concerning the judgements of God upon wicked men; If God doth so certainly punish all wicked men here in this world, and them only, that I must be judged a wicked man, because the hand of God is so heavy upon me; if when the wicked are in a prosperous condition, it never lasts long, (as Zophar had immediately before said, chap. 20. 5. *that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment*, and vers. 8. *that he shall fly away as a dream, &c.*) why then, saith Iob, *wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?* that is, wherefore is it that many times they live in health and pleasure even to old age, and are usually men of mighty estates, and of greatest dignity and authority in the places where they live?

Vers. 8. *Their seed is established in their sight with them, &c.*] This is in answer to that which Zophar had said to the contrary, chap. 20. 10. *His children shall seek to please the poor;* and Eliphaz, chap. 15. 33. *He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.*

Vers. 11. *They send forth their little ones like a flock, &c.*] This may imply their being trained up under guardians and guides, & their unity amongst themselves: and their children dance, to wit, as young cattel, calves, and lambs, and kids are wont in a kind of wantonneffe to skip and leap; whence are those expressions, Psal. 29. 6. *He maketh them also to skip like a calf,* and Psal. 114. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.*

Vers. 13. *They spend their daies in wealth, and in a moment goe down to the grave.*] That is, they goe away in a trice, they do not lye long in a wearisome languishing condition before they die, nor undergoe any of those sore pains and conflicts in their death which most men suffer; and so as they lived, so they die, without any great trouble. It is the same, as many think, with that which the Psalmist saith, Psal. 73. 4. *there are no bands in their death.*

Vers. 14. *Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, &c.*] The meaning of this is, that because of their prosperity they despise God; *they say unto God, Depart from us, &c.* If they say not so much with their mouths, yet the horrible prophanenesse of their lives discovers that they think so in their hearts, or is in effect all one as if they thought so, since those that should harbour such thoughts in their hearts could not live more atheistically then they do: which agrees with that of the Apostle, Tit. 1. 16. *They professe that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* And the drift of this is to shew, that even the worst of wicked men do often live in such exceeding great prosperity, as is before described.

Vers. 16. *Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counsell of the wicked is farre from me.*] The judgement of Expositours is very different concerning the drift of these words. Some take the first clause as spoken ironically, *Lo, their good is not in their hand;* as if he should have said, By this which I have said concerning the usuall prosperity of ungodly men, you see how unsound that is which you have maintained, to wit, that *their good is not in their hand*, but that God doth alwaies strip them of the goods they have unjustly gotten. And then for the second clause, that is added, *they say, by way of preventing an objection, to wit, that if wicked*

men

men fared so well, then it would be his best course to walk in their waies: that his friends might not object this, he adds, *the counsell of the wicked is farre from me*; as if he should have said, I would be loth to have their prosperity upon those terms, I have alwaies abhorred and do still abhorre the thoughts and courses of such prophane men, and far be it ever from me to desire a share in their pomp by treading in their steps. Again, others understand it thus, *Lo, their good is not in their hand*, that is, it was not their own hand, their own wisdom or industry that got them those goods they enjoy, or raised them to such a prosperous estate, but it was the hand of God that conferred these things upon them: and therefore we see that God doth many times exalt and prosper the worst of men: and then for the next clause, they say that is added, to shew how foolish and wicked a thing therefore it is in such men as he had spoken of, to carry themselves so scornfully and insolently towards God; *the counsell of the wicked is far from me*, that is, I am therefore farre from thinking as wicked men do, that ascribe all they have to themselves, according to that of the Assyrian, Isa. 10. 13, 14. *By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent, &c.* & thereupon carry themselves so impiously towards God, as if they were not beholding to him for any thing they had, nor did expect or look for any favour from him. But then lastly there is another Exposition, that is farre more generally approved, to wit, that this is added, to discover the folly of wicked men in setting themselves in such defiance against God, as he had in the foregoing words described, in whose power it is to cast them down from their prosperous estate, even whensoever he pleaseth; *Lo, their good is not in their hand*, that is, though they carry themselves thus presumptuously, it is not in their power to keep what they have gotten, God can easily strip them of all, and cast them down from their lofty condition: and thereupon he inferres the next clause, *the counsell of the wicked is farre from me*, so farre am I from envying their prosperity, that I would by no means be in their condition; I never did nor ever shall approve of their waies. And thus these words are as it were a transition to that which follows, concerning Gods punishing of wicked men.

Verf. 17. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? and how oft cometh their destruction upon them?* Job seems clearly in these words to allude to that which Bildad had said, chap. 18. 5, 6, *The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the light of his fire shall not shine, &c.* and again verf. 12. *Destruction shall be ready at his side*: but yet what his drift in these words was is not so clear. For some conceive this question must be resolved negatively, *how oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* &c. that is, surely it is not often thus; though sometimes indeed it is thus, yet so far is it from being alwaies thus, that truly it is not often thus; the candle of the wicked is not often put out, nor cometh their destruction often upon them, to wit, from heaven. And thus, they say, Job confutes what his friends had maintained, concerning the certain destruction of wicked men here in this world, as before by affirming that they lived usually in a most prosperous estate, so here also by denying that they were usually cut off and destroyed, as his friends had again and again affirmed. Again, some resolve it affirmatively, *how oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* &c. that is, very often doth God put out the candle of the wicked.

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Having said in the foregoing verse, that it is not in their power to keep themselves in that prosperous condition which a while they have enjoyed, he makes that good now, by shewing that God doth often eclipse their glory, and destroy them miserably: and so he yields, as farre as truth would permit, to what his friends had affirmed, to wit, that God did often destroy wicked men; though withall he denies that it was continually and ordinarily so. So that Job doth not here contradict what he had said immediately before, concerning the prosperous estate of wicked men, nor doth he grant that which his friends had maintained: for by shewing that wicked men do sometimes prosper exceedingly, and are at other times grievously punished, he doth sufficiently disprove what they had said, that wicked men are alwaies punished here in this world, and clears it fully, that we cannot judge whether men be wicked or no by their outward condition. And indeed, according to our Translation, I see not how this clause can be otherwise understood, because in the following words he proceeds farther to set forth, how God poures forth his wrath upon wicked men.

God distributeth sorrows in his anger.] That is, he gives unto every wicked man his portion of plagues and sorrows, out of those treasures of wrath, which he hath in store for the ungodly; and so in this Job might have respect to that wherewith Zophar had concluded his last reply, chap. 20. 29. *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, &c.* But withall this word (*distributeth*) may likewise imply, 1. that God gives them their portion herein proportionably, according to their severall deserts; 2. that often he punisheth them diversly, some by one judgement, and some by another; and 3. that he also punisheth the same persons diversly and at divers times, sometimes one way and sometimes another, partly with temporall punishments here in this world, and partly with the torments of hell in the world to come.

Verf. 18. *They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff &c.*] That is, they shall be destroyed and come to nothing, be they never so great, and strong, and mighty, easily, suddenly, unresistably and irrecoverably; yea and all their great wealth shall be scattered as it were into a thousand hands. But withall we may note, that by comparing the wicked to stubble and chaff, Job implies likewise how saplesse and fruitlesse they are, as being void of all goodnesse; how light and unstable in all their waies, quickly carried away with any wind of doctrine, and with every blast of Satans or the worlds temptations; and lastly, how base and worthlesse, and how little God esteems of them.

Verf. 19. *God layeth up his iniquity for his children; he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.*] This last clause, *he rewardeth him, and he shall know it*, may be understood, as the former, of the Lords punishing the wicked man in his children, to wit, that by punishing them he rewardeth the wicked man according to his wickednesse: *and he shall know it*, to wit, because it shall be done in his life-time; for his greater vexation he shall before he dies see the judgements of God fall upon his children, and his conscience shall tell him that it is for his wickednesse that they are punished. Or else it may be meant of the punishments wherewith he shall be punished in his own person, thereby farther to aggravate the misery ap-

pointed for the wicked mans portion, *he rewardeth him*, that is, he doth not only recompence his sin upon his children, as was expressed in the first clause, but also upon himself in his own person; *and he shall know it*, that is, he shall know that the evil which befalls him is the just vengeance of God upon him.

Verf. 20. *His eyes shall see his destruction, &c.*] This may be also meant, either of his own personall ruine, or of the joynt-ruine both of him and his, even all that he hath. As for the following clause, *and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty*, the meaning of that is, that God should poure out his wrath with many sore punishments in a full measure upon him; and the metaphoricall expression he useth seems to imply, that the pains and terrours thereof should enter into his very bowels, and that he should become as a man that is drunk and mad with the sore calamities that God should bring upon him: yea purposely, I conceive, God is here expressed by this name (*Almighty*) to imply how grievous and insupportable those plagues must needs be, that were inflicted by the wrath of an Almighty God.

Verf. 21. *For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?*] This is added, either 1. as an aggravation of the wicked mans misery, when he himself is cut off by the revenging hand of God, especially if it be done in the flower of his age, to wit, that all the pleasure he took in thinking how great and honourable his house and family would be when he is gone, doth then come to nothing; or 2. as a reason why the wicked man shall surely be punished, not only in his children after his death, but also in his own person, as was said in the foregoing verse, to wit, because being dead himself, the misery of his children cannot then trouble him; or else 3. as a reason why God doth destroy the wicked mans children whilst himself yet lives, as was said before verf. 19. to wit, because being once dead, he neither takes any delight in the welfare of his posterity, nor consequently is at all troubled with any miseries that they then suffer; yea because wicked men do not usually take any thought, what shall become of others when they are dead, so it may goe well with them in their own daies, let their posterity after them shift for themselves.

Verf. 22. *Shall any teach God knowledge? &c.*] They carry themselves as if they meant to teach God wisdom and knowledge, that murmur against any of his proceedings, as when he prospers the wicked or afflicts the righteous, or that prescribe God the way of his judgements, to wit, whom, and when, and how he shall punish; which they do that limit God, by maintaining that he cannot punish the righteous or afflict the godly. Of this therefore it is that Job here complains, alledging it as a high degree of impudence, that man, who walks so much in the dark, and hath all the knowledge he hath from God, and whose wisdom at the best is mere folly in comparison of Gods unsearchable wisdom, should yet dare to teach God what he should doe: and so he covertly taxeth his friends of this arrogance, in that they did as it were set a law to God, by condemning him for a wicked man because of his grievous calamities, as concluding that God could not in justice either suffer the wicked to goe unpunished, or afflict the righteous. Now the reason that he gives, why it is such arrogance for any man to carry him-
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self so as if he would teach God knowledge, is in the last words, because God judgeth those that are high, *shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high*; that is, seeing he is, as Solomon also saith, Eccles. 5. 8. *higher then the highest*, the supreme judge of the whole world, who rules and governs those that are highest amongst men, and that exalt themselves most in their eminency, princes, and kings, and emperours, yea the very angels themselves in heaven. And indeed three things are implied herein, from whence it may be strongly inferred, that we ought to adore and admire the works of God we understand not, and not to judge them according to the rule of our reason; to wit, 1. that it must needs be a high degree of presumption, to question his wisdom who is so infinitely farre above all the creatures; 2. that it cannot be reasonably thought that he should fail in the government of men, who rules and governs those glorious and holy spirits the angels in heavens; and 3. that being the supreme Governour of the world, the King of kings and Lord of lords, yea the Lord of the angels, he must needs be infinite in wisdom, yea the absolute rule of all wisdom and justice, and therefore unquestionable.

Verf. 23. *One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet, &c.*] To prove the unsearchableness of Gods proceedings, and that it is not possible to judge what men are by that which God doth to them here in this world, Job here instanceth how differently God deals with two severall men both in their life and death, and yet how after death they are both alike laid in the grave, and there seems to be there no difference at all. Of the first he saith here, *One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet*; that is, he lives in a full estate, and in much quiet both of body and spirit, and so he dies also in abundance of all things, when he seemed to be as healthfull and strong as ever, and had as much cause still to desire to live as ever: and then again, verf. 24. *His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistned with marrow*; that is, there is not the least decay in his body, only God is pleased suddenly to take him away by death; or, *his milk-pails are full of milk* (for so this clause may be read, as we see in the margin of our Bibles) *and his bones are moistned with marrow*, that is, he hath a full estate and a healthfull body (for if we read it thus, by his milk-pails full of milk must be meant his plenty of all outward riches and pleasures.) Of the other man he saith, verf. 25. *And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure*; that is, he lives and dies in great misery, under very bitter and wofull pressures both of mind and body, having scarce ever enjoyed one good hour in his life, or ever eaten one bit of meat with any pleasure or comfort. And then concerning both these joyntly together he concludes, verf. 26. *they shall lye down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them*; that is, however differently God dealt with them before, yet after death they are both alike laid in the graves; and therein there seems to be no difference, even the rich man that lived so prosperously, and that was formerly clad so richly and gorgeously, shall then have no other covering, but that of dust and worms, as hath also the poor man. This, I take it, is the meaning of these words. But now of what sort of men this instance is to be understood, and to what purpose it is alledged, is somewhat more questionable. Some say that Job meant,

that one man being a wicked man lives and dies in a prosperous condition, another being a godly man lives and dies in extreme misery; and will have his drift in this instance, to shew how unsearchable Gods proceedings are, in that God should deal so well with the wicked, and so ill with the righteous. Others hold that the words must be understood of two wicked men; and that the aime therefore of this instance is to shew, that there can be no judging whether men be wicked or no by that which outwardly befalls them, because God deals so differently with wicked men, sometimes blessing them, and sometimes punishing them. But I rather think, with others, that it is meant of any two men, equally good or bad; and that hereby he sheweth Gods absolute Sovereignty is in disposing of men as he pleaseth, and how unsearchable his proceedings are, in that two men, one whereof deserves no more good nor ill then the other, should be so differently dealt with both in life and death, and yet after death both should be alike laid in the grave.

Verf. 27. *Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which you wrongfully imagine against me.*] That is, I know the injurious thoughts and imaginations which you harbour in your hearts concerning me, to wit, that in all that you have said concerning the destruction of wicked men, you have still aimed at me & my children, though you have not named us; and that you peremptorily conclude within your selves, that I am a wicked man, because the hand of God is so heavy upon me.

Verf. 28. *For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? &c.*] Some understand this of Iobs eldest son, whose house it was that was blown down upon him, his brethren and sisters, chap. 1. 18, 19. and that Iob chargeth his friends, that in relation hereto they did in their thoughts thus insult over him, *where is the house of the prince?* that is, what is now become of the house of that young gallant, your son and heir? Did not that exemplary judgement plainly discover the wrath of God against you and yours? But I rather think it is meant of Iob himself: *where is the house of the prince?* that is, what is now become of the house of Job, that mighty man of estate, that lived formerly like a prince? As if they should have said, You see that after all the pomp wherein he hath lived, God hath at last utterly overthrown his house and family, and so hath justly given him the reward of his wickedness. And then for the following clause, *and where are the dwelling-places of the wicked?* either it is meant of Iobs children, as if he had said, Hath not God destroyed both him, and his wicked brood too, his children? or else of all wicked men in generall, and is added to the former clause, to imply that this which had befallen Iob, was indeed the constant portion of all wicked men.

Verf. 29. *Have ye not asked them that goe by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?*] Some think that from the foregoing verse unto the end of the 33. verse, Iob goes still on in setting out the injurious thoughts which his friends had concerning him; and accordingly therefore they understand these words as the thoughts of Iobs friends, arguing as it were with others concerning him, *Have ye not asked them that goe by the way? &c.* that is, It is certainly notorious to every one that goes by the way, and if such were enquired of, they would readily answer, that the things which have befallen Job are the just vengeance of God upon him.

him for his wickednesse: nor can it be denied, these things being the clear marks and tokens of Gods wrath. But I rather take these words, with that which follows, to be Jobs answer to those injurious thoughts concerning him, wherewith he had charged his friends in the foregoing verse; *Have ye not asked them that goe by the way? &c.* By *them that goe by the way* may be meant travellers, and then the drift of the words must be all one in effect as if he had said, You, my friends, insult over me, as a wicked hypocrite, because of the ruine of my house and family; but if you would ask those that by travelling through many places and countries have the more experience and knowledge, they would readily tell you, to wit, that which I have hitherto maintained, that the righteous are often afflicted, and the wicked are often in a prosperous estate, or (as follows in the next verse) *that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, &c.* Or, by *them that goe by the way*, may be meant the ordinary common sort of people, (as before Judg. 5. 10. of which see the Note there) as if he had said, Do but ask any of the common sort of people that goe up and down by the way, any that you shall first meet with, not any one of them but will tell you this which I now maintain, and will be able to make it good out of their own observation: to which purpose is that which follows, *and do ye not know their tokens?* for by *their tokens* is meant the proofs and examples which they could alledge to prove the truth of this, to wit, that the righteous do often suffer many grievous pressures, and that the wicked live oft in great pomp and prosperity: and that expreſſion it seems Job purposely useth, as alluding to the marks and tokens which men are wont to observe as they travell, that they may be sure to goe in the right way, thereby to imply that such men could as readily alledge convincing evidences hereof, as they could tell the marks of waies that lead to such or such a place; *do ye not know their tokens?* that is, can ye deny, or, can ye be ignorant of those things which every man can alledge, to prove that which I say concerning the prosperity of wicked men? &c. I know some understand these words otherwise, *and do ye not know their tokens?* that is, do ye not understand that their present prosperity, riches and honours, are sure tokens that there is wrath that abides them hereafter? But I prefer the former Exposition.

Verſ. 30. *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, &c.*] This is that which Job saith they might learn of *them that goe by the way*, to wit, that wicked men are many times not punished, but even when judgements fall upon others they escape, as being reserved to the day of destruction, that shall yet at last come upon them.

Verſ. 31. *Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall reſpy him what he hath done?*] Some Expositours understand these words as spoken of God, Who shall declare the way of God to his face? &c. Because concerning that which was said in the foregoing verse, *that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, &c.* some might argue in their minds, why this should be so, as judging it a strange thing in the way of Gods proceedings, that God should so long spare wicked men, and let them flourish and prosper, when he meant to destroy them at last, and why he should not rather cut them off immediately without any such delays: therefore by way of preventing these secret cavils that might arise in mens minds, these words are added, *who shall declare his way to his face?* that is, when God deals

thus with wicked men, forbearing them for a while, who shall challenge God for this, and boldly argue the matter with him, demanding a reason of him why he doth so? *who shall repay him what he hath done?* that is, who shall retort that upon God which he hath done? or, who shall reply upon him for this? where is the man that dares be so bold as to doe this? And thus they would make these words to be parallel with those other passages, chap. 9. 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who shall say to him, what doest thou?* and chap. 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? what his soul desireth, even that he doth:* and vers. 22 of this chapter, *Shall any teach God knowledge, seeing he judgeth those that are high?* Thus, I say, some understand these words of God. But questionlesse they are rather spoken of the wicked man; *who shall declare his way to his face?* As if he should have said, So farre a while doth the wicked man seem to be from bearing the just reward of his wickednesse, that no man dares *declare his way to his face*, that is, no man dares to his face tell him of his faults, or no man dares shew him whether his wicked courses will at length bring him; and much lesse dares any man appear as a witnesse to accuse him, or as a judge to condemn him, and so to *repay him what he hath done*, that is, punish him for his wickednesse.

Vers. 32. *Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb.*] I find the opinion of Expositours very different concerning the dependance of these words upon that which went before. They that take these words to be a part of those injurious thoughts, which Iob tells his friends they harboured in their hearts concerning him (as is noted before vers. 29.) understand them as inferred upon the foregoing verse, thus, Though no man dares meddle with him, yet God shall bring down his pride by his judgements, and so shall lay him in the grave; and then they say these words, *and remain in the tomb*, are added, to imply that then he is quite cut off from ever returning to that pomp & plenty wherein he had formerly lived in the world. But now they that take these words to be spoken by Job as in his own person, understand them otherwise, even as a farther declaration of the wicked mans prosperous condition, to wit, that though he exalts himself so in his pride, that no man dares tell him of any thing he doth amisse, or though he be above the reach of man to controll or punish him, (as was said in the foregoing verse;) yet doth not God take him in hand, but he shall be brought to *the grave*, that is, dying not a violent, but a naturall death, he shall be carried to his grave with great magnificence, pomp and state, and so shall have an honourable and solemn buriall, *and shall remain in the tomb*, to wit, free from all fear of any the miseries which here in this world others undergoe. This last clause, *and shall remain in the tomb*, is translated by some according to the strict letter of the originall Hebrew, which is put into the margin of our Bibles, *and shall watch in the heap*. And if we should so read it, we must know that this expression might be used, in reference either to the dead bodies of great men, which being set upright in vaults, and being so embalmed and spiced that they were kept from putrifaction, as it was the custome in those times, seemed as it were to be living men, and looked as if they stood to keep continuall watch in that place; or else to those statues and Representations of the dead, which were placed upon their tombs, or set up
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in pressies near to their tombs, (as we see the use is also in our times) which being as farre as art could reach made to the life, had also the appearance of watchmen, that were set to watch in those heaps.

Verf. 33. *The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, &c.*] They that take these words still to be a part of the injurious thoughts of Jobs friends against him, do accordingly understand them thus, That the wrath of God should lye so heavy upon him, that death should be most welcome to him, or that he should then be glad to lye in a slimy pit, to wit, the grave, that was formerly scarce content with a princely palace: and the reason why he expresseth the grave by these words, *the clods of the valley*, is because their burying-places in those times were usually in the lowest dales and valleys. But I rather conceive that these words are still a continuation of Jobs reply to the injurious thoughts of his friends; and then this phrase, *the clods of the valley are sweet to him*, do only imply, either his continuance for ever there, (for it is an argument that we take much sweet delight and content in a place, when we stay long in it) or else that there he sleeps quietly and sweetly, as it were, free from all cares and feares, and from all danger of worldly troubles and sorrows. And as for the following words, *and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him*, they are added to imply, that his death cannot be reckoned as an effect of Gods wrath upon him, since herein he goes the way of all flesh; all men living, the righteous as well as the wicked, either have gone, or shall goe this way. And this expression, *And every man shall draw after him*, is grounded upon this truth, that every man living doth every moment, as his life wasteth away, draw nearer and nearer to the grave. We use to say of men lying at the point of death, that they are *drawing on*; but it is true also of all that live, that they are still drawing on to their end, and hasting to the grave, there to overtake that innumerable multitude that is gone before them.

Verf. 34. *How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?*] That is, what a vain thing is it in you, to think to comfort me, by telling me that if I will repent me of my wickednesse, God will certainly restore me to a prosperous condition, since, as you see, that which you have maintained concerning the misery of wicked men, and the flourishing estate of the righteous, is apparently false, and all your arguing is grounded upon errors and mistakes, both concerning God and concerning me. The same errors and falsehoods which Jobs friends had maintained in their first dispute with him, the same they had again maintained in the second; though they multiplyed answers, yet they mended them not: and therefore it is that he said, that in their answers there remained falsehood.

C H A P. XXII.

Verf. 1. **T**HEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered.] Thus taking his turn to speak, this was his third, and indeed his last Reply upon Job.

Verf. 2. *Can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?*] Some understand this of profiting God by way of teaching him.

him. Because Iob had said (and his friends took it as spoken in a way of complaining) that wicked men did often live pleasantly, and die peaceably, and were buried gloriously, whereas the righteous were usually in a very distressed condition; therefore to this Eliphaz (say they) replies, *Can a man be profitable to God? &c.* that is, Can you help God, by teaching him how he should better order things in the government of the world? A man by his wisdom may direct himself in his affairs; but can he profit God by directing him? No surely. But Job himself had immediately before condemned this boldness, chap. 21, 22. *Shall any* (saith he there) *teach God knowledge?* and besides, it seems clear, I conceive, by the following words, that it is meant of mans profiting God by his righteousness; to wit, that though a man be never so righteous, his righteousness can bring no advantage to God. And this he alledgeth in the beginning of his reply, either to intimate that Iob did not well, to carry himself so as if God were obliged to him for his righteousness, as if he thought there was reason that if he had offended God in some particulars, yet God should passe by that, and not punish him for it, and that because in other things he had deserved better at Gods hands, then that he should so afflict him as he did; or else to imply, that if it should be granted that he were righteous, yet it was a vain thing to boast of his righteousness before God, since God could no way reap any benefit thereby: yea in the last clause, *as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself*, Eliphaz seems to upbraid Job, that his righteousness was neither profitable to God, nor to himself neither, because it secured him not from the judgements of God; meaning hereby, that he was doubtlesse an hypocrite, and not righteous indeed.

Verf. 3. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? &c.*] As if he had said, It is no pleasure to him that thou art righteous, to wit, in regard of himself, or of adding any thing to his happiness. As for the following clause, *or is it gain to him that thou makest thy waies perfect?* some by making his waies perfect understand, his pretending or pleading that his waies were perfect, and so make the meaning to be, that this was so farre from being an advantage to God, that it was indeed a great dishonour to him, because it did plainly charge God with injustice, for laying his hand so severely upon a righteous innocent man: but I conceive that thereby is only meant his walking in an upright and perfect way, and so the second clause to be fully the same in effect with the first.

Verf. 4. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgement?*] That is, God doth not reprove thee, to prevent thee that thou shouldest not first reprove him; Or, God doth not so severely contend with thee and punish thee, because he is afraid of thee, as tyrants are wont to crush those whom they fear, as we see in Pharaoh, and Herod, and many others: as if he had said, As thy goodness cannot profit God, so neither can thy wickedness hurt him; and therefore it is in a way of justice to punish thee for thy wickedness, that God proceeds thus against thee, and not for fear of thee, to wit, least if he should let thee alone, thou shouldest become either so over-good that he could not reward thee, or so over-great that he could not punish thee. And it is like that Eliphaz doth the rather use this expression, because Job had formerly said, that by the afflictions
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he had brought upon him, God did as it were set a watch over him, chap. 7. 11.

Verf. 6. *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, &c.*] Though the words in this and the following verses seem expressly to charge Job with the particular gross enormities therein mentioned, yet doubtlesse the meaning of Eliphaz was only to conclude, that in some such way as these here mentioned, he had provoked God, or else he would never have laid such unusuall calamities upon him. It is therefore as if he had said, Bethink thy self, Job; for of these wickednesses that I shall now mention, or of some such like, thou art certainly guilty: *thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.* And here by taking a pledge from ones brother, may be meant the taking a pledge from a poor neighbour, yea it may be from ones nearest allies: yea by saying *thou hast taken a pledge*, he might imply that he had not only received such a pledge, as his brother did of his own accord tender to him, but had also gone into his house, and had taken there what he pleased, it may be by force; which is an over-rigorous proceeding with one that is in streights, even by the light of Nature, and was therefore forbidden by the law of Moses, Deut. 24. 10, 11. for which see the Note there. And then by taking a pledge *for nought*, is meant the taking of a pledge without any just cause: which may be done, either when men take a pledge notwithstanding they are otherwise sufficiently secured for that they lend; or 2. when they will not restore the pledge, more worth then the debt, though the debt be paid, to wit, because they charge them that pawned the pledge with more then indeed they owe them, or alledge that the pledge is forfeited, the money not being brought in time, or some such like pretence, which the prophet calls withholding the pledge, Ezek. 18. 16; or 3. when men take a pledge from such poor wretches whom in charity they ought freely to relieve. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *and stripped the naked of their clothing*: which they may be said to doe, that do not give raiment to those that want it, but especially they that 1. make men naked by taking their cloths from them, according to that expression, Hos. 2. 3. *lest I strip thee naked*; or 2. that are so greedy of a pledge, or so griping in any other way of oppression, that they take away the garments of those that have scarce a coat to put upon their backs; for such in the Scripture are termed naked, 1 Cor. 4. 11. *even to this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked*, and Jam. 2. 15. *If a brother or sister be naked, &c.* And this was also forbidden in Moses's law; see the Note, Exod. 22. 26. yea under this one particular, of stripping the naked of their clothing, the taking away of all other necessities from the poor may be comprehended; for by clothing in the Scripture is sometimes meant all necessities usefull for the poor, as we see Isai. 3. 6. *Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler.*

Verf. 7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.*] That is, thou hast not relieved the poor in their wants: yet herein lyes the chief emphasis of this charge, that he had not given them so much as a draught of water, or a bit or crust of bread.

Verf. 8. *But as for the mighty man, he had the earth, and the honourable man he dwelt in it.*] The meaning is, either that Job gave to the mighty and honourable

ble the land which he had unjustly taken from the poor; though he despised the poor, yet great and mighty men might have any thing of him; or that when the poor and the mighty man came before him in judgement, meerly in favour to the mighty and honourable man, he passed sentence for him, and so he unjustly carried away the poor mans estate. Yet some understand these words as spoken of Job in a third person, as in a way of scorn, *But as for the mighty man he had the earth;* as if he should have said, Great Job by his might and power had all under his command, and got all the country about him into his possession, and yet notwithstanding he could spare nothing to the poor, but did rather make use of his power to oppresse them.

Verf. 9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty, &c.*] This also may comprehend many severall waies of hard dealing with widows: as 1. that he unjustly seised upon their estates, and so turned them away empty; or 2. that when they came to him for aid against their oppressours, he did not right, but sent them away with hearts void of comfort, and disappointed of their hope; or 3. that when poverty made them seek relief from him, he turned them off with neglect and hard language, and would give them no succour. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *and the arms of the fatherlesse have been broken:* for thereby is meant his oppression of the fatherlesse, to wit, by bereaving them of the means they had for a livelyhood, or by crushing those that were likely to defend and support them, or any other way; or at least his suffering them to be oppressed by others.

Verf. 10. *Therefore snares are round about thee, &c.*] Thus Eliphaz applies that to Job, which Bildad had said concerning wicked men in generall, chap. 18. 8, 9, 10, 11: concerning which see the Notes there.

Verf. 11. *Or darknesse, that thou canst not see, &c.*] Some understand this thus, that besides his outward plagues, God had stricken him for his sins with such blindnesse and confusion of mind, that he understood not either why these judgements were come upon him, or what to doe that he might be freed from them: and accordingly they also understand the following clause, *and abundance of waters cover thee,* to wit, that he was in these calamities as a man under water, so amazed and stupified, that he knew not which way to turn himself. But it may as well be meant of the darknesse of his outward calamities, so perplexing him, that he could not see which way to goe to help himself; according to a like expression, chap. 19. 8. concerning which see the Note there. And so also the last clause may be understood, to wit, that he was overwhelmed with a multitude of grievous miseries, that like waters came rushing in upon him with unresistable violence.

Verf. 12. *Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars how high they are, &c.*] Expositours do very much differ in their judgements, concerning the dependance of this and the following verses upon that which went before: for though all agree in this, that in the following verses, *And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? &c.* Eliphaz chargeth Job with nourishing impious and atheistical thoughts in his heart concerning God, to wit, that God doth not know, or doth not mind what is done by men here upon

on the earth, and that his ground of charging Job thus was, because he had maintained that wicked men do usually live and die in a prosperous condition, and godly men on the other side do as usually endure all kind of misery and sorrow; yet concerning these words that are prefixed in this 12 verse, the judgement of Expositours is, I say, very different. Some take these words to be a part of that mimeticall expression, wherein Eliphaz would set forth the impious thoughts of Job concerning God, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* &c. as if he should have said, You, Job, think with your self, Alas, God dwells above the stars in the highest heavens, and we see how exceeding high the stars are, and therefore doubtlesse God doth not govern the world here below. But it being so clear, that Eliphaz doth not begin to set forth the impious thoughts of Job concerning God, till the following verse, as is clear by the words, *And thou sayest, How doth God know?* &c. I cannot see how this verse can be made a part thereof. First therefore, some conceive that these words are alledged by Eliphaz, as the ground of those impious thoughts concerning God, wherewith he chargeth Job in the following verse, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* &c. as if he should have said, It is true that God dwells above in the highest heavens, and we see indeed that the stars are of a mighty height, and hereupon now thou sayest in thine heart, *How doth God know?* &c.

2. Others hold, that in these words Eliphaz seeks to imply how incomprehensible God is, thereby covertly reproving Job for his rashnesse in judging of Gods works, *Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are;* as if he had said, If the stars be so high, that we cannot see how many, or of what bignesse they are, how can we then comprehend the wisdom, power and justice of God, who is above the stars, even higher then the highest heavens? But instead of inferring this from Gods being on high, you, Job, inferre atheisticall conclusions concerning God; *thou sayest, How doth God know?* &c. 3. Others take these words to be prefixed as an expression of the omniscience of God, *Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are:* as if he had said, God is infinite, and from the throne of his majesty in the highest heavens he seeth and governeth all things that are here below: if the stars that are so high do from thence shine upon us, is it not easie thence to conclude that God from on high doth behold all things that are done upon the earth? and that hereupon, in the following verse, he upbraids Job with the impiety of his thoughts, *And thou sayest, How doth God know?* &c. and 4. Others say, that Eliphaz, having in the foregoing verses charged Job with many grievous sins, adviseth him here to remember that there was a most high God, before whom he must expect to give an account for these things that he had done; and in expressing this he mentions the height of the heavens, above which God sits in the throne of his majesty and glory; because, though God may be seen in every creature that is here below, yet the height and glory of the heavens must needs above other things strike men with an apprehension of Gods transcendent majesty. And then, in the following verses, they say that Eliphaz shews, how instead of being awed thus with the consideration of Gods dwelling on high, he took occasion from thence to conclude, that surely God did neither see nor regard what was done upon the

earth, *And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?*

Verf. 14. *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.*] This phrase of Gods walking in the circuit of heaven is used to imply, either that God there delights himself in the glorious works which his own hands have there made, (as when a man walks about in his grounds and gardens, or as when a prince walks about in some goodly pallace that he hath built) and so minds not those things that are done below; or that he is taken up with the care of governing and ordering the heavens, (as when a man walks about in his own possessions, or in some other place whereof he hath the charge, to search and see what is fit to be done) and so being busied in those things, he cannot mind these things that are beneath: for the mention that is made here of *the circuit of heaven* seems purposely to imply, that in so vast a circuit as that of the heavens God had enough to doe, though he troubled not himself with those things that are done here in this world.

Verf. 15. *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?*] By the *old way which wicked men have trodden* is meant, either the miserable end which of old, even from the first, hath ever at last befallen wicked men, (as death is called *the way of all the earth*, Iosh. 23. 14.) the course which God hath at last taken with them; or else the way of profanenesse, wherein wicked men have of old in all ages walked, to wit, that not minding God they have taken liberty to doe what they list themselves, as if God regarded not what men doe here below: yea particularly it may be meant of the way of the old world, whom God destroyed, as will be more evident in the following verse. And then by asking whether he had *marked the old way which wicked men have trodden*, he demanded whether observing their waies, he had not taken notice, that the wrath of God hath alwaies at last fallen upon them.

Verf. 16. *Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a floud.*] If we understand this, (as most probably we may) of the destruction of the old world, there is nothing difficult in it; for we know that their *foundation*, that is, the earth whereon they lived, *was overflown with a floud* of waters. But it may also be meant of wicked men in generall, to wit, that in all Ages they have been *cut down out of time*, that is, suddenly, even in an instant; or by an untimely death, namely, when by the ordinary course of nature they might have lived longer; or, before they could accomplish their hopes and aimes. And then for the second clause, *whose foundation was overflown with a floud*, the meaning may be, that the wrath or judgements of God coming upon them with sudden and irresistible violence, as an overflowing floud, did utterly wash and sweep away their *foundation*, that is, those riches and honours which they had already attained, and which they had laid as a foundation or ground-work of a greater eminency which they aimed at; or, it carried away them and all that they had, even to the very foundation, all their children, their riches, their friends, their plots and designes, whatever was the support of their lives and estates, or whereon they rested, as their foundation and refuge.

Verf. 17. *Which said unto God, Depart from us.*] Thus in a way of derision here-
peats

peats the very words of Iob, chap. 21. 14. (of which see the Note there) but in a contrary sense; as if he had said, These *whose foundation is overflown with a floud*, are those that *said unto God, Depart from us*, and not those that God prospers, as you affirmed.

Verf. 18. *Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsell of the wicked is farre from me.*] That is, as some say, yet thou affirmest, that in stead of overflowing their foundation with a floud, God filled their houses with good things, and withall boastest, that notwithstanding the counsell of the wicked is farre from thee. Thus, I say, some Expositours take these words to be only a scornfull rehearfall of what Iob had said. But I rather think that Eliphaz here expresth his own thoughts; and that the first clause, *yet he filled their houses with good things*, is added, either as only to yield that a while God did greatly prosper those whom yet afterwards he destroyed, or rather as an aggravation of their wickednesse, both in that they could so unthankfully despise God, who had given them outward blessings in so great abundance, and in that they could so boldly deny the Providence of God, and slight him, as if he could doe nothing for them, when God had with so open a hand conferred many good things upon them. And then for the following clause, *but the counsell of the wicked is farre from me*, therein he doth again indeed reply upon Iob in a way of scorn, with the very same words which Iob before had used, chap. 21. 18. (concerning which see the Note there) to wit, either as upbraiding him for saying that the counsell of the wicked was farre from him, when his thoughts of God were the same with theirs, namely, that God minded not what was done here in this world (which Eliphaz charged him with, because he held that God prospered the wicked, and afflicted the righteous) and withall he was now a sharer with them in their plagues; or else to intimate, that he had better cause to say, that the counsell of the wicked was farre from him, then Iob had; he might say it cordially, because he held that utter ruine would be their end, but Iob, though he professed so with his mouth, could not think so in his heart, holding that they lived in greater prosperity then the godly did.

Verf. 19. *The righteous see it, and are glad, &c.*] That is, They evidently see that at last accomplished in the destruction of wicked men, which they long expected, and rejoyce in it. For though it be unlawfull to rejoyce simply in the destruction of the worst of men, especially if that joy ariseth from a private grudge and desire of revenge, or from any secret hope that men may have of any advantage that will thereby redound to themselves, according to that Prov. 24. 17. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, &c.* yet certainly it is not only lawfull, but commendable to rejoyce and triumph at the destruction of wicked men, out of zeal for the glory of God, because thereby his power, justice, truth, and holinesse is manifested, and his tender care over his servants, in taking their part against their wicked adversaries; and with respect to the peace and welfare which may redound to the people of God by their destruction.

And the innocent laugh them to scorn.] That is, They look upon them as such, who justly deserve to be laughed to scorn, to wit, because their waies have been

so foolish and ridiculous, and because they are taken, through the over-ruling providence of God, in their own craft, and are quite disappointed of their designs and hopes.

Verf. 20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.*] That is, Whereas the estates of the righteous, which are gotten in a just way, are not ruined (for they are the righteous with whom Eliphaz here joins himself and his friends) Or, more generally, whilst our life, and that whereby our life is maintained, and by which we and our families do subsist, is not cut down, the fire of Gods wrath utterly consumes the wicked, even all that is left of their families and estates, so that there is no remnant nor memorial left of them, as it was in the destruction of Sodom and her neighbouring cities, whereto it is very probable that Eliphaz might in these words have special respect. And indeed with the like phrase the prophet Isaiah expresseth the utter destruction of Babylon, Isa. 14. 22. *I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, &c.* Now this Eliphaz inserts here, either as a reason why the righteous rejoyce and triumph when the wicked are destroyed, as he had said in the foregoing verse, to wit, because God therein puts a difference betwixt the wicked and them; or else, as an introduction to the following exhortation, wherein he perswades Job to repent and turn unto God, whereas God spares the righteous, and the fire of his wrath consumes the wicked, *Acquaint now thy self with him, &c.*

Verf. 21. *Acquaint now thy self with him, &c.*] That is, whereas thou hast despised God, and estranged thy self from him, and lived as if thou hadst nothing to doe with him; now addresse thy self to know him and his will distinctly, to seek his favour, to walk with him, to be much in enjoying a holy communion with him in meditation, prayer, and other holy duties, to serve him as a master or father, and so to conform thy will to his in all things whatsoever. As for the following words, either they are added as a part of the advice which he gives Job, *and be at peace*, that is, pacifie thy troubled mind, and do not murmur against God as thou hast done, but labour to make thy peace with him; or else as a promise, *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace*, that is, then God will be at peace with thee, and thou shalt live in all prosperity.

Verf. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.*] See the Note, Deut. 6. 6. Some would gather from hence, that God had given his Law to Moses a little before this was written. But there is no sure ground here for this inference; for by *the Law* may be meant any divine declaration of Gods word and will, by what means soever it was done: It is therefore all one as if he had said, As we would not have thee run on in a way that is not good, trusting to thine own wisdom; so neither do we desire that thou shouldst depend upon our judgement, but that thou shouldst follow the counsell that God himself hath given us.

Verf. 23. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, &c.*] That is, God will every day more and more make up all the breaches in thy estate, thy glory, thy body, and thy children, till he hath raised thee to a great height of prosperity:

ty: see the Note, Exod. 1. 21. As for the following clause, *thou shalt put away iniquity farre from thy tabernacle*, that is inserted as a conditionall clause, to wit, that the truth of his repentance must be manifested, by his abandoning all his former evil waies, and not suffering any wickednesse in any of his family (wherein he doth also covertly tax Job, that not only he himself, but his children also and family had lived lewdly and wickedly; whence it was that both his children and servants were so strangely destroyed:) Or else, it is added as a farther branch of the promises here made to Job, upon condition of his repentance, to wit, that he should forsake all his former sins, and reform his family (and indeed when men sincerely humble themselves before God, and turn to him, he is wont thus by way of a blessing to carry on the work of grace in such men;) and withall that he should remove farre from him all those plagues and punishments which hitherto had lain upon them. For by iniquity in the Scripture is usually meant the punishment of iniquity: see the Note, Gen. 4. 7.

Verf. 24. *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, &c.*] That is, in mighty abundance. It may indeed also be read, as it is in the margin, *Then shalt thou lay up gold on the dust*, and so the meaning may be, that he should have gold in such abundance, that he should make no reckoning of it, it should be piled up or shovel'd up in heaps on the ground, or it should lye thrown up and down on the ground as if it were nothing worth; yea, say some, he should have such an infinite plenty of gold, that he should build his house, yea the very foundations of his house with gold in stead of stone, (an hyperbolical expression) or at least that he should make his pavements with gold.

Verf. 25. *Yea the Almighty shall be thy defence, &c.*] That is, he shall protect thee and thy estate; his providence shall once again be as a hedge about thee. This also may be otherwise read, as in the margin, *yea the Almighty shall be thy gold*, that is, thou shalt have that which is better and more precious then the most precious gold; Gods love and favour shall be to thee in stead of gold, and shall make thee richer and happier then all the gold and silver in the world can make thee. And then for the following clause, *And thou shalt have plenty of silver*, that is in the originall, *and thou shalt have silver of strength*; but the meaning is only this, that he should have store of silver, and that it should be a strength to him.

Verf. 26. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, &c.*] This word (*for*) may be taken with reference to the foregoing promises made to Job concerning temporall blessings; and then the drift of these words is all one as if he had said, Surely God will not withhold from thee these outward blessings, seeing he intends to give thee that which is infinitely better, even delight in himself. But I rather think that this is added as a farther encouragement to win him to that duty of repenting and returning to the Almighty, to which he had before advised him, namely, that whereas now he was continually vexed with inward troubles of mind, then he should have sweet *delight in the Almighty*; to wit, in the assurance of his love and favour, whereof all the outward blessings he should bestow upon him should be comfortable pledges, and so likewise in walking with him, & in doing him service. As for the following words, *and shalt lift up thy face unto God*, see the Note on chap. 11. 15.

Verf. 27.

Verf. 27. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.*] This last clause, *and thou shalt pay thy vows*, may be added to imply, 1. that Gods hearing his prayers should be manifested, by his doing that for him which he had begged of God, and thereby giving him occasion to pay the vows that he made when he put up his prayers: 2. that he should have continuall cause of rejoycing and praising God: 3. that God should blesse him so that he should be able to pay his vows: and it may be also 4. that it should be of Gods grace that he should be willing to pay his vows, when God had satisfied his desires.

Verf. 28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee, &c.*] That is, Thou shalt but say the word, and it shall be done; what thou shalt determine to doe, through Gods blessing thou shalt accomplish; or, what thou shalt determine to desire of God, resolving through faith that it will be done, it shall be made good to thee according to thy faith: (which may seem the more probable, because in the foregoing words he had spoken of Gods readinesse to hear his prayer.) And then for the following clause, *and the light shall shine upon thy waies*, the meaning of that must be, that by the counsell of Gods spirit, and by the blessing of Gods providence, he should be directed and prosper'd in all his undertakings, and should take great delight and contentment in what he did or had done. And very likely it is, that Eliphaz opposed this to that complaint of Jobs, chap. 19. 8. *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot passe, and he hath set darknesse in my paths.*

Verf. 29. *When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up, &c.*] This some Expositours understand thus; *when men are cast down* or destroyed by the judgements of God, *then thou shalt say*, there is, or there was a lifting up, of the spirit, a proud heart that was the cause of this destruction, according to that of Solomon, Prov. 16. 18. *Pride goeth before destruction.* Others again understand it thus; When men are overthrown with Gods judgements, yet thou shalt be preserved or lifted up, or thou shalt say, Yet I am lifted up; behold, God hath spared me in this common destruction, and in stead of casting me down, he hath exalted and lifted me up: Or, thou shalt comfort thy self with assurance, that God will again lift thee up. Again, others give this sense of the words; When men are humbled under the mighty hand of God, and cast down with grief and sorrow for their sins, then thou shalt assure them that God will raise them up again? Last of all, others give this as the meaning of the words; When men are cast down under grievous calamities, as now thou art, thou shalt from thine own experience assure them, that if they repent and turn to the Lord, he will lift them up again; yea and, in the confidence hereof, thou shalt pray unto God that he would raise them up from their low condition: and hereto agrees the following clause, *and he shall save the humble person*, that is, God, moved with thy prayer, shall save the man that is brought to so low and poor a condition, or the man that is humbled under his miseries.

Verf. 30. *He shall deliver the island of the innocent, &c.*] That is, God will remove his judgements from a whole country, for the sake of a few righteous ones that are

are in it: which Eliphaz in the next words applyes to Job, *and it is delivered by the purenesse of thy hands*; that is, if thou purgest thy self from thy sins by repentance, so shall it be with thee, thou shalt deliver the whole country where thou livest from calamities that otherwise would come upon it, because God will spare it for thy sake; Or, by the purenesse of thy hands lifted up in prayer unto God, it shall be delivered. And indeed God doth often spare whole kingdomes for his poor servants sake: but yet Eliphaz was deceived, if he intended to say that it is alwaies thus, as is evident by that which God saith concerning the land of Israel, Ezek. 14. 14. (where there seems to be an allusion to this very place) *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls.*

C H A P. XXIII.

Verf. 2. **E**ven to day is my complaint bitter, &c.] That is, still and still I do and must complain bitterly: and no wonder, *my stroke is heavier then my groaning*, that which I suffer exceeds my complaint; concerning which see the Note, chap. 6. 2. And thus doth Job covertly imply, that hitherto neither Eliphaz that replied last upon him, nor any of the rest, had spoken any thing that did in the least satisfie his mind, or allay his sorrow, but rather they had much imbittered his spirit. And therefore indeed, if we mark it, in this Reply of Jobs he doth not vouchsafe, as it were, to speak any more to his friends, as concluding there was no hope of convincing them, but addresseth himself either to speak to God, or to bemoan himself to himself.

Verf. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!*] That is, the seat of God. For, either because he had heard Eliphaz lay such foul things to his charge, as he had done in the former chapter, after all that he had formerly said to clear himself, therefore he now again wisheth that he might plead his cause before God, before him who knew what he suffered, and would compassionate him because of his sufferings; or else, because Eliphaz had advised him, to acquaint himself with the Almighty, and to make his peace with him, telling him what great things God would doe for him, if he would thus repent and turn to him, therefore he professeth here how glad he would be that he might appear before God, as knowing that he should find God at peace with him, whatever they thought, & should be able to justify himself against them before his tribunall. *O that I knew where I might find him! &c.* He speaks here of God after the manner of earthly princes & judges, who sit in judgement sometimes in one place and sometimes in another; and the drift of his words is only to shew, that were it a thing to be hoped, that God would appear in a visible manner, and so he might plead his cause before God, as men do before an earthly magistrate, he could be very glad of it, and would willingly present himself before his Judgement-seat, to answer for himself, against the false accusations of his friends. So that this is no more then what he had often wished before, as chap. 9. 34, 35. chap. 16. 21. and 17. 3. concerning which see the Notes there.

Verf. 5. *I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.*] That is, Being confident of the justice of my cause, and therefore not fearing any thing; having in order opened the cause before God, which hath been pleaded betwixt me and my accusers, and having with store of arguments maintained mine integrity before him; I would see what God would answer to the arguments that I should bring for my self, and what he would at last determine in the cause: I would study to understand what he should say, whether by way of approbation or reproof, and would quietly submit thereto. And thus he implies, that he doubted not but God would acquit him, and would make known why he had brought so great calamities upon him. Yet because of those words, *and understand what he would say to me*, some would have this implied also, that God would clearly and perspicuously make known his mind to him, whereas he scarce knew what to make of all that his friends had said to him.

Verf. 6. *Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put strength in me.*] By his great power may be meant, either that absolute power whereby God may doe with his creatures whatever he pleaseth, and that justly too; or that infinite power, before the consuming terrour whereof such a poor creature as he was could never stand, especially if God should proceed in extremity with him, and deal with him according to the rigour of his justice: and accordingly the meaning of these words must be, that he was confident, either that God would not proceed with him according to his absolute power over his creatures, making his own will and pleasure the only reason why he hid such heavy judgements upon him, or else that God would not overwhelm him with the terrour of his Majesty and glory; which was the condition that Job formerly propounded, where he desired he might have liberty to plead his cause before God, chap. 13. 20, 21. (concerning which see the Note there.) And hereto indeed the last clause seems best to agree, *No, but he would put strength into me*; that is, in stead of crushing and overwhelming me by his glorious power, he will rather sustain me, that I may be able to stand and plead my cause before a God of such Majesty.

Verf. 7. *There the righteous might dispute with him, &c.*] That is, The righteous may boldly plead their cause before God in such a way of judgement, where God will not stand upon his absolute power for the punishing of men, but will only deal with them according to the revealed rule of his justice, in regard of the Covenant of mercy he hath made with them, and where God will as it were lay by his Majesty and glory, and admit a poor man to plead his cause before him, as if he were pleading before a man as himself. And this he applies to himself in the following words, *so should I be delivered for ever from my judge*: the meaning whereof is, that if God, his judge, before whose tribunal he had desired to plead his cause, would hear him with such gentleness, and proceed with him in that manner he had now expressed, by him he should be for ever acquitted, and should not fear to be condemned by him; and consequently also, he should be delivered from the false accusations of those that now did most unjustly both judge and censure him.

Verf. 8. *Behold, I goe forward, and he is not there, &c.*] That is, whether I goe forward or backward, neither way can I make that discovery of God that I desire. And so it follows, verf. 9. *I goe on the left hand, where he doth work;* as if he should have said, Seeking him out by taking notice of his works: *but I cannot behold him;* that is, even there I cannot discern him: *he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him;* that is, if I look for him on the right hand, there also he is hidden from me, I know that many learned Expositours do hold, that by *forward* here is meant Eastward, (because, say they, man is considered here as setting his face toward the rising Sun) and by *backward*, Westward; and so by *the left hand*, the North, and by *the right hand*, the South. And accordingly they also hold that Gods working is particularly mentioned, where Job speaks of *the left hand*; that is, the North, *I goe on the left hand where he doth work*, because the Northern parts of the world are more inhabited and better peopled then the Southern are, and the people there are also more civilized, more understanding, ingenious, and active for all things then the other are. But methinks this is somewhat nice and curious. That which is said before to be the ground of this expression, is I think sufficient. But however, questionlesse, that which is here said in both these verses, is added in relation to that he had said before, verf. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him!* &c. and may be understood first of the invisibility of God; and so the scope may be, to shew, that though he had wished he might appear before Gods tribunall, yet he did not think that God was visibly to be seen, as earthly Judges are, but knew that God was every where present, though no where to be seen as man is: and 2. of the incomprehensiblenesse of Gods waies and judgements, to wit, that which way soever he turned himself, he was not able to comprehend any of Gods judgements, or to find out God by any of his works; (concerning which see a former Note upon a like place, chap. 9. 11.) or 3. of Gods refusing to answer his desire by manifesting himself to him in any outward apparition, as a judge offering to hear and determine his cause; and so it is all one as if he had said, I may wish thus to appear before God, that I may plead my cause before him; but, alas, I do not find that God intends me any such favour; he hides himself from me in this regard, and which way soever I look, I find not the least likelihood, that God will vouchsafe to give me such a hearing!

Verf. 10. *But he knoweth the way that I take, &c.*] The inference of these words upon that which went before is very questionable: but two opinions concerning this I find most probable. The first is, that these words are here added to clear himself from a false conceit, that upon his former words his friends might entertain in their thoughts concerning him; and so that the meaning of these words is, as if he had said, Though I say that I can no where find God, that I may plead my cause before him, yet I am farre from the atheistical thoughts of those prophane wretches that say, God knoweth not what is done here in this world: for, sure I am, that though I cannot find him, yet he knoweth me and all my waies; which makes me also confident, that, knowing mine innocency, he only intends to try me by these calamities he hath laid upon me. The second is, that this is added here, to shew the reason why he desired to plead his cause before God, or

to shew, that though there was no hope of appearing before the invisible God in a visible manner, after the way of pleading before the tribunall of an earthly judge; yet he might safely appeal to God to passe judgement in his cause, and that because he was sure that God knew him exactly; and therefore though earthly Judges, not knowing men, may upon false information erre in judgement, yet so it could not be with God: whereupon he also adds, *when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*; where by Gods trying him may be meant, either a judicall triall, by hearing him plead his cause, or a trying him by the afflictions where-with he had exercised him; and so the drift of these words may be, to shew how confident he was, that after tryall he should not be found such drosse as his friends would make him, but pure gold, and that God meant no more to destroy him by these calamities he had brought upon him, then the gold-smith means to burn up the gold that he puts into the fire, for the trying and purging of it.

Verf. 11. *My foot hath held his steps, &c.*] This Job adds, as by way of protesting against those wicked practices wherewith Eliphaz had charged him, chap. 22. 5. and by this, *my foot hath held his steps*, is meant, either that he had endeavoured to imitate God in his holinesse, justice, mercy, &c. according to that of the Apostle, Ephes. 5. 1. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children*; or else his strict treading in those steps which God in his law had prescribed him: so that the next words are a meer explanation of these, *his way have I kept, and not declined*.

Verf. 12. *Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips, &c.*] That is, I have not upon any pretence fallen off from doing what he hath commanded me, to the utmost of my power, but rather have fully and constantly cleaved thereto. *I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food*; that is, I have more earnestly desired them, more diligently sought them, more heartily delighted in them, more highly prized them, more carefully stored them up in my heart, *than my necessary food* which I cannot be without, or *my appointed portion*, as it is in the margin, that is, my daily food appointed for me, and consequently then any thing that is most requisite for me. And thus Job expressly answers that advice which Eliphaz had given him, ch. 22. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart*, (of which see the Note there :) affirming that he had alwaies done this, whatever he might judge of him because of his afflictions.

Verf. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? &c.*] That is, Who can make him goe back from what he hath resolved upon? Some understand this of the immutable perseverance of God in his love to Job; as if he had said, Though at present I can discern no token of his love and favour towards me, yet he is, I know, the same towards me that he alwaies was, a gracious and loving father, and there is no turning him from those thoughts of love that he hath alwaies born me. But more generally and better it is, by others, understood of the unchangeableness of God in all his counsels, and that it is here inserted, to shew that it was no wonder that God dealt so severely with him, notwithstanding he had endeavoured to yield obedience to God in all things, *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?* as if he should have said, But, alas, be I never so righteous, or let me say what I will and can for my self, when he hath determined to doe any thing, he

he is constant in his purposes, and will doe, as he justly may, whatever he pleaseth. For Job doth not charge God that he dealt with him as tyrants use to doe, that will doe what they list, without regarding what is just or unjust; but only acknowledgeth Gods absolute Sovereignty over men, whereby he may doe whatever he pleaseth in the world, and yet doth alwaies what is just, though men cannot comprehend the reason of his proceedings.

Verf. 14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me, &c.*] Here Job applies that to himself, which in the foregoing words he had delivered more generally: and accordingly some understand it of Gods performing the good he had intended him; which cannot well agree with that which is added in the following verses, concerning his fears and terrours. It is better therefore, by the most expounded of Gods unchangeable proceeding to doe to him whatever he had determined: *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me;* that is, what according to his just Prerogative he hath determined to doe unto me in this way of afflicting me, that he doth and will perform. And hereto agreeth the following clause, *and many such things are with him,* that is, with him with whom I have to doe. And the meaning may be, either that God had many such like calamities and miseries, as those were which he had already suffered, which he might farther bring upon him, and wherewith it was like he meant yet farther to exercise his graces, and to purge-out his corruptions; as if he had said, I do not perceive that God hath yet done with me; it may be there are yet other sorrows appointed for me: or, that he doth many such things to others as well as to him, the cause whereof is hidden from us; as if he should have said, It is not my case alone, many such things he both decrees and executes, he usually deales thus with men in an unsearchable way according to his absolute Sovereignty, proceeding oftentimes with great severity against men, when yet he loves them, and means them good.

Verf. 15. *Therefore am I troubled at his presence; when I consider, I am afraid of him.*] In the foregoing chapter, when Eliphaz had charged Job with many grosse sins, he added verf. 10. *Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee:* Job therefore, say some Expositours, as in answer hereto, professeth here that his terrours did arise, not from any guiltinesse of conscience, but meerly from the consideration of the majesty of Gods presence, his absolute power in doing what he pleaseth to men, and the unsearchablenesse of his judgements. But however, clear it is that he ascribes his fears to that absolute and unresistable power and Sovereignty whereby God doth to men whatever he pleaseth, whereof he had spoken in the two foregoing verses; to wit, because, observing that God proceeded with him after this manner, he might well fear how farre God would goe on in laying his hand so sorely upon him. And withall herein he might also intimate, how farre he was from holding that God could not see and consider what was done here in the world, as Eliphaz had seemed to charge him, chap. 22. 13. and that when he desired that he might plead his cause before God, it was in hope that God would not overwhelm him with the terrours of his Majesty, as he had before expressed, chap. 13. 21.

Verf. 16. *For God maketh my heart soft, &c.*] That is, By these heavy calamities,

ties brought upon me, he hath made my heart weak and faint; it melteth away like wax before the fire: which makes me the readier to fear that still more miseries are coming upon me.

Verf. 17. *Because I was not cut off before the darknesse, neither hath he covered the darknesse from my face.*] That is, Because he did not cut me off before these calamities came upon me, nor by these calamities which he hath brought upon me, nor hath yet afforded me any release from my miseries: and hereby he intimates his fears, that he was hitherto preserved from utter destruction, that he might be reserved to farther miseries, which was that which did so exceedingly perplex him; for that by *darknesse* he means his grievous calamities; see 1 Sam. 2. 9.

CHAP. XXIV.

Verf. 1. **W**Hy, *seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him, not see his daies?*] 1. By this, that *times are not hidden from the Almighty*, is meant, that God knoweth all times, and all things that are or shall be done in time. 2. By *they that know him* are meant the godly, that love and fear God, according to that, Psal. 36. 10, *O continue thy loving-kindnesse to them that know thee!* and 3. By this, that *they see not his daies*, is meant, that they see not the noted and memorable daies wherein God doth his great and famous works, either of mercy or judgement; or more particularly, the daies of his executing vengeance upon wicked men here in this life, which indeed are usually by way of eminency called in the Scripture Gods daies, as Isa. 2. 12. *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, &c.* and so in many other places. The drift of these words is, to shew that God doth not alwaies punish wicked men here in this world, as Jobs friends had maintained he did. For the proving whereof, as he mentions many sorts of leud men that live in peace and prosperity, and are never punished here in this world, so before this enumeration of such prophane ones as goe unpunished, he prefixeth the words of this verse by way of introduction; the meaning whereof may be thus set forth: *Seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty*, that is, seeing God knoweth all times, and consequently both the times how long men are to live in the world, and when is the fittest time and opportunity to punish wicked men, so that no wicked man can slip out of the world unknown to God, or before the time that God intended to punish him, *why do they that know him, not see his daies?* that is, why do the righteous servants of God, that walk with him, and observe his dealings, and to whom God is most ready to reveal himself, as to his bosome friends, not see the daies of Gods punishing wicked men here in this life? The summe of this introduction is therefore briefly this; that if God did constantly determine to punish all prophane ungodly men in this world, since he knows the times how long they are to continue here, and so cannot be disappointed by their unexpected dying, he would certainly take the fittest time to doe it: and so the godly should observe the time when, and the manner how God alwaies punisheth wicked men, and so should infallibly know by Gods dealing with those upon whom God laies his hand, whether they are wicked men or no.

Verf. 2.

Verf. 2. *Some remove the land-marks, &c.*] Here Job begins to reckon up the foul enormities of those that yet often goe unpunished here in this world; and mentions in the first place the removing of land-marks, this being in all ages, and amongst all nations, even by the light of nature, esteemed an execrable wickedness, and therefore also forbidden in Moses law, Deut. 19. 14: under which also all other unjust encroachings upon other mens estates may be comprised, according to that, Prov. 23. 10. *Remove not the old land-mark, and enter not into the fields of the fatherlesse.* And to this he adds, *they violently take away flocks and feed thereof:* and if we read the last clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and feed them,* it is doubtlesse added to shew the impudency of such men, that when they have driven away other mens cattel, do not kill them, or sell them away, to conceal their rapine thereby, or to supply their necessities, but putting them into their own pastures do openly there *feed them*, as if they were their own: and withall their impunity; God never calls them to a reckoning, but they quietly enjoy what they have so unjustly gotten.

Verf. 3. *They drive away the asse of the fatherlesse, &c.*] Asse here may be put for asses; or, this may be intended as an aggravation of the wicked mans oppression, that though the fatherlesse have but one asse, yet he sticks not to spoil him of it. And the like may be said of the following clause, *They take the widows oxe for a pledge.* Oxe here may be put for oxen: but however it is to the same effect. For because the widows oxen are so necessary for the ploughing of her ground, and other such like employments, and of a yoke of oxen if one be taken away, the other becomes uselesse, it being a most unmercifull act to take that for a pledge without which the poor man cannot live, and therefore forbidden in Gods law, Exod. 22. 26. (concerning which see the Note there;) hence it is that this is mentioned here as such a high degree of wickednesse.

Verf. 4. *They turn the needy out of the way, &c.*] Expositours find it hard to determine what is meant here by turning the needy out of the way. Some understand it of causing the needy, by their oppressions, to take leud and unwarrantable courses to help themselves; so turning them out of the way of righteousness, which God hath prescribed them. 2. Some understand it of turning the needy out of the way of justice, to wit, either by overawing them, so that they dare not appear in judgement against them; or else by obstructing the waies of justice so by their great power, that the needy are thrust from their right, and can find no way of righting themselves: and so they make this place parallel with that, Amos 2. 7. *they turn aside the way of the meek.* 3. Others conceive it is meant of those that by their robberies do so infest the high-waies, that the very poorest, because of their cruelty, are afraid to travell in the ordinary way, and therefore seek out secret by-waies whereby they may safely passe. 4. Others apply it to those that by their oppressions and hard dealing with the poor, do turn them out of the way of their livelyhood, the way of exercising their trade and profession, and force them to hide themselves; as when by taking those things as pawns from them, which are absolutely necessary for the exercise of their callings, or by any other way of cruell usage, they are disabled from going forth to their work, and
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from following their ordinary imployments. And 5. others hold, that by turning the needy out of the way is only meant, that they are by the unjust dealing of their oppressing neighbours put to such shifts, that they scarce know which way to turn themselves, and cannot in a manner be suffered to live by them. And indeed with these two last Expositions the following clause doth best agree, *the poor of the earth hide themselves together*: the meaning whereof doubtlesse is, that by the oppressours enlarging of their estates and other unmercifull dealings, the needy are many times forced to run together into holes and corners to hide themselves, and to crowd together in any corner like bees in a hive, and scarce dare show their heads abroad amongst others. See 1 Sam. 14. 11. and Heb. 11. 37.

Verf. 5. *As wild asses in the desert goe they forth to their work, rising betimes for a prey, &c.*] Some understand this of the needy, mentioned in the foregoing verse, that are turned out of the way by their great oppressours; to wit, that being forced to fly into the desert, they do there live more like beasts, even like wild asses, then like men, *going forth to their work*, to wit, to that toiling and moiling labour wherein they are made to drudge for others, or to seek a poor livelihood for themselves, *rising betimes for a prey*, that is, to gather here and there, or any way to seise upon somewhat wherewith to satisfie their hunger: and accordingly also they understand the following clause, *the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children*; that is, all the food they have, is what they can get in the wilderness. But now the most of Expositours understand this of those that oppress the poor and needy, or of the mighty robbers that were in those times, to wit, that they were like *wild asses in the desert*, in that they were a company of fierce, savage, untamed men, sons of Belial, that would be in no subjection to any laws or government, but exercised all kind of violence and rapine upon those that were near them, and lived like beasts in that regard; *they goe forth to their work, rising betimes for a prey*, that is, every day they ramble up and down diligently, to rob and make a prey of all that come near them, which is their only work and imployment: and so also they understand the following clause, *the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children*; that is, they and theirs live by rapine, as others by their grounds which they till and dresse; or, in the wilderness, by their robberies and murthers, they provide for them, their children and servants, not caring what becomes of others.

Verf. 6. *They reap every one his corn in the field, and they gather the vintage of the wicked.*] Even this likewise some understand of the poor, to wit, either that they are glad to work for their mighty task-masters, in reaping their corn and gathering their vintage; (for in this sense it may be said, that *they reap every one his corn*, either because they reap every one that parcell of corn which is allotted them for their task, or because they are forced to reap their own corn, not for themselves, but for the oppressour that hath taken their fields by force from them) or else that by way of foraging for themselves, here one cuts down the corn in one field, and another the corn in another field, and gather the vintage of their wicked oppressours, which they thought to have had for themselves. But this too the most

most Expositours understand of those great oppressours and robbers, of whom Job had spoken in the foregoing verses, to wit, that they reap the corn, and gather the vintage, of the fields and vineyards which they had wrung by unjust violence from the right owners, or that they pretend some title or other to any mans corn and vintage which they have a mind to, and take it away by force from them; which is expressed in the last clause by those words, *and they gather the vintage of the wicked*; either 1. because it was gotten wickedly: or 2. because they condemn those for wicked men whom they so oppress, and under that notion take their inheritance from them, as Ahab did the vineyard of Naboth: or 3. because in their oppressions they spare not the vineyards of those that are as wicked as themselves; and so one wolf makes a prey of another.

Verf. 7. *They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, &c.*] See the Note, chap. 22. 6.

Verf. 8. *They are wet with the showers of the mountains, &c.*] That is, the poor, mentioned in the foregoing verse, that are stripped of their clothing, are exposed to wet, whilst they work abroad in the fields for their great lords, or whilst they wander up and down in the desert to provide for themselves; *and embrace the rock for want of shelter*, that is, hide themselves in the holes of rocks for want of other shelter, and are glad and joyfull of such a refuge, which this phrase of embracing the rock may seem to imply. We have the like phrase, Lam. 4. 5. *they that were brought up in scarlet, embrace dunghils*, that is, are forced to sit or lye upon dunghils.

Verf. 9. *They pluck the fatherlesse from the breast.*] And this not only they might be said to have done, that took them from the breast to sell them for bond-slaves; but they likewise that took away their mothers or nurses, to make slaves of them, or that forced them to leave their sucklings to goe and work in their fields or vineyards, and it may be to wean them before they would have done it, that they might be fitter to toil and labour for them; and those also that by starving their mothers or nurses, disabled them that they could not give their little ones suck. For the following clause, *and take a pledge of the poor*, see the Note chap. 22. 6.

Verf. 10. *They cause him to goe naked without clothing, &c.*] That is, the poor man mentioned in the foregoing verse, whom they had taken for a pledge, they would force him to work for them, and yet not afford him necessary raiment. And then it follows, *They take away the sheaf from the hungry*; that is, from the hungry poor they take away that little corn which they had gotten for the nourishment of them and theirs, haply that one sheaf of gleanings which with much pains they had gathered: Or else the meaning may be, that they would not suffer their poor hungry harvest-men to tast the least of the corn which they reaped and gathered in for them; an act of great inhumanity, though it were to a beast, as is evident by that law, Deut. 25. 4. *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.*

Verf. 11. *Which make oyl within their walls, and tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst.*] Some understand this of griping oppressours; who will scarce tast of the
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blessings they enjoy in greatest plenty. But the words seem clearly to hold forth the contrary, to wit, that it is spoken of the poor that are oppressed. And it may be understood either of those that make wine and oyl in their own houses, and yet afterwards have not wherewith to quench their thirst, namely, because they are presently forced to sell all away to pay their debts, or else because spoilers come straightwaies upon them and carry it all away; Or else of the poor labourers, that make wine and oyl in great mens houses, and yet are ready to perish for thirst, to wit, not only because their wages are not paid them, at least not in time, or because they allow them wages whereon they cannot live; but also because they are not allowed to quench their thirst with that they provide for their great Masters. And well may this be mentioned as a high degree of wickednesse, as is noted above vers. 10. that they should suffer them to be hungry and thirsty, at the very time when they toiled and moiled to prepare for them such choice dainties, and should be hard-hearted to the poor, when they receive so liberally from God.

Vers. 12. *Men groan from out of the city, &c.*] As if he should have said, These things are thus not only in the country, in desert and solitary places, but also in cities, the places where seats of justice are usually erected; they are not only done in secret, but openly: the groans and cries of the oppressed are openly heard in the cities, *and the soul of the wounded cryeth out*; that is, the men that are wounded in their very souls because of the oppressions of the wicked, and the wrong that is daily done them, or, the men that are wounded and slain by the overbearing power of tyrants and oppressours, do in their grief, or whilst they are dying, complain bitterly of what they suffer, and cry unto God for vengeance; Or it may be meant, that the bloud, or the souls of those that are wounded and slain do cry for vengeance, as is said concerning the bloud of Abel, Gen. 4. 10. (of which see the Note there) and the souls of the Martyrs slain by their cruell persecutours, Revel. 6. 9, 10. Some understand the first clause particularly of those that grieve and groan in the city, because of those grievous oppressions which they hear the poor endure in the country; and some apply both clauses to the groans of such as inhabite cities, when they are streightned and damnified, and sometime, if they stir forth a little, wounded and slain by those field-robbers, whereof Job had spoken in the foregoing verses. But I conceive it must be taken generally of the groans and complaints of all that are oppressed in cities, whatever their sufferings and oppressions be. As for the last clause, *yet God layeth not solely to them*, it is that for which Job had alledged all that he hath hitherto spoken of profane wicked men; to wit, that though their wickednesse be so great, and the oppressed cry to God against them, yet many times God doth not in the least punish them for the evil they commit, and so stop them in their foolish and wicked waies, but suffers them to run on in their leud and sinfull courses.

Vers. 13. *They are of those that rebell against the light, &c.*] This I conceive is primarily meant of that naturall light, whereof Job speaks also in the following verses; for against this light it may be said that they rebell, because they hate and abhorre it: *they know not the waies thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof*; that

is, they are birds of darknesse, they spend their daies most in the dark, and take little or no pleasure to be in the light. Having spoken before of open oppressours, now he comes to speak of those that sin more secretly and closely. But yet secondarily it must questionlesse be understood of spirituall light, to wit, that they rebell against God *the father of lights*, against the light of nature, and against the light of Gods word and spirit: and that 1. Because mens seeking darknesse and secrecy when they sin, is an argument that they rebell against the light of their own consciences; and 2. Because this their sinning so wilfully and desperately, not of ignorance, is mentioned here as a great aggravation of their wickednesse, and that which makes it farre more strange that God should spare them. And indeed even in regard of this light it might be well said, that *they know not the waies thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof*; because they do not approve of, nor delight in, nor will walk in those waies to which by this spirituall light they are directed: at least if they sometimes do something that the light directs them, yet to be sure they will not make it their constant course, they will not abide in those waies.

Vers. 14. *The murderer rising with the light, killeth the poor and needy, &c.*] This is meant either directly of those that do purposely goe forth to kill such as they have conceived malice against; and then the next clause, *and in the night is as a thief*, must be understood thus, that in the night he seeks to slay those he hates secretly, as in the day he seeks to doe it by open assault; or, that having shed the bloud of men in the day, in the night he seeks to hide his head, as thieves are wont to doe: or else of robbers and high-way men, as we use to call them; and that both because robbers are frequently also murderers, and likewise because by robbing and spoiling them of their estates, they do in a manner shorten their daies; and then the meaning of the last clause is this, *and in the night is as a thief*, that is, as he robs openly by day, so he is a close pilfering thief by night: for this word (*as*) doth not alwaies import a likenesse only, as we see Joh. 1. 14. *and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the father.*

Vers. 16. *In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time, &c.*] That is, those wicked ones of whom he spake vers. 13. *that rebell against the light*. It cannot be so properly meant of adulterers, of whom he had spoken in the words immediately foregoing (they are usually let in by agreement, or have some closer way of getting in to satisfie their lust, and are seldome wont to *dig through houses*, or break in by force;) and therefore it must be understood of another knot of wicked wretches, to wit, of thieves, who are wont indeed to view the houses by day which they purpose to rob, to observe the strength of the house, and which way they may get in with most ease and advantage, and then accordingly break into them by night. As for the last clause, *they know not the light*, see the Note vers. 13.

Vers. 17. *For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death, &c.*] That is, most hatefull and terrible: to wit, both because coming suddenly upon them, before they have fully accomplished their wickednesse, they are vexed to be so crossed in their intended evil; as also because they are afraid they shall be discovered, surpris'd, and taken: which the following words *do more clearly hold*

forth, if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

Verf. 18. *He is swift as the waters, &c.*] A most knotty place this is, insomuch that we can hardly find any two Expositours that are in every regard of the same mind in giving the sense of the words: and yet all agree, that Job speaks here still of those wicked wretches that rebell against the light, of whom he had been speaking hitherto, though he speaks of them sometimes indefinitely in the singular number, *He is swift as the waters*, and so verf. 20, 21, &c. and sometimes in the plurall number, *their portion is cursed in the earth*, and so verf. 24, &c. It is not to be wholly slighted which some say, that Job having before spoken of the thief at land, digging through houses, he now speaks also of the Pirate, that robbeth by sea; *he is swift as the waters*, to wit, when he is in chase of any ship that he seeks to make a prey of; *their portion is cursed in the earth*, that is, they that live at land curse them, because they are ever and anon so exceedingly damnified by them; *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*, that is, having once tasted the sweetnesse of sea-robbing, he will no more live at land, to toil and moil in dressing vineyards. But there are three other Expositions which seem to me the most probable. First, some conceive that these words do farther set forth the wickednesse of these desperate wretches: *He is swift as the waters*, that is, they pursue their wicked designs with full sail, they are as prone and forward to doe evil as water is to run downward, and as speedy and swift in doing evil, as the waters are in gliding away from one place to another; which agrees with that which Solomon saith of such kind of men, that *their feet are swift in running to mischief*, Prov. 6. 18. *their portion is cursed in the earth*, that is, the places where they chuse to live, as fittest for them that intend to live by robbery and spoil, are forrests and desarts, that are cursed with barrennesse, Heb. 6. 18. *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*, that is, they love not to live by honest labour, as by ploughing and dressing the vineyards, but by thieving and robbery, and therefore the way of the vineyards is no place for them. Again 2. some understand these words of the fears of wicked men, and their seeking to hide themselves: having said in the foregoing verse, if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death, he adds here, *He is swift as the waters*; that is, when they are in danger to be discovered and apprehended, they slip away, as nimbly as the water glides away in a river, nor can stay long in any place, but fly all company, by reason of the terrors that are continually upon them: *their portion is cursed in the earth*, that is, they seek to hide themselves in woods, and rocks, and desarts, as before is noted; Or, they live a most miserable base life, not only in regard of the desolatenesse and the solitarinesse of the places where they live, but also because of the terrors wherewith Cain-like they are continually perplexed. *He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*, that is, they fly so speedily away, that they have not so much time as to visit their houses, or to see their vineyards; Or, they live a solitary sad life in desarts and mountains, and enjoy not the pleasure of gardens and vineyards as other men do; Or rather, they flee not to the vineyards, that are places alwaies frequented, as being usually planted near to cities, and where all the year long there is still some company, either working, or tending them, or walking for their pleasure; in such places as
these

these they dare not be seen. And then 3. many understand them of Gods punishing such wicked men; *He is swift as the waters*; that is, they passe away, to wit, by death, suddenly and irrecoverably, as waters in rivers run swiftly away, and come back no more; see the Note, Gen. 49. 4. *their portion is cursed in the earth*, that is, their habitations shall be destroyed by the magistrate when they come to apprehend them, or when they are cut off by sentence passed upon them; Or, their inheritance in the land is barren, covered over with weeds and briars; Or, they are cursed even here while they are upon earth, where they seem to live in a very happy condition; because the curse of God shall be at last upon all their earthly concernments, (and perhaps their posteritie too) either by wasting and consuming it, or by causing all that they have to tend to their hurt. *He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*, that is, they flie not so farre as the vineyards, though usually in the suburbs of the cities, before they be apprehended and taken; Or, even their vineyards are so cursed with barrenesse, that they take no pleasure to visit them and to look upon them. And if it be objected, that if we understand these words thus, that which Job saith here should contradict what he had said before, concerning wicked mens running on unpunished, and living in a prosperous conditions; see the answer to this in the Note, chap. 21. 17.

Verf. 19. *Drought and heat consume the snow waters; so doth the grave those which have sinned.*] That is, As the earth, when it is drie by the heat of the weather, doth soon drink up the waters of the melted snow that lay unmelted all the winter; so doth the grave at last swallow up the wicked, when they had run on in sin to that very time. And I conceive that doubtlesse the drift of the words is, to shew, that after those wicked wretches had lived such an abominable and damnable life, as he had now described, yet they died at length an ordinarie naturall death, as other men die, without the least visible sign of the vengeance of God upon them, more then there is in the death of other men. Job had in a manner said the same before, chap. 21. 13. concerning which see the Note there. For whether by their passing away as the snow-waters, is meant their dying suddenly, or their wasting away by degrees, the aime of the words is certainly to shew, that they are gathered to the grave at last as other men are. We have the like expressions, Psal. 58. 8. *As a snail which melteth, let every one of them passe away*; and Psal. 68. 2. *As the wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish*. And this Exposition is indeed most suitable to the scope of Job in this place, which is to shew, that God doth not manifest his wrath against all wicked men, neither whilst they live nor when they die. But yet some learned Expositours do rather take the words to be a description of the sad conclusion and miserable end of sinners, wicked and ungodly men, to wit, that they are for their sins cut off in a way of wrath; and whilst the righteous in death triumph over death, and cannot be cut off from their spirituall blisse, death doth absolutely triumph over the wicked, and doth wholly consume and swallow up them and all their happinesse.

Verf. 20. *The womb shall forget him, &c.*] That is, His wife, or rather his mother, and so consequently all his dearest and nearest friends, shall utterly forget him; Or, He shall perish and be forgotten, as if he had never been conceived

and born into the world. Some conceive that this, as that did in the foregoing verse, referres to the easinesse of the wicked mans death; as the cause why his friends the sooner forget his death; they shall not be grieved or troubled at his death, because he died so easie a death: to which purpose is that also which follows, *the worm shall feed sweetly on him*, that is, (say some) It shall be sweet and delightfull to him that the worms feed on him, (an expression like that, chap. 21. 33. *the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him*, concerning which see the Note there) Or rather, the worms shall make a sweet banquet of him; he that had wont to feed on sin, and to make a prey of others, shall then become a prey to the worms, to whom his flesh shall be sweet-meat. The summe of all is, that he shall fare no worse in the grave then others fare. *He shall be no more remembred*, that is, there shall be no remarkable stroke of judgement in his death to make him be talked of, when he is gone; *and wickednesse shall be broken as a tree*, that is, as an old rotten tree doth wast and moulder away piece-meals and by degrees, till it be at last quite gone, so shall the wicked man wast and consume away by degrees. But then again others understand this also of the miserie and wretchednesse of wicked men in their death; *The womb shall forget him*, that is, his nearest relations, as they were wearie of him whilst he lived, so being dead they shall scarce ever mind him, or think of him more: *he shall be no more remembred*, that is, he shall never be mentioned with honour, but his name shall rot amongst men, or he shall be forgotten as a man not worthy to be thought of; *and wickednesse shall be broken as a tree*, as a barren & unfruitfull tree is cut down or grubbed up by the roots, or as any other tree is violently shiver'd in pieces & thrown down by a tempest, or as a rotten and worm-eaten tree is easily broken or blown down by the wind, and then never sprouts up again; so *wickednesse*, that is, wicked men (according as we find the like expression Psal. 107. 42. *and all iniquity shall stop her mouth*) after they have flourished a while in their wickednesse, shall be suddenly taken away by death, and be cut off from amongst the living.

Verf. 21. *He evil intreateth the barren, that beareth not; and doth not good to the widow.*] But rather hurt. Under these two particulars, of evil intreating the barren, and doing no good to the widow, all oppression of the needy and helpelesse is comprehended: and evil intreating the barren is made one of the great oppressions of the wicked, because therein they did afflict those that were in a sad afflicted condition before, and that had no children to rise up in their defence: and if it be meant of the hard usage of their own wives when they were barren, whom they should have comforted, and who dare not mutter against them, this must needs implie the greater cruelty. Some conceive that this is added, to shew why the wicked, when they are dead, are no more minded nor remembred, as is said in the foregoing verse, to wit, because they were such mercilesse wretches whilst they lived, evil intreating the barren, &c. But I rather conceive that Job here returns to set forth the wickednesse of those wretches, whom notwithstanding God suffers to live in prosperity, till they come at length to die in an ordinarie way, as other men do.

Verf. 22. *He draweth also the mighty with his power, &c.*] Some understand this

this of Gods punishing wicked men, to wit, that when he begins to contend with the wicked, he subdues or brings under the mightiest of them as well as the meekest; and so also they understand the following clause, *he riseth up*, that is, God riseth up to contend with wicked men; and *no man is sure of life*, no man can secure himself against the killing stroke of Gods indignation, or the discovery of Gods indignation makes every man afraid of his life. But the tenor of the words sheweth clearly that Job still proceeds to describe the wickednesse of wretched men, whom God notwithstanding prospers. *He draweth also the mighty with his power*: the meaning is, either that by his power he procures the mighty to side with him, judges, and magistrates, and great men, and so this makes him terrible to others, *he riseth up, and no man is sure of life*; or else, that *he draweth the mighty*, to wit into his net, according to that, Psal. 10. 9. *he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net*; when he hath crushed the poor by his oppressions, then, encouraged hereby, he layeth wait also for the mightie, and subdues them, and brings them into subjection to him, even magistrates also and judges, whereby likewise he subverts all publick order and government: *he riseth up, and no man is sure of life*; that is, if any man rise up to oppose this oppressour, he shall but ruine and destroy himself thereby; or, Though the oppressour riseth up to make a Covenant of peace with men, yet they are all of them for all that afraid of their lives; there is no assurance in any vow or oath, whereby he engageth himself: Or rather, *he riseth up* to contend with the mightie, and the terrours of death presently seise upon them all. But if we read this last clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *He riseth up, and he trusteth not his own life*, either it is meant of the oppressed, to wit, that *he riseth up*, namely, to sue for favour to the oppressour, or to flie from him, but do what he will, he trusteth not his own life, but gives himself for a dead man, because of the over-bearing power of his adversary; or else of the oppressour, to wit, that when he riseth to contend with the mightie, or every day he riseth, he is afraid of his own life, being still jealous, as tyrants are wont to be, that some body or other will kill him.

Verf. 23. *Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth, yet his eyes are upon their waies.*] Some Expositours understand this thus; that though the oppressed give gifts to the oppressour, that he may thereby purchase his peace, or, though the oppressour grants this to the oppressed, that he shall live in peace and safety by him, and thereupon he rests upon this his covenant and promise, that he will surely be as good as his word; yet the oppressour keeps his eyes upon these to whom he hath thus engaged himself, and watcheth all their waies, and if he can but get the least advantage against them, will be sure to crush them. But there are severall other Expositions given of the words that seem farre better then this; to wit, 1. that though God gives to the oppressour that which may well in outward appearance secure him in peace, and he rest hereon, yet it is not because God is ignorant of his wicked courses; seeing Gods eyes behold all his waies: or 2. that though God lets him live in safetie, and he rests hereon with great security, yet Gods eyes are upon his waies to favour him and to blesse him: or rather 3. that though it be given of God to wicked wretches that they live in peace

peace and prosperitie, and they resting hereupon are confident they shall never be moved, yet God takes strict notice of all their wicked waies, that he may be sure at last to charge them all upon them, and that he may take the fittest time to destroy them.

Vers. 24. *They are exalted for a little while, &c.*] to wit, both in estate and mind; *but are gone and brought low, they are taken out of the way as all other;* that is, for all their greatnesse, on a sudden God pulls them down, and they are gone and laid in the grave, as other men, and often after the same manner as others are, *and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn;* that is, as high as they bear their heads, they are cut down as the corn in harvest, to wit, easily and in a trice, or not by any notorious judgement, but by an ordinary naturall death, when they come to ripenesse of years, as the corn is ripe in harvest. The drift of the verse may be to shew, either that God cuts off the greatest of wicked men many times by a sudden stroke of judgement; or else rather, that after all their horrid wickednesse, they are cut off by death in an ordinari way as all other men are.

Vers. 25. *And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?*] That is, If it be not as I have said, that God many times prospers the wicked, and afflicts the righteous, let any man that will, undertake to confute what I have spoken.

CHAP. XXV.

Vers. 1. **T***hen answered Bildad, &c.*] Eliphaz having replied the third time upon Job, chap. 22. it was now Bildads turn, who still spake next after Eliphaz, to reply again upon him; which therefore he doth in this Chapter, but very briefly: either as finding Job too strong for them; or as not having any thing in a manner to say; but what he and his friends had said before; or rather, as concluding that, because of Jobs obstinacie, it was in vain indeed to talk any farther to him, there having been abundantly enough already said to him, but that nothing would convince him; which may be the cause also why Zophar, who should have replied in the third place upon Job, spake no more at all.

Vers. 2. *Dominion and fear are with him, &c.*] Because of these words *with him*, some limit this to the Lords exercising of his Sovereigntie, and the manifestation of his dreadfull Majestie in the heavens, his dwelling-place, to wit, that he rules the Angels in heaven, and that his presence there is so full of Majestie, that those holy spirits out of reverence and fear do cover their faces before him. But I conceive the words must be understood more generally; *Dominion and fear are with him*, that is, God is the Sovereign Lord over all, he it is that governs all things, and hath absolute power over all things in heaven and in earth; yea & in regard of this his Majestie and power a terrible God he is, and justly to be feared of all. But why doth Bildad speak of this here? I answer: Some conceive, that because Job had affirmed, that many wicked men run on in their leud courses even to their dying day, and are never punished, therefore Bildad, as apprehending this to be
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in effect a deniall of the power, justice, and providence of God, doth here set forth with what unresistable authoritie and power God doth rule and govern the whole world; thereby to intimate, that it is not therefore possible that he should suffer such wicked wretches to passe alwaies unpunished. But I conceive there are two other waies, wherein Expositours do better set forth the aim of Bildad in these words: to wit, first, that he doth here set forth the infinite power, and Majestie, and goodnesse of God, that having afterward therewith compared the basenesse and weaknesse of man, he might thence inferre, how impossible it was that so poor a wretch should be found just before such a glorious God, and thereby condemns Job for justifying himself: or 2. that Bildad doth here speak of Gods supreme Sovereigntie, and dreadfull power and Majestie, thereby to discover the folly and arrogance of Job, in desiring so earnestly that he might plead his cause before God. Job had indeed in the beginning of his last answer protested, with a little too much confidence and boldnesse, that there was nothing he desired more, then that he might answer for himself before Gods Tribunal, chap. 23. 3, 4, 5. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat: I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments; I would know the words which he would answer me, &c.* Now though after this Job said much also, to prove that the wicked many times live and die in a flourishing condition, whilst the righteous are sorely oppressed and distressed; yet when Bildad came now to reply upon him, not being able to answer what he had said concerning the prosperitie of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous, he gives not the least touch upon that, but as flying upon him for his confidence in desiring to plead his cause before God, as not doubting but that there he should be able to justifie himself, he tells him here of the Sovereigntie and dreadfull Majestie of God, and seeks thereby as it were to strike Job with the fear of his glorious Majestie and absolute power; and to intimate how strange it was, that he should dare so fearlesly to challenge God, as it were, to answer him, or that he should hope that God would lay by his Majestie and glory, that he might come and plead his cause before him, alluding to that which Iob had said chap. 23. 6. *Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put strength in me.* As for the next clause, *he maketh peace in his high places*, either first, it must be meant of the heavens, and those that inhabite those heavenly places, as opposed to the world here below, to wit, that whereas here, by reason all things are corruptible and subject to change, and by reason of the wickednesse of the devils and men, the elements and those things that are made thereof seem to be opposite one to another, and to fight one against another, and there is continually much rebellion against God; in the heavens it is quite otherwise, there is nothing but quietnesse and peace. And this too may be spoken, first, with respect to the Angels; of whom though there be a numberlesse number, and though they have differing ministries and imployments, yet they are by the mighty power of God so established and order'd, that they all sweetly agree amongst themselves, and doe all unanimously the will of their creatour; they neither contend one with another, nor much lesse dare any of them contend with God: and hereby Bildad might imply.

what an arrogancy it was in Job to think of contesting with God, which the Angels themselves dare not do. 2. It may be spoken with respect to the stars and heavenly Orbs: though the heavens be of such an incomprehensible vast bignesse, and are whirled about daily with such a strange swift violence, though the stars be infinite in number, and though the orbs have their different and contrary motions, some moving far faster then others, some going one way and some another; yet they all observe the order, both for time and place, that God hath set them, insomuch that there is not the least jarring amongst them, they do not in the least crosse or hinder one another, but move all with one sweet consent, according to the course that the Almighty hath prescribed them. Or 2. it may be meant of the upper regions of the aire, to wit, that when all things are there tempestuous and stormy, God, when he pleaseth, doth presently quiet them, & make all calm. Or 3. it may be meant of the constant accomplishment of Gods will by all the creatures in the world: *he maketh peace in his high places*, that is, God in his dwelling-place doth rule all things in a stedfast order; yea even here below, where there seems to be most confusion and rebellion against God by reason of sin, yet all things are so overruled by him, that nothing is done but according to his determinate counsell and will, and all is carried on for his glory. And this is added to make good the former clause, that *Dominion and fear are with him*, that is, to shew that God ruleth all things, and that this all-wise and almighty God is therefore to be revered and feared of all.

Verf. 3. *Is there any number of his armies? &c.*] Whether we understand this particularly of the Angels, or of the stars (which are both sometimes stiled Gods armies or host, as Gen. 32. 2. and Deut. 4. 19. and are indeed innumerable) or else of all the creatures in generall, which are all Gods host (of which see the Note Gen. 2. 1.) doubtlesse it is alledged to set forth the glorious Majesty of Gods Dominion, who is thus magnificently attended with such numberlesse armies, and likewise his incomprehensible wisdom in the governing of them; and withall to discover the desperate boldnesse of those that dare contend with him, who hath such innumerable armies at his command, to fight against them, and destroy them.

And upon whom doth not his light arise?] The meaning of this may be, that 1. God causeth the Sun to shine upon all, according to that, Matth. 5. 45. *He maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on the good*; or 2. that he doth behold and know all things, that nothing is covered in darknesse in regard of God, but all things are light and manifest before him; or 3. that the light of his wisdom shines upon all, in that the waies of Angels and men, yea the operations of all the creatures are admirably directed and ordered thereby; or 4. that God is good unto all, in that all the good the creatures enjoy doth proceed from Gods favourable goodness shining down upon them: Angels and men have the light of their reason and understanding from God, and both they and other creatures have their life (which is their light, Joh. 1. 4.) and their being from him; neither have they any thing from themselves, but all is derived unto them from him, who is *the father of lights*, Jam. 1. 17. This last I conceive is chiefly here intended. But however this is doubtlesse added, to set forth Gods dominion over all things, how wonder.

derfull, dreadfull, and unquestionable it is, and consequently how desperate a thing it must needs be for any man to contend with him.

Verf. 4. *How then can man be justified with God? &c.*] That is, Seeing God is so dreadfull in all these regards, how can man hope to justify himself before God, by pleading with him, or to maintain that his sins deserve not so heavy punishments as God hath inflicted on him? Thus Bildad it seems understood Jobs words, chap. 23. 10, 11, 12. and thence he presseth him with this absurdity. See the Note, chap. 9. 20. *How can he be clean that is born of a woman?* See the Notes chap. 14. 14. and 15. 14.

Verf. 5. *Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea the stars are not pure in his sight.*] Some understand these words thus: that if God give a charge to the moon and the stars that they should not shine, they shall be straight quite void of light; and therefore much more is the Lord able easily to crush man, whatever he is, if he should offer to contend with him, man having no power but what he hath from God. But I rather conceive it is meant of the transcendent purity, and brightnesse, and glory of God above that of the moon and stars, and so is parallel with that, chap. 15. 15. *yea the heavens are not clean in his sight*, of which see the Note there: And then this expression, *Behold even to the moon, &c.* must be understood as if he had said, Look up to the moon, and you shall see it *shineth not*, to wit, in comparison of God: or thus, Pitch your thoughts upon any of the creatures that have any shining brightnesse in them, beginning with those things that are below, gold, and silver, and precious stones, &c. and so ascending up *even to the moon* (which is particularly mentioned, and not the Sun, either because it is the lowest of the planets, and surpassing man in glory, or because we can better behold her brightnesse, and was therefore for her brightnesse usually called the *Queen of heaven*, Ier. 7. 18.) and so from thence upward to the stars, which are in an orbe above all the planets (and so even the Sun is comprehended too) and, alas, the brightnesse of all these is infinitely short of the purity and resplendency of God: Or lastly thus, *Behold*, take all the bright shining lamps of heaven, descending from the highest *even to the moon*, the last and lowest of all the planets, (and so also the Sun is included too) and their brightnesse and purity is nothing to that of Gods; they shine not, but are unclean, if compared with God. Some indeed adde that the stars may be said to be unclean, because by the fall of man even they have contracted defilement, and so are blemished, and not wholly free from pollution in Gods sight. However the drift of these words is, to shew how foolish a thing it was in Iob, in the confidence of the brightnesse of his conversation, to contend with God, before whom the heavenly lights are no other then as clouds and darknesse.

Verf. 6. *How much lesse man, that is a worm? &c.*] That is, How much lesse can man be compared with God, who is so far inferiour to those heavenly lights for purity and brightnesse? even no better then a *worm*, especially if compared with God, a weak, base, unclean thing, made of corruption, and sure at last to become worms meat, subject continually to dangers, as worms, whom every foot may crush, and of themselves utterly unable to defend themselves. See the Note, chap. 4. 19.

C H A P. XXVI.

Verf. 2. **H**ow hast thou helped him that is without power? &c.] Iob here answers Bildad, and that somewhat tartly, because he had spoken so impertinently, pressing still those truths concerning the infinite Majesty, power, and justice of God, which he did never deny, and that not for the comfort of Job, but rather to drive him to despair. The words must be understood as spoken ironically; and that either as spoken by way of upbraiding Bildad, for undertaking to plead Gods cause for him, (according to that he had said before, chap. 13. 7, 8.) and doing it withall so fillily, *How hast thou helped him that is without power? &c.* as if he had said, If God be of such infinite Majesty and power as you have spoken, why do you think so highly of your self, as to undertake to plead for him? sure you think that God hath no power to help himself, and is not able to plead his own cause, and therefore you step in to his aid: and how effectually have you done it! if you mark it, you have done it to great purpose, God is much the better for this help that you have afforded him: Or else as in relation to Job himself, *How hast thou helped him that is without power? &c.* as if he had said, You have come a long journey purposely, as you pretended, to comfort a poor, fainting, helpless man; and have you not done it, think you, to the purpose? you make account you have done great wonders; but, alas, what am I the better for all that you have spoken? The truth is, it had been better for me if you had never come near me. And indeed this I take to be the true meaning of the words. As for that phrase in the last clause, of saving *the arm that hath no strength*, see the Note, chap. 4. 3.

Verf. 3. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? &c.*] This also is spoken ironically. And because they that speak that in defence of God and his works, which God never intended, do thereby as it were counsell and advise God what he should say or doe, therefore many Expositours do also understand these words, as if Iob did herein upbraid Bildad for undertaking to teach God, *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?* as if he should have said, You think that God is not wise enough to order his affairs in the government of the world without your advice; and oh what admirable wise and solid counsell have you given him! and accordingly also do they understand the following clause, *and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?* as if he had said, by way of scorn, you have now fully informed God how he ought to sway the affairs of his kingdom. But I rather think that Iob speaks this also as in reference to himself, *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?* as if he had said, Sure you take me to be a man void of all wisdom and understanding, and so in pity to me have given me counsell: But, alas, if I be so, surely I am not like to be much the wiser for this counsell that you have given me: *and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?* as if he had said, You have now indeed hit the nail on the head, you have fully and convincingly opened the cause between God and me; and how? by speaking that which is nothing to the purpose, and by taking a great deal

deal of pains to inform me of that which I knew before as well as your self.

Verf. 4. *To whom hast thou uttered words? &c.*] This also was spoken either (as some think) as in relation to God, *To whom hast thou uttered words?* that is, Is it to God you have addressed your words in this which you have spoken? and if so, have you considered who he is to whom you have spoken? what? will you undertake to teach the omniscient and all-wise God? which is the same in effect with that he had said before, chap. 21. 22. of which see the Note there: Or else, as in relation to Iob himself, *To whom hast thou uttered words?* as if he had said, Do you consider who I am, and in what condition I am? have you uttered words suitable to and fit for a man in such a sad distressed condition as I am? or, *To whom hast thou uttered words?* is it not to one that knoweth these things as well as your self? what do you take me to be? think you that I am so silly and ignorant, that I know not these things that you have uttered? It is the same he had said before, chap. 12. 3. of which see the Note there. As for the following clause, *and whose spirit came from thee?* it is expounded by Commentatours many severall waies; of which three are most probable. First, some understand it thus, *whose spirit came from thee?* that is, Did not God give thee that life and breath whereby thou hast spoken? and wilt thou teach him who gives thee life and breath, and who is the father of the spirits of all flesh? 2. Some make this to be the sense of the words; *whose spirit came from thee?* that is, who is it that hath taught you these high mysteries? Did you speak them of your self, and had you them from any body else? or do you think that the spirit of God did dictate them to you? No, doubtlesse, such impertinencies were never of Gods spirit, but of your own. And 3. others give this to be the meaning; *whose spirit came from thee?* as if he had said, whose spirit hast thou revived by this which thou hast spoken? Surely not mine. Because when mens fainting spirits are revived by the consolations of a friend, they seem to receive a new life, as it were, and spirit from those that have thus cheared them up; therefore in stead of saying, whom hast thou revived or comforted with thy words? he expresseth himself thus, *whose spirit came from thee?*

Verf. 5. *Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.*] or, *with the inhabitants thereof.* Here Iob begins to shew, that he could say as much or more of the infinite power and the all-ruling Providence of God, as Bildad had said; and to that end at first he instanceth in this, that Gods Providence extends it self to the very bottom of the sea, where he forms not only the fishes that are to live there, but also divers *dead things*, as all kind of minerals, corall, pearls, amber, together with divers plants and herbs that grow there.

Verf. 6. *Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.*] As if he had said, You, Bildad, told me, that God maketh peace in his high places; but I can adde hereto, that Gods providence extends not only to the high places in heaven, but also to the low places and depths in hell. By *destruction* here almost all Expositours understand the place of destruction, to wit, the place of the damned; and then if by *Hell* in the first clause the same be meant, then the second clause is but only a repetition of what was said in the first. But by *Hell* others understand the

grave, and consequently also all the hidden lower parts of the earth; and then the meaning is this, that God beholdeth all things, even the grave and hell, and all the lowest parts of the earth, he sees all that the grave hath devoured, and beholdeth what becomes of every part of man when the grave hath consumed him, and what the damned in Hell both doe and suffer. And thus he confirms what Bildad had said chap. 25. 3. (understanding it, as many do, of Gods omniscience) *upon whom doth not his light arise?* yea probable it is that Iob the rather mentioned this, to imply to his friends that in regard of this omniscience of God, it would be a joy to him to appear before God, who knew him better then they did: and withall to wipe off that aspersion Eliphaz had cast upon him, chap. 22. 13. *And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?*

Verf. 7. *He stretcheth forth the North over the empty place, &c.*] The meaning of this is, either that God stretcheth out the heavens from one Pole to another over the region of the air, (for *the North*, that is, the Northern part of heaven, the Hemisphere of the Arctick or Northern Pole, is here figuratively put for the whole heaven, because that part was nearest the climate where he dwelt; and the region of the air is called *the empty place*, because the air is as nothing, and what hath nothing but air in it we count empty, at least it is as nothing in regard of bearing up and supporting the heavens;) or else, that God stretcheth out the heavens even to the Northern pole, where the earth under it is uninhabited, and is therefore called here *the empty place*, meaning that Gods providence orders all things that are done there, according to that, chap. 38. 26. where God is said *to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man.* And then in the next place, the earth is said to hang *upon nothing*, either in relation to the center of the earth, which is said to be through Gods appointment the cause of the stability of the earth in its place, in regard all heavy things round about presse thither, and yet is but an imaginary thing, indeed nothing; or else in relation to the earths hanging in the midst of the air, having nothing to support it, but Gods almighty power.

Verf. 8. *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, &c.*] That is, By a divine force he keeps them within the clouds, which himself hath made to be as it were *the bottles of heaven*, as they are called chap. 38. 37. *and the cloud is not rent under them*; that is, the waters do not break through with their weight, and fall down all together, but are let out by degrees, as through a strainer or watering-pot, when and how God is pleased.

Verf. 9. *He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.*] The highest Heaven is the throne of God, Esa. 66. 1. and is so called, because there he manifests himself, as princes do upon their thrones, in greatest majesty and glory: and then the full discovery of that infinite light and glory wherein God dwells, is *the face of his throne*, which in this life is hidden from the best of his servants. Or else the clear and bright outside of heaven, which appears to the eye of man that looks up thither, is *the face of his throne*: and then therefore God *holdeth back the face of his throne*, when, as it is in the next clause, he *spreadeth his cloud upon it*, that is, when he withdraws it from the sight of man by over-

overspreading it with clouds. See the Note, 2 Sam. 22. 12.

Verf. 10. *He hath compassed the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.*] That is, as long as this world shall last: and it is said that God *hath compassed the waters with bounds*, both because he did at first dispose of the waters in those hollow places and channels of the earth, wherein they are now held, (of which see the Note, Gen. 1. 9.) and also because by his Providence he doth still keep in the unruly waves, not suffering them to break out beyond the bounds whereto God hath confined them.

Verf. 11. *The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.*] That is, When God shews himself in his indignation, in thundering and tempestuous storms or earthquakes, the very heavens seem as affrighted, to tremble as if the foundations thereof were shaken, yea the whole Universe seems to be moved, as a house built upon pillars totters when the pillars thereof are shaken, so that one would think that heaven and earth would come together. Some by *the pillars of heaven* here understand the angels; others the strength and powers of heaven; others those high mountains and hills which stand up in the air, as pillars supporting the heavens, and whereon the heavens to the eye of man seem to lean and rest, and are therefore called *the foundations of heaven*, 2 Sam. 22. 8. of which see the Note there: but the first Exposition is most generally approved.

Verf. 12. *He divideth the sea with his power, &c.*] Some Expositours understand this of Gods dividing the Red sea before the Israelites when he carried them out of Egypt; and accordingly also they understand the following clause, *and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud*, to wit, that God by his wisdom drawing their enemies into the Red sea, as into a net, did there destroy that insolent tyrant Pharaoh, and with him those proud Egyptians that followed him. But I cannot conceive that Job intended any such thing, because first, it is generally held that Job lived long before Moses time; and 2. he seems all the way here to speak of the ordinary continuall works of Gods providence, and not of any such unusuall and extraordinary work: and therefore it is not said that *he divided*, but *he divideth the sea with his power*. Nor is it much more probable that others say, that by these words, *he divideth the sea with his power*, is meant, that God causeth the waters of the sea through the earth to rise up in severall fountains and springs, and so divideth it into severall seas, and rivers, and brooks. The true meaning of these words I conceive is this, that God *divideth the sea*, that is, he breaks the waves thereof, and causeth them to cleave in sunder, and so to fight and dash one against another, to wit, when in tempestuous weather he maketh such gulfs in the sea, the waves standing up like mountains on each side of them, that the very foundations of the earth seem to be discovered, as is expressed 2 Sam. 22. 16. of which see the Note there: and accordingly we must understand the following clause, of Gods stilling the sea again when it is thus tempestuous, *and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud*. For though some by *the proud* here understand the whale, and that the rather, because the whale is elsewhere called *a king over all the children of pride*, chap. 41. 34. and is many times cast up in great tempests, and left dead upon the land, yet I rather think that by *the proud*

is meant the proud sea, according to a like expression, chap. 38. 11. where God saith of the sea, *here shall thy proud waves be stayed*; and so the meaning is, that when the sea swells and rageth, and lifts up his proud waves as it were unto the clouds, God presently subdues and stills the proud sea, and makes it lye down as still as a dead man doth when he falls down, being smitten through by the sword or arrow of his enemy.

Verf. 13. *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, &c.*] Because in the foregoing verse Job had spoken of stilling the tempestuous sea, therefore some conceive here he shows how this is done, to wit, by a sudden clearing of the heavens: *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens*, that is, By a fair gale of wind he drives away the clouds, and then the garnishing of the heavens with innumerable lights is evidently seen. But because our Translatours have render'd the words, not, *he doth garnish*, but, *he hath garnished*, therefore I rather understand it of Gods creating the Sun, Moon, and stars at the first; *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens*, that is, by his own essentiall power, or, by his holy spirit, he hath adorned the heavens with many glorious lights. As for the following clause, *his hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, some by *the crooked serpent* understand that meteor sometimes seen in the aire, which naturalists call *the flying serpent*; and others, those celestiall circles or sphears, which are involved one within another, as a serpent wrappeth up himself in many folds, or else some of the Constellations of heaven; as some understand it of the Zodiack, which goes athwart the heavens; others of that which is called *via lactea*, the milky way; and others of that Constellation near the Northern Pole, which from its fashion or figure is called *the Dragon* or *Serpent*, that divides the two Bears with its tail; which may seem, I confesse, the more probable, because of the joyning of this with that foregoing clause of Gods garnishing the heavens. But yet, because it may well be questioned, whether those figures of the heavenly Constellations which Astronomers have fancied, and the names which thereupon have been given them, were so ancient as the daies of Job; I think it farre more probable, which others say, that by *the crooked serpent* is meant all kind of serpents that crawl upon the earth, or all kind of sea-monsters that are in the Ocean; or, more particularly, the Whale, which is indeed elsewhere also called *Leviathan*, *the piercing serpent*, or, *the Bar-like crooked serpent*, Isa. 27. 1; who thereupon do make the generall drift of these words to be this, that as God made the beauteous lights of the heavens above, so he also made the most deformed and harmfull creatures that are on the earth, or in the sea below, and that in both God hath manifested his almighty power.

Verf. 14. *Lo these are parts of his waies, &c.*] That is, his works, wherein he comes forth, as it were, and manifests himself unto men: *but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?* Some understand this last clause thus, It is very little or nothing to speak of that we can hear from man concerning these wonders of Gods works, but if God should speak of them himself, who could endure or understand him, when he should thunder out these things in his mighty power and Majesty? Others understand it properly of the thunder, which is indeed very terrible to all the creatures here below, to wit, that

that none can understand whence it is, or how it is done. But the best Exposition of the words I conceive is this, that by *the thunder of his power* is meant figuratively, either the might, and excellency, and terrour of Gods power, to wit, that it is incomprehensible, or else (which is much to the same effect) the declaration or sounding forth of Gods power by the voice of all his works of Creation, according to that, Psal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, &c.* which, because of its glorious excellency, and force, and terrour, is called the thunder of his power; and because none can sufficiently understand so much of the mighty power of God as is taught us by the Creatures, therefore it is said, *the thunder of his power who can understand?* And indeed, in our ordinary speech, we use to say a man thunders it, when he speaks with mighty eloquence, vehemence and powers; and chap. 39. 25. the tumultuous noise of an army ready to the battel is called *the thunder of the Captains*. And thus hath Iob shewn that he could say as much of the terrible might and Majesty of God as Bildad had said.

C H A P. XXVII.

Verf. 1. **M**oreover Iob continued his parable.] What is meant by a parable, see in the Note, Numb. 23. 7. It was now Zophars turn to reply upon Job the third time, as Eliphaz and Bildad had done; and it seems that Iob was silent a while, expecting his reply: but when he saw that neither he nor any of the other two offered to reply again upon him, (which was either because they had nothing farther to object against Jobs defence, or because they saw him so stiff, that they judged it in vain to talk any farther to him) then Job began again to plead his cause, much after the same manner as before; addressing his speech to them all joyntly together, and that with some more courage then formerly, and as one that did in a manner triumph over them, as is expressed in the five following chapters.

Verf. 2. *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgement, and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul, &c.*] To assure his friends that he would speak nothing but the truth, that so they might the more regard what he said, and that by this solemn calling God to witnesse of the truth of what he spake, he might win them to credit what he should say concerning his integrity, which by no other arguments he could hitherto bring them to believe, Job here swears solemnly by the living God, that (as it follows in the two next verses) as long as he breathed, his lips should not speak wickednesse, nor his tongue utter deceit. As for that clause which he adds, concerning Gods taking away his judgement, and the Almightyes vexing his soul, *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgement, &c.* some hold that he adds that as in relation to their opinion, *As the Lord liveth, who, as you think, hath taken away my judgement, &c.* but then others say, that by Gods taking away his judgement he meant, either that God had not judged him according to his righteousness and integrity, or that God had bereaved him as it were of his righteousness, in that he had not cleared his innocency, to the stopping of the mouths of those that falsely accused him, but rather, by the severity of his proceedings

dings against him, did seem to judge him to be a wicked wretch and an hypocrite, as they had censur'd him to be; as where Gods people are charged with saying, Isa. 40. 27. *My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God,* because they thought that God did not regard them as his people, in taking their part against their enemies: or else (as some conceive) that the Lord had abridged him of his right, in that he was not admitted to plead his cause before God, as he had often desired he might do. So that he doth not expressly accuse God of dealing unjustly with him, but only complains that God had not dealt with him according to the ordinary way of his proceedings with men, whereby his integrity was hidden and overclouded; neither could he perceive what the cause should be why Gods hand was so heavy upon him. And in the oath he takes here, this he interposeth, *who hath taken away my judgement, and hath vexed my soul,* either to imply how safely they might believe, that he would doe what he now engaged himself, seeing he durst appeal to that God as a witnesse, who had hitherto dealt so severely with him; or else to intimate, that though God seemed to condemn him by the heavy pressures he had brought upon him, yet that should not make him cast off his confidence in God, or yield himself to be an hypocrite.

Verf. 4. *My lips shall not speak wickednesse, nor my tongue utter deceit.*] This Protestation of Jobs, Expositours understand diversly. For first, some take it generally thus, that he would speak nothing falsely or dissemblingly, but would speak the truth from his heart: Secondly, others understand it as if he had said, that no severity of Gods proceedings with him, nor no unjust censures of theirs, should make him utter a word whereby he might discover himself to be either a prophane wicked wretch, or a dissembling hypocrite: and 3ly. (which I like best) others give this to be the meaning, that he would not wickedly, either for fear or flattery, betray the truth, or lie against his own conscience, by yielding to those false accusations which they had passed upon him, which he knew to be false.

Verf. 5. *God forbid that I should justify you, &c.*] To wit, by speaking or doing any wicked thing, which may seem to justify or make good those unjust censures of wickednesse or hypocrisie, which you have passed upon me; or rather by yielding to that which you have said, that God for my wickednesse and hypocrisie hath brought these miseries upon me.

Verf. 6. *My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it goe, &c.*] That is, I have hitherto constantly persevered in a way of righteousness, and so I will still; or rather, I have hitherto resolutely maintained my integrity, and still I will maintain it: *my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live;* that is, my conscience shall not upbraid me for that which, were I guilty of it, would indeed be a shame and reproach to me, to wit, either for speaking or doing wickedly, or else rather for denying mine integrity.

Verf. 7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.*] This is also divers waies understood by Expositours. Some say that Job here speaks ironically, and by the wicked unrighteous man means himself; as if he should have said, You judge me a wicked ungodly man, because of the
extreme

extreme afflictions that lye upon me; but as sad as my condition is, so much good I wish my enemies that rise up against me, that I could be glad that they were in no worse a condition, then that poor wretch whom you so harshly condemn as a wicked man. Others again hold, that those that had robbed him of his estate, and other waies wronged him, are the enemies he here speaks of, and so make the sense of the words to be this, Let those that robbed me and wronged me be looked upon as wicked ungodly men: I for my part am no such man. Others again conceive, that by his enemies and those that rose up against him, Job meant these his friends, and so give this to be the sense of the words, Let those that condemn me for a wicked man, because of mine afflictions, bear the brand of wicked men, and not I that am innocent of those things they charge me with: as if he should have said, They that oppose the truth which I have maintained; that causelessly condemn me for a wicked wretch, they deserve to be judged wicked men better then I do: only some, to allay the sharpnesse of such a censure, say that Job doth not absolutely condemn them for wicked men, but only affirms that there was more of wickednesse in that which they did, then there was in any thing they could fasten upon him, Let mine enemy be *as the wicked* and *as the unrighteous*; according to a like expression, chap. 2. 10. *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women*. And lastly, others, most probably, conceive that in these words Iob gives a farther proof of his integrity, *Let mine enemy be as the wicked*, &c. as if he had said, Though the wicked may live I know in a very prosperous condition, yet so farre am I from liking their waies, that I could wish mine enemy no greater mischief, then that he should be a wicked man, or that God should deal with him as he will certainly deal with the wicked. And indeed the like expressions we often meet with, as 2 Sam. 25, 26. *Let thine enemies and they that seek evil to my Lord be as Nabal*: and so also 2 Sam. 18. 32. and Dan. 4. 19.

Verf. 8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?*] The scope of these words, together with the following verses, is, either to shew how farre he was from being a wicked hypocrite, as they had judged him to be, by declaring what thoughts he had of the wretched condition of such men, to wit, that when God comes to seise upon them by the harbingers of death, and to take or pluck away their souls, though they had gained never so much before, and so thereby God seemed to prosper them, they must needs be then in a hopelesse and comfortlesse condition, because all that they placed their hopes in, their wealth, and friends, and other things shall fail them; and whereas they promised themselves long life, and much pleasure in their estates, they shall find their hopes herein disappointed, and in God, who then shews himself an enemy, they can have no confidence: Or else, to prove that his friends might have discerned a difference betwixt him and hypocrites, even in these sad calamities that had befallen him, and therefore had no cause to censure him so harshly; to wit, because though outwardly it fares alike with the righteous and the hypocrite, yet their carriage of themselves in the hour of adversity is very different, the hypocrite not having then any hope in God, when God summons him by death, which the righteous have: from whence he inti-

mates, that since he in his lowest estate did still hope in God, and pray to God, and desired to plead his cause before God, they might hereby plainly perceive that he was not an hypocrite. And to the same purpose is that which follows.

Vers. 9. *Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?*] That is, when either trouble and terrours of conscience, or any outward distresse do seise upon him.

Vers. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? &c.*] That is, when he sees that he is likely to be taken away from all the comforts he enjoyed here, will he then comfort himself in God alone, as acknowledging him to be alone an all-sufficient ground of joy and comfort? or, though Gods hand be never so heavy upon him, will he notwithstanding still cleave to God, and delight himself in him, as knowing that God is well pleased with him? *will he alwaies call upon God?* that is, not only in adversity, but in his prosperity too? and so also not only in prosperity, but in times of distresse too? yea though his afflictions be never so fore, and of never so long continuance?

Vers. 11. *I will teach you by the hand of God, &c.*] Some translate this, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *I will teach you being in the hand of God*, and so take the sense of the words to be this, that whereas hypocrites in distresse have no hope in God, it was not so with him; for though he were at the present under the afflicting hand of God, he would teach them better. But taking the words as they are in our Bible, the meaning must be either thus, *I will teach you by the hand of God*, that is, God assisting me, or by Gods speciall inspiration, I will teach you; as where the prophet saith, Isa. 8. 11. *the Lord spake to me with a strong hand, and instructed me*: or else thus rather, *I will teach you by the hand of God*, that is, I will teach you by shewing you the mighty power of God, and the glorious works of his hand, to wit, what are the usuall dispensations of his Providence both toward the righteous and toward the wicked. And hereto agreeth the following clause, *that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal*; that is, I will not conceal the decrees and judgements which God daily executes in the world, sometimes prospering, and sometimes punishing both the wicked and the righteous. And indeed of all these he speaks in his following discourse; and this he premiseth beforehand, either that he might quicken their attention, by shewing what great and high things they were, of which he meant to speak; or else thereby to give them to understand, that he should plainly discover by the usuall waies of Gods proceedings, that there is no judging of men by their outward condition.

Vers. 12. *Behold, all ye your selves have seen it, &c.*] As if he should have said, You are learned wise men, men that observe the waies and works of God, at least such you boast your selves to be; and therefore herein I dare appeal to your selves, concerning the truth of that which I have said, and that which I shall now farther say; you your selves have known it, and have seen it so in your own experience. But what was it they had seen? Some referre it to that which he had said concerning his innocency; some to that foregoing observation of his, that he had not carried himself in his distresse as hypocrites used to do: But I conceive

ceive it is best referred to that which he meant now to teach them, as he had said in the foregoing verse, concerning Gods dispensing the same, both blessings and afflictions, to the wicked and to the righteous; This, saith he, *ye your selves have seen*; and then he adds, *why then are ye thus altogether vain?* that is, why do you so vainly conclude that God alwaies punisheth wicked men, and prospers the righteous, and thereupon condemn me for an hypocrite? why do you multiply words nothing to the purpose, not giving any one solid answer to that which I have objected, and yet persevere in condemning me upon grounds so palpably false?

Vers. 13. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressours, &c.*] Zophar had said the very same in effect, chap. 20. 29. of which see the Note there; and therefore some think that Job, in this and the following verses, doth only alledge what his friends had said, and that to shew why he had charged them in the foregoing verse, that they were *altogether vain*, to wit, that they had said, *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, &c.*] But I doubt not but Job delivers this as his own judgement. And yet he doth not hereby recant what he had formerly said concerning the prosperity of the wicked, nor yield to that which his friends had hitherto maintained, to wit, that God doth alwaies manifest his indignation against wicked men by punishing them here in this world; only to clear his meaning in that he had said concerning the prosperous condition of the wicked, to shew that he was willing to yield to all that was truth in that which his friends had said, and that so much he was able to say as well as they, he grants them here thus much, that indeed many times the prosperity of the wicked did end in extreme misery; though they might long live free from punishment, yet often that befell them at last, even here in this world, which God, who is *Almighty*, had appointed them for their portion and inheritance, and therefore the mightiest of these oppressours are not able to resist it: and then afterwards he adds, what it was wherein he opposed his friends, to wit, that it was not alwaies thus, but that many times on the other side in his secret wisdom, whereof he speaks much in the following chapter, the righteous were afflicted sorely, whilst the wicked lived in great prosperity.

Vers. 14. *If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword, &c.*] Against which, though they be never so many, they shall not be able to defend themselves: and so that which might seem to the wicked man at first a pledge of Gods favour, shall be found at last to have been given merely for the encrease of his future misery, that he might have many children to be devoured by the sword, to wit, the sword of Gods vengeance, or rather the sword of an enemy; for the following clause makes this later Exposition the more probable, *and his off-spring shall not be satisfied with bread*, that is, they shall not only live in penury and want, but shall even perish by famine.

Vers. 15. *Those that remain of him shall be buried in death, &c.*] That is, those of his children and childrens children that remain, and are not cut off by sword or famine, shall die yet of some other disease, and so shall be buried; though they lived as if they should never die, yet they *shall be buried in death*, that is, they shall

die, and being dead shall be buried. I know there are divers other Expositions given of these words: as thus, *they shall be buried in death*, that is, they shall die, and rot when they die, and that shall be all their buriall, according to that Jer. 16. 4. Or, *they shall be buried in death*, that is, whilst they are yet dying, before the breath be well out of their bodies, at least so soon as ever they are dead, they shall be presently clapped into the grave, without any funerall rites and solemnities; Or, *they shall be buried in death*, that is, so soon as they are dead, they shall be buried in oblivion, their name and memory shall be buried with them; Or, *they shall be buried in death*, that is, in the grave, which is called *the chambers of death*, Prov. 7. 27. But the first Exposition is, I conceive, as the plainest, so the best. And as for the following clause, *And his widows shall not weep*, it is expressed in the plurall number, *his widows*, either because they had in those times many wives, or else because it comprehends the widows of the wicked mans whole family: and by not weeping is meant, either that through extreme penury they should not be able to make any funerall for him; or else that indeed they should not mourn for his death: and that either because their miseries should be so many and so exceeding great, that being as it were stupified thereby they should not be able to weep; or else rather because they should be indeed glad that they were rid of him.

Vers. 18. *He buildeth his house as a moth, &c.*] It may be said that the wicked man *buildeth his house as a moth*, 1. because he builds it with much pains and skill, as the moth makes her nest: 2. because he doth even waite himself in the doing of it, even as a moth makes her bag or silken woolly nest out of her own bowels: 3. because he builds his house with the spoil and ruine of others, as the moth eats the garment where she builds her nest: But 4. that which I conceive is chiefly intended is, because though he buildeth his house, as if he hoped to dwell there for ever, yet both he and it shall suddenly be destroyed, as when the moth is quickly brushed or shaken out of the garment, where she had made her nest. For upon the like ground, Bildad had before compared the wicked mans house to the house of a spider, chap. 8. 14. of which see the Note there. And to the same purpose in the next clause it is said, that it shall be *as a booth that the keeper maketh*: For if it be meant of those that are set to keep a vineyard or a garden of fruits, they use only to make some slight booth of the boughs of trees, and perhaps stollen out of the neighbours hedges or woods, which, so soon as the fruits are fully ripe and gathered, and the keeper gone, are quickly broken down and burnt up by the poor, or fall down of themselves: and if it be meant of those that keep cattel, their booths or tents seldome stand so long, because they so often remove to seek for fresh pasture.

Vers. 19. *The rich man shall lye down, but he shall not be gathered, &c.*] That is, He shall die as others, but he shall not be buried as others, at least not with the solemnity of friends attending him to his grave. For that by being gathered is meant buried, we may see in many other places; as where it is said of Aaron, Numb. 20. 26. *he shall be gathered and shall die there*, and of Josiah, 2 Kings 22. 20. *I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave*, and of the Jews, Jer. 8. 2. *they shall not be gathered neither buried, they shall be for dung upon the face*

face of the earth. And hereto agrees also the following clause, *he openeth his eyes, and he is not*: for though, because this is mentioned after his death and buriall, therefore some Expositours understand it of the wicked mans soul after it is parted from his body, to wit, that he then sees with the eyes of his mind, that he is cut off from the land of the living; yet I think we may better take it as a farther amplification of that which was said already in the foregoing clause, *he openeth his eyes, and he is not*, that is, whilst he is looking about him, and beholding with much joy the riches he hath stored up for many years, in an instant he is gone; or thus, He openeth his eyes lying on his death-bed, looking about for help, ease or comfort, but in stead thereof he perceives himself a dead man, ready to be taken from all his comforts; or thus, Being yet in his former condition, in the twinkling of an eye he is taken away.

Verf. 20. *Terrours take hold on him as waters, &c.*] That is, when God brings his judgements upon him, and especially when he sees death approaching, the terrours of an evil conscience, yea many and manifold affrightments besides shall suddenly, unexpectedly and unresistably surprise and overwhelm him, as when an unexpected flood of waters breaks forth upon men, and overwhelms them. We have had formerly expressions much like to this, concerning which see the Notes chap. 18. 11. and 20. 25. and 22. 11. And doubtlesse of this affrighting evil must the following clause be understood, *a tempest stealeth him away in the night*; that is, the wrath of God, or some grievous judgement from God comes upon him with unresistable violence, when he least thinks of it, (as it were in the night) and carrieth him away, to wit, out of the world, or out of that pompous condition wherein he lived.

Verf. 21. *The East wind carrieth him away, &c.*] This is also meant, as the foregoing clause, of the wrath or Judgements of God; which are compared to the *East wind*, because that wind in those Eastern countries used to be most violent, and is therefore called *the wind of the Lord*, Hof. 13. 15.

Verf. 22. *For God shall cast upon him, and not spare; he would fain flee out of his hand.*] That is, God, in this tempest of his wrath, shall shewre down Judgements upon him as thick as hail-stones, without shewing him any more pity, then he hath formerly shewn to others; so that though he would fain flee from his vengeance, yet he shall not be able.

Verf. 23. *Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hisse him out of his place.*] To wit, by way of wonder, derision and scorn; but especially by way of rejoycing, that the world is rid of such an oppressing miscreant, and that the just judgements of God are at last executed upon him: for in these regards men are said to hisse and clap their hands, in other places of Scripture, as Lam. 2. 15. *All that passe by clap their hands at thee, they hisse and wagge their head at the daughter of Ierusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty? &c.* and so also Ezek. 25. 6. and 1 Kings 9. 8.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Verf. 1. *S*urely, there is a vein for the silver, and a place for the gold, where they fine it.] To wit, which men, by the naturall wisdom which God hath given them, do search and find out for their use, though they lye deep in the earth, many times under hills and mountains; and being so far out of sight, and so hard to be discerned where they are, one would wonder how they should be discovered. The greatest difficulty is to know, what it is that Job aims at in those words of his set down in this chapter, and what dependance they have with that which went before. Some conceive that Jobs drift here is to shew, that though worldly men do gather all variety of earthly treasures, yet the godly have a treasure above all these, which is true wisdom, consisting in the knowledge and fear of God, verf. 28. Others hold that Job labours to make out this, that if God disposeth of all things with great wisdom, and there is nothing done to any of the creatures without just reason, much lesse can we think that God would punish man causelessly. Others again say, that having set down in the foregoing chapter the miserable end of those foolish men, that sought by wickednesse to make themselves great, here now he shews the reason, why such men did not seek after true wisdom, to wit, because they knew not where it was to be had, namely with God, and so set their hearts merely upon earthly things. But that which I find both most commonly, and most probably held by Expositours concerning the scope of this chapter, and the connection thereof with that which went before, is this, that having in the foregoing chapter yielded, that God doth often bring ruine upon wicked men here in this world in the conclusion, in this chapter now he undertakes to shew, that yet notwithstanding the wisdom of God in many other strange dispensations of his Providence is altogether unsearchable, (as namely when he doth sometimes on the other side prosper the wicked and afflict the righteous) thereby to prove that his friends were altogether vain, as he had said, chap. 27. 12. in judging so peremptorily that he was wicked, because of his afflictions; as if there could not be in these proceedings of God with him a secret depth of wisdom, which they were not able to dive into. Only for the farther illustration of the unsearchableness of Gods wisdom, first he shews here, in the beginning of the chapter, what deep secrets of Nature man by his wisdom hath searched out, instancing in the finding out, the melting and fining the severall minerals, that lye deep and hidden in the bowels of the earth; and then afterwards adds verf. 12. that though the most hidden secrets of nature are thus found out by the wisdom of man, yet the wisdom of God they cannot search out, *But where, saith he, shall wisdom be found? &c.* where by wisdom is meant the wisdom of God in his unsearchable waies, as when he prospers the wicked, and afflicts the righteous, &c.

Verf. 2. *I*ron is taken out of the earth (or dust) and brasie is molten out of the stone.] That is, Iron is taken out of a brittle kind of earth, wherewith it is mixed; and brasie out of the stone wherewith it is, as it were, incorporated: it is commonly called

called the Cadmian stone, as being a hard masse like a stone, and mingled with stone.

Verf. 3. *He setteth an end to darknesse, &c.*] Some understand this of Gods putting an end to the darknesse of the night, by causing the light of the day to succeed in the room thereof: and others understand it generally thus, that man, by the naturall wisdom that God hath given him, discovers and finds out the most hidden and unknown things. But the most Expositours hold, that Job still proceeds to speak of that choice art of discovering and drawing forth the minerals that are in the bowels of the earth, yea and perhaps in the sea also. *He setteth an end to darknesse.* It is spoken either of man, to wit, that men by going into those mines which they have digged deep in the earth, with candles or torches in their hands, do there discover those minerals, which had from the creation lain hid there in darknesse; or that by fetching them out thence, they bring those treasures to light, which had been alwaies before hidden in darknesse (for though there be no expresse mention made of man in the foregoing verses; yet because in that which he had said before concerning the taking of gold, silver, iron and brasse out of the earth, his meaning was, that those things were done by man, therefore as in relation still to man, by whom those things were done, he adds these words also, *He setteth an end to darknesse:*) Or else it is spoken of God, to wit, that *He*, namely by man as his instrument, and by the art and skill that he hath given to man, *putteth an end to darknesse*, that is, as is before said, by discovering to man, and bringing forth to open view by the skill and industry of man, those precious minerals, that lay so low in the dark bowels of the earth, that one would have thought it impossible they should ever have been discovered. *He putteth an end to darknesse, and searcheth out all perfection:* that is, by searching he finds out and brings to light all the perfection of nature; or, those things which are most precious and hardliest found, man discovers perfectly. The phrase may imply both the preciousnesse of those things that are found out, and likewise the bringing of them to their full perfection; and the drift of all is still to shew, that all finite things man is able to comprehend, only the wisdom of God is incomprehensible. As for the following clause, *the stones of darknesse and the shadow of death*, thereby is meant either those gems and precious stones, which are indeed of all other things most highly prized, and therefore may be mentioned here as the perfection of nature, or else any minerall stones, yea and even those flints and rocky stones which they digge through, that they may come at the mineralls: all which may be called *stones of darknesse and the shadow of death*, because they lye hid in the dark bowels of the earth, where never light was seen; and perhaps because those that descend into those dark and deadly vaults of the earth, are exposed there to manifold dangers of death. But what is meant by the darknesse of the shadow of death, see more fully in the Note, chap. 3. 5.

Verf. 4. *The flood breaketh forth from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot, &c.*] A very hard place this is, and therefore Expositours differ much concerning the meaning of it. But because the drift of the Chapter is clearly to shew, that however man, by the wisdom that God hath given him, is able to

find out many secret things, and to effect matters of great wonder, yet he is no way able to comprehend the unsearchable wisdom of God; therefore there are only two Expositions which to me seem probable, as being agreeable to the generall drift of Job in this place. The first is, that it is meant of mens finding out the way to turn the waters of rivers into other channels, or of draining lands that are overflowed and drowned with waters: for by *the floud that breaketh forth from the inhabitant* is meant, either the streams that break through or over the banks of the Sea or rivers, and so overflow those grounds which were dry land, good pasture or arable before, and are said to break forth *from the inhabitant*, because they break forth from the inhabitants that dwell on the banks of those rivers, or notwithstanding all that the inhabitants can doe to damme them or keep them up, and drown some adjoining grounds, where the foot of man never trod on water, or where never man remember'd any such floud of waters before, and are therefore termed *waters forgotten of the foot*; and then the draining of these grounds, by carrying these waters away in channels digged for that purpose, is expressed in the following words, *they are dried up, they are gone away from men*: Or by *the floud that breaketh forth from the inhabitant* is meant that torrent of waters, which breaketh forth from rivers, or overfloweth grounds in those new channels, which are made by the inhabitants thereabouts for the diverting of those rivers some other way, or for the draining of those fenny grounds; which waters are therefore called *the waters forgotten of the foot*, because when they are thus carried some other way, men walk dry-foot over those old channels, where the rivers did formerly run, or over those grounds that had been long drowned under water, as if they had forgotten that ever there had been waters there, and so the grounds are then made habitable, dry, and usefull for seed or pastorage, from whence they had no benefit before: which is intimated in the last words, as a matter of wonder, *they are dried up, they are gone away from men*. The second Exposition is, that here an instance is given of a wonderfull difficulty, which those that work in mines under ground do sometimes meet with, which yet the wisdom of man finds a way to overcome, to wit, that when men are digging in those mines many fathom under ground, a floud of waters sometimes breaks out upon those poor wretches that dwell there in those dark caves of the earth, though they doe what they are able to prevent it, even a floud of waters which the foot of man never waded nor came near, and whereof they had not the least knowledge, *The floud breaketh out from the inhabitant, even the waters forgotten of the foot*; but yet, by the art and industry of man, labouring day and night by engines made with wheels, these waters are drawn up in huge leather vessels made of Oxe hides, and there above ground are poured forth and carried away, *they are dried up, they are gone away from men*.

Verf. 5. *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread, and under it is turned up as it were fire.*] As if he should have said, And thus man, by the wisdom and skill which God hath given him, gets bread out of the upper part of the earth, (and it may be spoken with reference particularly to that land spoken of in the foregoing verse, which by his art he hath drained from the waters) and then out of the bowels of it

it he gets other precious things. For by *as it were fire* in the last clause must needs be meant either the materials of fire, as coales, brimstone, &c. or metallis that are to be melted and fined in the fire, or rather glittering gold, and sparkling precious stones, which for their splendour, when they are digged up, seem to have the appearance of fire. I know that there are some Expositours that do far otherwise understand this place, holding that Job speaks here of the strange and wonderfull works of God, to wit, that in the same place he hath made the upper part of the earth fat and fruitfull for the yielding of corn, and the under part of it nothing but veins of sulphur and such like: or that the Lord makes that land sulphureous, hot and fiery, and therefore barren, which yielded before exceeding good corn. But the first Exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 6. *The stones of it are the place of Saphires, and it hath dust of gold.*] That is, out of the stone-quarries therein they get Saphires, and out of the mold thereof they gather gold, *dust of gold or gold ore.*

Verf. 7. *There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vultures eye hath not seen, &c.*] Though some conceive the meaning of these words to be this, that men search for precious minerals in those desolate places, which neither bird nor beast will come near, because of the sulphureous smell that is there; yet I rather think that they are a poetically expression of the inaccessibleness of those waies, which men by digging and mining passe through, to find out those minerals and precious stones which they seek after, to wit, that they are paths which never creature found out before: fowls that will be flying into any place, yea even those that are most quick-sighted, as vultures and others, could never discover these secret paths; and those savage beasts, lions and such like, that use to find out the secretest and deepest caves and dens of the earth to hide themselves in, did never set foot there: for that also is added in the following verse, *the lions whelps have not troden, nor the fierce lion passed by it.*

Verf. 9. *He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.*] As before verf. 3. so here also, in these three following verses, some Expositours hold that Job speaks of severall great and wonderfull works of God; as first here, that God sometimes by terrible earthquakes rendeth rocks in sunder and overturneth mountains; secondly verf. 10. that he causeth rivers many times to break forth out of flinty rocks, and that there is nothing hid from him; and thirdly verf. 11. that oft times he dryeth up rivers, and so discovers what before lay hid there under deep waters. But, as is before noted, it is farre more agreeable to the scope of Job, to understand all these passages of those things which are done by the wisdom and skill which God gives to man: as first, that *he putteth forth his hand upon the rock, &c.* that is, man in searching for minerals and precious stones cutteth his way oft times through the flint or rock, *and overturneth mountains by the root*, to wit, either by digging them down to the very bottome, and carrying them away, or rather by mining under them, whereby the foundations indeed of mountains are removed, and sometimes at length the mountains themselves do sink down into them; secondly, verf. 10. that *he cutteth out rivers among the rocks*; whereby may be meant, either that when rivers have rocks on

each side of them, there being no other way to drain them, man cutteth channels through the very rocks, that so the waters may be carried away thereby, and so the precious things that lye in the bottome of the old channels may be discovered; or else, that when men are working in mines underground, they cut passages through hard rocks many times, to wit, either to convey away those floods and torrents of waters that there break in upon them, and hinder their work, or else to convey some streams of waters thither from other places, to set their water-mills on work, whereby they wash the ore wherein the gold & other minerals are found, &c. and so *his eye seeth every precious thing*, that is, he discovereth all the precious things that ly hid in the bowels of the earth: & 3^{ly}. vers. 11. that *he bindeth the floods from overflowing*; which may be meant either of mans artificiall stopping any chinks or clefts in the gutters & troughs, wherein they convey rivers from one place to another, that so the waters may not issue forth; or of his damming up rivers from turning into their old channels, when he means to divert them some other way, or from overflowing their grounds in times of great rain; or rather of his stopping and binding up the waters from breaking in upon them, when they are digging in their mines: and thus the hidden treasures that lye in the bowels of the earth, or under deep waters, are brought forth for the use of men, *and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light*.

Vers. 12. *But where shall wisdom be found?*] In these words Job hath reference to those words in the beginning of this Chapter, *Surely there is a vein for the silver*, &c. as if he had said, Though the most hidden and secret things in nature may be searched out by that Reason and understanding which God hath given man, yet there is a wisdom which is altogether unsearchable by humane Reason. And by wisdom here is meant, either that supernaturall knowledge of God, and the way he hath appointed for the salvation of men, which can never be known but by revelation from God; or the knowledge of the secret counsels of God in the waies and works of his providence, as why he often prospers the wicked and afflicts the righteous, which man by no art or skill of his can ever comprehend.

Vers. 13. *Man knoweth not the price thereof*, &c.] That is, It cannot be purchased at any rate (as being indeed of invaluable worth) nor doth man know where to get it: as is more fully expressed in the next words, *neither is it found in the land of the living*, that is, no man can possibly find it out, to wit, as being kept secret in the bosome of God, or only by God revealed unto men.

Vers. 14. *The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not in me.*] By the *depth*, as it is here distinguished from the *sea*, we must needs understand either deep rivers, or the waters that are under the earth, or else rather the depth of the earth it self; as Psal. 75. 26. there is expresse mention made we see of *the depths of the earth*. But however the meaning of this clause is, either that man cannot find out wisdom, though he travels by land or by sea never so farre; or rather, that it cannot be found either in the entrails of the earth, or in the bottome of the sea, as gold and silver, and other costly minerals and precious stones many times are.

Vers. 15. *It cannot be gotten for gold*, &c.] See the former Note; vers. 13.

Vers. 17.

Verf. 17. *The exchange of it shall not be for jewels (or vessels) of fine gold.*] The price whereof is much enhaunfed many times by the curious workmanship thereof.

Verf. 19. *The Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equall it.*] That is, even those gems that are the more esteemed, because they are fetched from a far country.

Verf. 20. *Whence then cometh wisdom? &c.*] See the former Note, verf. 12.

Verf. 21. *Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air?*] Though we read the last clause, as some do, *and kept close from the fowls of heaven*, yet that it should be meant of the angels in heaven seems to me very improbable. Rather I conceive the meaning of the whole verse to be, either that man can no where find out this supernaturall wisdom, as he doth many of the secrets of nature, minerals and precious stones, &c. and so this clause, that it is *kept close from the fowls of the air*, is added to imply, that as it cannot be found in the depths of the earth or sea, as he had said before, so neither in the regions of the air above, (no where under heaven, no where but in the bosome of God;) so that though men could mount up into the air, and from thence behold all things on the earth, as the quick-sighted fowls of the air do, yet they could not thereby discover this wisdom: or else more generally, that no creature can attain to this wisdom, farther at least then God is pleased to reveal it to them; nature is a mere stranger to it, and therefore it is hid from all creatures high or low, whatever they are.

Verf. 22. *Destruction and death say, We have heard the same thereof with our ears.*] The meaning is, that though they had heard some talk or mention of wisdom, yet that was all, they were never able fully to find it out. Some by *destruction and death*, understand the devils and damned in hell; others the souls of the Saints departed, to wit, that even when they are no longer clogged with earthly bodies, and so are the freer to search after wisdom, they were never able fully to comprehend it; yea and others understand it more generally yet, of all men that have lived formerly from the first creation, and are now dead, to wit, that they were never any more able to find out this wisdom of God, then those that are now living: though formerly they lived many years, and so had great advantage to gain more wisdom then others, and though some of them were in their times men of great wisdom, as the Philosophers and others, yet this supernaturall wisdom of God they were never able to comprehend; that which they had was but a shadow of wisdom, as farre short of true wisdom, as the fame of a thing is short of the thing it self. But lastly, others understand by *destruction and death*, hell and the grave, or rather the depths and bowels of the earth and sea, and so make the meaning to be this; that though where the fame of wisdom hath been heard, to wit, because the providence of God extends it self to the ordering of all things there, yet there this supernaturall wisdom cannot be learnt or found. And this Exposition I conceive most probable, and judge this which is said here to be much the same with that before, verf. 14. *The depth saith, It is not in me.*

Verf. 23. *God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.*] If

we conceive that Job speaks here of that supernaturall knowledge of God and the way of salvation, which is indeed the only true wisdom of man, the meaning then must needs be, that God only knoweth how this is to be attained, because God must reveal it to man, or he can never attain it: But if we understand it of the secret wisdom of God in the government of the world, as questionlesse Job intended it, then the meaning of the words is, that God, and he only, understands where this wisdom is, because it rests only in his own bosome; he fully knows all the waies of his Providence, to wit, how and why all things are done, as why the wicked often prosper, and the righteous are afflicted, which are all to man altogether unsearchable.

Verf. 24. *For he looketh to the ends of the earth, &c.*] That is, he beholds all things not only in heaven, but also throughout the world, to wit, that he may order and dispose of them, as seems good unto himself: and this Job alledgeth as an evident proof, that therefore God must needs perfectly know the cause of all things that are done in the world, which are hidden from man. And indeed this place makes it clear, as I conceive, that the unsearchable wisdom Job speaks of in this chapter, which is known only to God, and which man cannot attain, is that of his counsels in all the waies and works of his Providence.

Verf. 25. *To make the weight for the winds, and he weigheth the waters by measure.*] The meaning is, that God doth appoint and order such a quantity and measure both of the winds and waters (whether we understand it of the rain that comes down from the clouds, or of the waters that are in seas, rivers, brooks and springs upon the earth) as may serve just for the accomplishment of what he hath purposed with himself, whether for judgement or mercy: that either the winds or waters are more or lesse in one place or in another, it is not by chance, but by the Providence of God, who sees well and understands all that he doth.

Verf. 26. *When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder, &c.*] The drift of these words is, to shew that the unsearchable wisdom, whereby God governs the world and the fulnesse thereof, was with God, and therefore known to him from the beginning of the world, yea even from eternity. *When he made a decree for the rain, &c.* that is, when from all eternity he decreed, or when at the first creation he established an order how the rain should come to be bottled up in the clouds, when and where, in what measure and how long, it should be afterwards poured down upon the earth; and so likewise concerning the lightning and the thunder, and all other things whatever.

Verf. 27. *Then did he see it, &c.*] That is, then did he exactly know and understand that unsearchable wisdom of his, whereby the world hath been ever since governed; and declare it, that is, (if we referre it to the creation of the world) then did he in part discover this his wisdom by the admirable works which he made, and the order which he appointed to them, or (if we referre it to his eternall decree) then did he determine how it should by his works be declared to men and angels; (and if we read this clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and did number it*, the meaning is, that he did particularly order, and manifested it severally in every thing that he made:) *he prepared it, yea and searched it out; that is,*

is, he decreed all things thereby, and established them in a most excellent manner, as when things are done upon the most exact search and enquiry. I know, some Expositours understand these two verses, as they do all that went before, concerning that knowledge of God and of the way of salvation, which is the true wisdom of man, and so give this as the meaning of the words, that this wisdom was from the beginning known of God, and ordered by him to be the wisdom of man, and accordingly was by him discovered to man, partly by his works, and partly by his word, which otherwise they could never have known: But the first Exposition is by far the best.

Verf. 28. *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom, &c.*] As if he should have said, And thus hath God reserved to himself the wisdom of his governing the world, as a secret which man can never attain; and the wisdom which he hath appointed him to seek after, is to learn to fear him and to keep his Commandements. And with this Iob concludes his discourse concerning the unsearchable wisdom of God, partly thereby to condemn the rash censures of his friends, and partly to shew that he had thus alwaies endeavoured to be wise, though they judged otherwise of him, and neither had nor would hereafter search into Gods secrets.

C H A P. XXIX.

Verf. 1. *Moreover Iob continued his parable.*] See the Note, chap. 27. 1.

MVerf. 2. *Oh that I were as in moneths past, as in the daies when God preserved me.*] To wit, from those miseries which are since come upon me. And this Iob might adde, not so much by way of desiring the recovery of his former prosperity, as to imply that he was not ashamed of his former prosperity, as if he had not behaved himself therein as became a man that feared God, but could wish with all his heart that it were now with him in every regard as it was then: thereby condemning his friends for passing such uncharitable censures upon him, as if by his secret wickednesse in the daies of his prosperity, he had provoked God to bring those miseries upon him which of late he had endured. But if we take the words so, that therein he did indeed wish that he were in the same prosperous condition wherein he had been formerly, this he might lawfully desire, so it were with submission to Gods will, and without any murmuring against that which God had laid upon him; and withall, his drift in mentioning this might chiefly be to imply, how unwarrantably they judged of him by his outward condition, since they might as well conclude that he was a righteous man and beloved of God because of his former prosperity, as that he was a wicked man and hated of God because of his present afflictions; as likewise to intimate, that in this regard his present miseries were the greater, because he had formerly lived in such a prosperous condition.

Verf. 3. *When his candle shined upon mine head, &c.*] That is, upon me, according to that Prov. 30. 6. *Blessings are upon the head of the just*, that is, upon the just. Yet in this phrase there may be also an allusion to the lifting up or setting

up of torches or candles on high, because thereby they give the better light to men. However by the time when the candle of God shined upon his head, is meant the time when the Lord favoured him and prospered him apparently, and when he did by his providence and the counsell of his spirit guide and direct him in all his waies. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *when by his light I walked through darknesse*; for thereby is meant, either that God prospered him when times of great distresse lay upon others, or that through Gods favour he lived free from affliction in this world, the vale of tears and land of darknesse and sorrow, or that God directed him in the most intricate difficulties that ever he met with. See the Notes, 2 Sam. 22. 29. and Esth. 8. 16.

Verf. 4. *As I was in the daies of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my Tabernacle.*] That is, when that speciall and singular love which God did bear me was plainly manifested, by the great blessings he daily afforded to me and mine; Or, when God by his secret providence did protect, and by the secret counsell of his spirit did direct both me and my family: For all these may be tearmed *the secret of God*, as likewise Psal. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*; and in other places.

Verf. 6. *When I washed my steps with butter, &c.*] That is, when I enjoyed the choicest of Gods blessings in greatest abundance. We have the like expressions, Gen. 49. 11. and Deut. 33. 24. concerning which see the Notes there. Yet the last clause, *and the rock poured me out rivers of oyl*, may imply not only abundance of oyl, as where streams of water come gushing forth out of rocks; but also that the barrenest places yielded him plenty: for which see the Note, Deut. 32. 13.

Verf. 7. *When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street.*] As by *the gate* is meant the place of judicature, (see the Note Gen. 22. 17.) whether Job used to goe in great state and honourably attended; so also by *the street* is meant any place of publick concourse, where when the people met together about publick affairs, Job, as being a chief magistrate, had a seat prepared for him against he came thither.

Verf. 8. *The aged arose and stood up.*] That is, as I passed by, or when I came in place where they were, the aged arising stood up; or, rising from their seats, they continued standing, whilst I was present.

Verf. 9. *The Princes refrained talking, &c.*] That is, they were silent presently when I came in presence; or, they still gave way to me to speak, and would not speak themselves when I was by: which is also expressed in other words in the following clause, *and laid their hand on their mouth*, of which see the Note, chap. 21. 5. Yet some adde farther, that by putting their hand upon their mouth, the princes gave a sign to others to be silent too.

Verf. 10. *The Nobles held their peace, &c.*] To wit, when Job was by, or began to speak: *and their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouth*; that is, they were as mute as if it had been so; or, they durst not speak for fear.

Verf. 11, *When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, &c.*] That is, they that heard me speak commended me for that I spake, pronounced me blessed, or desired God to blesse me: *and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me*; that is,

is, as any saw me, they testified of me, how righteous and good I was in all my waies.

Vers. 12. *Because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherlesse, &c.*] As if he had said, It was not for my riches and greatnesse that every one spake well of me; but for the good I did, and that especially to those from whom no requitall could be expected. And thus he confutes that slander of Eliphaz, chap. 22. 9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherlesse have been broken.*

Vers. 13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me.*] To wit, because I helped those that were like to be utterly undone, and rescued those that were in the way of perishing, from the oppression of such as would have ruined them; Or, because I pardoned those that were condemned to die.

Vers. 14. *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgement was as a robe and a diadem.*] As if he should have said, Whereas magistrates use to wear robes and diadems, and other glorious ornaments, to make them to be honoured and revered amongst the people, the ornaments wherewith I sought to adorn my self were justice and judgement; and they were indeed an honour and glory to me both with God and man. His just dealing in that office of magistracy whereto God had raised him, he might compare to a garment which he put on, and wherewith he clothed himself, first, because it was not naturall to him, he was born naked of any such clothing; secondly, because it was manifestly to be seen in all his actions, as a mans garments are visible to every one that looks on him; thirdly, that he took as much care to do justly, as a man doth to dresse himself, and did as much delight in all righteous dealing, as men do in costly attire. But that which is first mentioned, was chiefly, I conceive, intended by Job.

Vers. 15. *I was eyes to the blind, &c.*] This may include many particulars: as first, that he took order that the blind should have all requisite help afforded them; secondly, that he instructed those that were ignorant, who are indeed spiritually blind, according to that which the Apostle spake to the Jew, Rom. 2. 19. *thou art confident, that thou thy self art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darknesse*; thirdly, that he counselled and directed those that for want of wisdom knew not many times, both in publick and private affairs, which way to turn themselves; and fourthly, more particularly, that when poor simple men had any cause pleaded before him, who, not understanding their own cause, were in danger to be gulled and deceived by those that would yet seem to plead for them, he used to help such simple souls, discovering for their benefit the justice of their cause, which they were not able to make good themselves. And agreeably hereto we must also understand the second clause, *and feet was I to the lame*; to wit, either of bodily lamenesse, that he provided that such poor wretches should not want help, or secondly, of men figuratively lame, that is, poor weak men, that are not able as it were to stand of themselves, or manage their affairs, that he supported and aided them.

Vers. 16. *I was a father to the poor, &c.*] That is, I helped them, and counselled them, and supplied them with all things that were necessary for them, and that with the care and affection of a father. As for the following clause, *and the cause*

which I knew not, I searched out, it may imply two remarkable acts of justice in Job: to wit, first, that he did not content himself with righting those that complained to him of wrong that was done them, but by search and enquiry found out those that were injurious in their dealings, and called them to an account, and so relieved those that durst not complain; and secondly, that when any cause was brought before him, he durst not be rash in passing judgement, nor would suffer those that were the wrong-doers to carry the cause by any false dealing, but did alwaies weigh well every circumstance, that there might be nothing which he did not thoroughly understand.

Verf. 18. *Then I said, I shall die in my nest.*] That is, I shall die peaceably at home in my bed, in a good old age, having my children and family about me. Nor doth this contradict that which he said before, chap. 3. 25, 26; *that which I was afraid of is come unto me; I was not in safety, neither had I rest, yet trouble came.* For as that did only imply, that he grew not carnally secure upon his prosperity, but still looked upon all creature-comforts as mutable uncertain things; so this doth only imply, that finding himself in such a prosperous condition through Gods blessing upon him and his, it seemed to him most probable and likely (at least such thoughts did sometimes come into his mind) that surely he should continue settled in that estate, till he came at last to die in his nest: which he the rather thought also, because his conscience testified with him, that he had alwaies sincerely endeavoured to walk uprightly before God, and so had not that cause of being perplexed with continuall fears of a dismall change, as wicked men have, that enrich and raise themselves by unlawfull means. And this he now alledgeth, as that which made his misery now the more bitter and insupportable, and shewed how wonderfull and unsearchable the wayes of God were, that notwithstanding this, he should now be brought into so low and sad a condition.

Verf. 19. *My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.*] That is, through the grace of God planted in my heart, and the blessing of God upon me and mine, and all that I did, I was in great prosperity, like a flourishing tree planted by the waters, and having it's branches refreshed every night with dew from heaven.

Verf. 20. *My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.*] That is, my prosperity, wisdom and strength was daily encreased: For by the bow in the Scripture is usually meant a mans strength; for so we see the continuance of Josephs strength is expressed, Gen. 49. 24. *But his bow abode in strength, &c.* See also 1 Sam. 2. 4.

Verf. 21. *Unto me men gave ear and waited, &c.*] That is, they waited both till I spake, and whilst I was speaking, though I was never so long, as longing to know my advice, and to hear my judgement, and expecting nothing from me but what was full of wisdom and justice.

Verf. 22. *After my words they spake not again, &c.*] To wit, neither by gaining any thing I said, nor by adding any thing which they conceived was wanting in that which I had spoken: *and my speech dropped upon them; that is, it was to them*

them as a sweet showre of rain that distils gently upon the earth, and soaks into it; it was most pleasing, welcome and profitable, chearing and refreshing the minds of the hearers, and every way beneficiall to them. See the Note, Deut. 32. 2.

Verf. 23. *And they waited for me as the rain, &c.*] Most Expositours hold, that by *the rain* in this first clause is meant the rain which fell with them in Autumn, (when in those parts their new-sown seed was in danger to be spoiled for want of rain) which is usually in the Scripture called *the first* or *the early rain*, Deut. 11. 14. Jam. 5. 7. and that because *the later rain* seems to be opposed hereto in the following clause, *and they opened their mouth wide as for the later rain*. But however the meaning is, that they did as eagerly long to hear him speak, as men long for rain in those times when they most need it, and have been longest without it; and did as greedily gape after his words when he began to speak, as the husbandman, or the chapped earth it self gapes after the rain, yea even after the later rain; which is that which falls in the spring, and was most necessary in those countries for the ripening and plumping of their corn, which began then with them to be nigh unto harvest.

Verf. 24. *If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.*] Some understand this thus, that no body would believe that which was spoken before them, if Job by a smile seemed but to suspect that there was no truth or fair dealing in that which was said; and that on the other side, when he gave any approbation to that which was spoken, by the chearfulness of his countenance, those that stood by slighted it not, but observing by his looks what his judgement was, they also approved it. But others take it thus, *If I laughed on them, they believed it not*; that is, they had such a high opinion of my gravity, that if I spake any thing in a jeasting, pleasant manner, or did any other way shew my self chearfull and familiar with any body, they could scarce believe that I laughed when I did laugh; what I spake in jeast they would think I spake it in earnest, at least that there was somewhat in it more then they discerned, nor durst they thereupon carry themselves in a familiar and jeasting manner to me again; and to the same purpose also is the following clause, *and the light of my countenance they cast not down*; for the meaning is, that when he so carried himself, no man, by taking offence at him, caused him to change his countenance; or, that they did not slight any look of his, but took a smile from him as a great matter; or, that his familiar carriage towards them did not embolden them to reverence him ever a whit the lesse, at least to doe or speak any thing that should grieve or anger him, or make him ashamed, and so overcloud his countenance. The expression is much like that, Gen. 4. 5. *Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

Verf. 25. *I chose out their way, and sat chief, &c.*] Two waies this is understood: First, that he appointed them what course they should take, and which way they should goe, in any businesse they had to doe, and was still the chief man in all their meetings: or secondly, that he usually went amongst them, and was familiarly conversant with them; and yet this did not make them despise him, but still he was all in all amongst them, and advanced as the chief man wherever he

came. As for that which follows, *and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners*, the meaning of the first clause, I conceive, is unquestionably this, that he was obeyed and honourably attended, and his house resorted to, more like a king in an army, then a private man or an inferiour magistrate, (and he compares himself to *a king in an army*, rather then in any other place, because there the attendance of kings useth to be greatest, the obedience of souldiers is most observable, and the resort of company for advice and dispatch of businesse is most frequent.) But then the meaning of the last clause is more questionable, *and as one that comforteth the mourners*; for either that may be added in reference to the former clause, to wit, that he was as a king that comforteth the army, when by some distresse or disaster they are discouraged and dejected; or else the meaning may be, that men flocked after him farre and near, as they are wont to doe to one that is famous for his abilities to comfort those that are of a sad and drooping spirit: and so, however, one chief thing which Job intended to imply in these words may be, that notwithstanding the honour that was done him, he was ready still to comfort any that were in affliction and sorrow.

CHAP. XXX.

Verf. 1. **B***Vt now they that are younger then I have me in derision, &c.]* This is opposed to that which he had said in the foregoing Chapter, concerning the great honour that formerly was done him both by young and old, to wit, that now the younger sort despised him, *whose fathers*, saith he, *I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock*, that is, to have made them my dog-keepers, or to have set them with my dogs to keep my sheep: and to prove how wretched, sordid, and base they were, he sets forth how exceeding beggarly and worthlesse their fathers were; because usually such as the parents are, such are the children, if not baser and meaner. And whereas this may seem a high degree of insolency and pride in Job, that he should thus scorn and despise the meanest that were in regard of their poverty; to this it is answered, either that Job doth here set forth the temptations wherewith he was assailed, when he was so despised, which yet notwithstanding he resisted and overmaster'd; or rather that Jobs aim in these words was, not to shew how he was affected towards those that did so shamefully despise him in his misery, but only to set forth what base contemptible men they were that did so scornfully use him; and that not only for their extreme wretchednesse in regard of their outward condition, but especially also for their sloth, and other base qualities, to wit, that they were such, that a man would have been loth to have joyned them with the meanest and lowest in his family, nor could have thought fit for the basest services wherein he could employ them.

Verf. 2. *Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was perished?*] To wit, because though they had lived long, yet they had so wasted their time in sloth and wickednesse, they had neither the wisdom nor experience of old age; and so they were fit for no employment, as being impotent by reason

reason of age, and withall wholly void of that wisdom of the aged, that might have made amends for their bodily weaknesse.

Verf. 3. *For want and famine they were solitary, &c.*] That is, Being in extremity of want, and scarce knowing where to fill their hungry bellies, they were forced to fly into solitary and desolate places: Or, *they were dark as the night* (as it is in the margin of our Bibles,) that is, they lived in caves and woods, as dark as the night, not daring to shew themselves in open view.

Verf. 4. *Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat.*] Because such roots could not be gotten without some trouble, and being gotten must needs be hard and unfavoury meat, under these particulars here mentioned, all other herbs and roots of the like nature are comprehended, which no man would eat of, but those that were hunger-bitten and ready to starve.

Verf. 5. *They were driven forth from among men (they cried after them as after a thief) &c.*] Either this is meant of mens hunting them back to their dens and other solitary places, when at any time they brake out to rob and to steal; or else rather it is meant of their first expulsion from amongst men, to wit, that for their sloth, and other vile qualities, they were looked upon as men that were likely to live only by filching from others, and so were driven into desolate places, as not fit to live in any civile society, and hated, as if they had been the veriest thieves in the world.

Verf. 7. *Among the bushes they brayed.*] That is, say some, when the bushes pricked them. But the meaning rather is, that for hunger, thirst and cold they brayed, being more like so many wild asses rather than men. See the Note, chap. 6. 5.

Verf. 8. *They were children of fools, yea children of base men, &c.*] That is, children of wicked, worthlesse, despicable men; see the Note, 2. Sam. 3. 33. *they were viler then the earth*, which we tread and spit upon; the meaning is, that they were as base as base might be, men not worthy to goe upon the ground. That which is said in the five foregoing verses might be meant of those that now derided him, or of their parents; but this seems rather to be meant of those that so abused him.

Verf. 9. *And now am I their song, yea I am their by-word.*] See the Note, chap. 17. 6. and Deut. 28. 37. And because this he chargeth upon them, of whom he had said before that they were driven from amongst men, and lived in solitary places, it seems that it was by Jobs authority especially they were cast out, though all men were ready to contribute their help thereto; and that thereupon they took now the advantage of his downfall from his former dignity, and coming now without fear from those desolate places, did abuse him, and trample upon him, as here is expressed.

Verf. 10. *They abhorre me, they flee far from me, &c.*] That is, Because of the extreme low condition whereto God hath brought me, and the loathsomenesse of my person, by reason of the ulcers and sores that are upon me, they stand aloof from me by way of scorn and disdain, or as looking on me as some unlucky and accursed thing. We have the like expressions before, chap. 19. 13, 19. And to

the same purpose is the following clause, *and spare not to spit in my face*: whereby is meant, either their loathing of him (for we spit at those things we are scarce able to look at, to imply the rising of our stomachs against them;) or their detesting of him, as an execrable wicked person; or their casting of all kind of vile reproaches upon him to his face; or more generally, that they used him with all kind of contempt and scorn. For though it may be understood literally, to wit, that these base fellows did indeed spit in his face, because spitting in the face was in those times an usuall way of using men reproachfully and despightfully, (as is evident Numb. 12. 14. Deut. 15. 9. but especially Matth. 26. 67. where it is said of Christ, that *they did spit in his face*:) yet here I take it rather to be a proverbiall expression, the meaning whereof is, that they affronted him and abused him in the vilest manner they could devise. There is the like expression before, chap. 16. 10. of which see the Note there.

Verf. 11. *Because he hath loosed my cord and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.*] That is, Because God hath deprived me of that power and authority which I had over them, and hath not awed their spirits to fear and reverence me as formerly, therefore these base people do now with unbridled rage abuse me to my face. In the first clause, the Lords bringing down Job so low is expressed in those figurative tearms, *he hath loosed my cord*: either first, because binding strengthens things, and loosing or unbinding things weakens them, as we see in a bundle of sticks or sheaf of corn, which have no more strength in them, if once the cord wherewith they were bound be loosed or untied; and in the body of man, which is strengthened by the binding of the limbs together with nerves and sinews, and is soon weakned if they be loosed, whence is that expression concerning Belshazzar, that *the joynts of his loyns were loosed*; and so to signifie that God had bereaved him of that might and strength he formerly had, he expresseth it thus, *he hath loosed my cord*: or secondly, in reference to that he said before, chap. 29. 20. *and my bow was renewed in my hand*, that as there the continuance or encrease of his power was implied by the renewing of his bow, so here, by the loosing of the cord or string of his bow, that is, the unbending of his bow, the weakning of his power might be signified: or thirdly, because the authority of magistrates, or the peoples reverencing them because of their authority, is the bond of subjection, or the rains of government whereby people are awed and kept in; whence is that, Psal. 2. 3. *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us* (see the Note, chap. 12. 18.) and so by loosing his cord is meant, that God had stripped him of the authority he formerly had, and made him to be despised amongst the basest of men, and so now (saies he) *they have also let loose the bridle before me*, that is, they have let loose the reins to their malice and wickedness, and give liberty to themselves, even to my face, to use me as they please.

Verf. 12. *Vpon my right hand rise the youth, &c.*] They are said to rise against him upon his right hand, to imply, either first, their opposing him in every thing he did, because the right hand is the instrument of working; or secondly, their endeavour to weaken him, because in a mans right hand his strength chiefly lyes;

or

or thirdly, the advantage they had over him, in regard of the very low condition whereto he was brought, because the right hand is the upper hand; or fourthly, that these youngsters, who were wont to hide themselves for fear of him, as he had said before, chap. 29. 8. did not now abuse him secretly, and behind his back, but were ready at every turn to beard him and oppose him to his face. And indeed the like expression is used elsewhere upon most of these grounds: as where David saith of his great enemy, Psal. 109. 6. *Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand*; and Zach. 3. 1. where Joshua the high priest was seen, *and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him*. As for the following words, *they push away my feet*, though some Expositours understand thereby that they bereaved him of his estate, and of every thing else that might be any support to him, and of all power to help himself; yet I rather take it to be a proverbiall speech, signifying with what extreme contempt they abused him, that they sported themselves with him, as those do that lay stumbling-blocks in a poor mans way, and trip up his heels. And then in the last clause, *and they raise up against me the waies of their destruction*, they are compared to souldiers, that lay siege against a place, (of which see the Note chap. 19. 12. where there is the like expression:) but the meaning is, that they sought by all means to destroy him.

Verf. 13. *They marre my path.*] The meaning of this may be, either first, that they cast an aspersions of hypocrisie upon all the waies of holinesse and righteousness wherein he had formerly walked; or secondly, that hating his waies and courses, they sought to overthrow both him and them; or thirdly, rather, that they had cut off from him all way of escape.

They set forward my calamity, they have no helper.] That is, they have none amongst them that will help me; or there is none to help me against them. Yet I acknowledge the most received Exposition of these words is, *they have no helper*, that is, they need no body to animate and provoke them to these mischievous courses against me; yea as base and mean as they are, against me poor wretch they may easily prevail, and need no helper.

Verf. 14. *They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters, &c.*] That is, Being deprived of my estate, authority and power, which hitherto kept them off, and made them affraid to meddle with me, and God withall having withdrawn his protection, which was that indeed that had hitherto secured me, they came in upon me thick and threefold with all violence; even as souldiers that have besieged any place, when they have made a breach, do rush in like a torrent of waters, and bear down all before them. *In the desolation they rolled themselves upon me*; that is, as souldiers break in through the ruines they have made in a breach, so they, taking advantage of my downfall, come tumbling in upon me, as the waves of the sea, or as stones that roll down from a steep hill, and with all violence, acting mischief upon mischief, they do utterly oppresse and overwhelm me.

Verf. 15. *Terrours are turned upon me; they pursue my soul as the wind.*] That is, the terrours of death, and of Gods wrath, which are worse by farre then any outward affliction can be, do often suddenly, violently, and irresistably sur-

surprize, follow and pursue my soul. See the Note, chap. 6. 4.

Verf. 16. *And now my soul is poured out upon me.*] That is, To my exceeding grief I see the strength and courage of my soul, or the powers of my life spend and run out apace, I faint and die away; through the continuall wasting of my spirits, I melt away in tears and sorrow, and my soul passeth away out of my broken body, as water runs out of a broken vessel. We have the like expressions, Psal. 42. 4. *when I remember these things, I poure out my soul in me*; and Lam. 2. 12. *their soul is poured out into their mothers bosome.*

Verf. 17. *My bones are pierced in me in the night season, &c.*] That is, even in the night, when others find some refreshing rest, my most inward parts are in continuall pain and anguish.

Verf. 18. *By the great force of my disease is my garment changed; it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.*] The meaning of this is, that by that purulent bloody matter, which issued in great abundance out of his ulcers, his garment was continually stained; and that being stiffened with that congealed matter, it was as hard and streight round about his body, as the collar of his coat was about his neck.

Verf. 19. *He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.*] Some Expositours referre this to the extreme contempt whereinto God had brought him, to wit, that God trampled him down in the mire, that he was no more regarded then the dirt under mens feet: and others referre it to the low and weak condition whereto he was brought, in regard of his health, namely that he was more like a dead carcasse then a living man, no better then dust and ashes, and as one that was already thrown down into the grave. But because in the foregoing verse he had spoken of the filth of his ulcers, I rather conceive that here also he intends his loathsome condition in that regard, to wit, that he was no other to look on then a heap of mire, and as he had said before, chap. 7. 5. *cloathed with clods of dust*; concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me; I stand up, and thou regardest me not.*] Standing up is a gesture of those that pray, whence is that Jer. 15. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people*; and that Matth. 6. 5. *they love to pray standing in the Synagogues.* So that the second clause may be no more then a reiterating of that which, in other terms, he had said in the first clause. But yet some conceive, that as by crying in the first clause he meant to imply his earnestnesse in prayer; so also by standing up in the second place he implied, both his eagernesse to be heard, and his persevering still to presse God, waiting for an answer; and withall that he did in prayer present himself before God, to see, as it were, if such a pitifull spectacle would move him to compassion: but that all was in vain.

Verf. 21. *Thou art become cruell to me.*] That is, whereas thou wert wont to deal graciously and bountifully with me, now, contrary to thine own disposition, and thy former dealings with me, thou seemest more then severe, even cruell in that which thou doest unto me. Job therefore doth not here charge God with cruelty, but only affirms that his dealing with him carried the resemblance of cruelty
in

in it, to wit, in that he laid his hand so exceedingly heavy upon him, and took no pity of him, when he saw him in such a sad condition, nor regarded his submission and crying to him for mercy. And indeed the Lord himself useth the same expression, speaking of the severity he had used in the punishment of his own people, Jer. 30. 14. *I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruell one, for the multitude of thine iniquity.*

Verf. 22. *Thou liftest me up to the wind, thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance.*] Three severall waies these words may be understood: to wit, first, that God had lifted him up to a great height of prosperity, that afterwards his fall might be the greater, even to the dissolving of his substance, that is, to his utter ruine; and so he may allude to the lifting up of any thing on high, as it were to the clouds, that so falling from thence it might be dashed in pieces; or to the winds carrying up of the clouds on high, which then fall down in shewres of rain, and so come to nothing: secondly, that he was in the judgement of reason as it were absolutely lost and gone, *Thou liftest me up to the wind, &c.* that is, Thou dost suddenly and speedily snatch me away as with a whirlwind from amongst men, *and thou dissolvest my substance*, that is, thou causest me to melt and wast away to nothing: or thirdly, that he sets forth in the first words the miserable restlesnesse of his condition, to wit, that he was so continually disquieted and distracted, through pain and grief, both in body and mind, that he could be still in no place, nor could ever find any rest in himself, but was like a feather or stubble, that is caught up by the wind, & then driven and whirled about, sometimes one way and sometimes another; insomuch that at last hereby his substance was dissolved, that is, his flesh was quite spent and wasted, yea there was no soundnesse or solidity left either in body or mind: and indeed some read the last clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and dissolvest my wisdom*; and then the meaning must needs be, that he was as a man that is moped, void of understanding, not knowing what course to take, or which way to turn himself.

Verf. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, &c.*] Some conceive that Jobs drift in these words is, to intimate, that since he must needs die ere long, therefore in the mean time he desired that God would let him be at ease; as we see the same alledged, chap. 7. 16. concerning which see the Notes there. But I rather conceive that these words are added only to set forth, that he looked upon himself as a dead man, one of whose recovery there was no hope.

Verf. 24. *Howbeit he will not stretch forth his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.*] Two Expositions are given of these words, which are both very probable, (though they be indeed contrary one to the other;) in regard ones hand may be said to be stretched forth to another, either for good or evil. The one is this: *Howbeit he will not stretch forth his hand to the grave*; that is, God will not save men from the grave, when the time comes that he intends to bring them thither, or when he hath brought them to the grave; *though they cry in his destruction*, that is, though there be never such mourning and lamentation for their death, or for their being in danger of dying, or though they that are dying do never so piteously bewail their misery, and do never so vehemently call upon God, when

he destroyes them: as if he had said, As I know I shall die, so I know that being dead there is no hope of being raised from the grave; thither all must come, and there they must all lye till the generall resurrection. The other Exposition is this, *Though they*, that is, though men in that miserable condition that I am in, *cry in his destruction*, that is, complain bitterly and cry out earnestly for ease and help when God is destroying them, and thinks fit to make an end of them; yet this is that which comforts me, that *howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave*, that is, God will not afflict them any longer when they are in the grave: And so I know it will be with me; though now I cry out, because of my misery whilst he is destroying me, yet this comfort I have, that my miseries will end with my life; when I am laid in my grave, whether I am hasting apace, there he will no longer stretch forth his hand against me, there we shall all be at rest. And this Exposition I take to be most agreeable to the Context in this place.

Verf. 25. *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? &c.*] This might be added to imply, both that he could apprehend no reason why God had so sorely afflicted him, and likewise that he could see no ground for that counsell his friends had given him, to wit, that he should addresse himself to doe that which was good in Gods sight, and then God would again be favourable to him; since this he had alwaies formerly done, and yet these sad calamities had befallen him. But that which I conceive Job meant chiefly to imply is, that in regard he had been so compassionate to others, it was the stranger to him, that he in his miseries should neither find man nor God ready to pity him, according to that former complaint verf. 20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me*: yet that so it was with him he shews in the following verse, *when I looked for good*, (namely, because I had been so ready to pity others) *then evil came unto me; and when I waited for light, there came darkness*.

Verf. 27. *My bowels boyled and rested not, &c.*] His meaning is, that his inward parts were incessantly troubled within him; partly with the burning heat of his disease, and partly with the grief and vexation of his mind. Some hold that Job proceeds here still to expresse, how he was distressed for the distresse of others, to wit, that his bowels yearned over them that were in misery, by means whereof he was continually afflicted for some or other. But the first Exposition is most generally approved; and indeed it best agrees with the following clause, *the dayes of affliction prevented me*, that is, they came unexpectedly upon me; or they came upon me thick and threefold, so that I had no breathing time to arm my self against them.

Verf. 28. *I went mourning without the Sun, &c.*] Even this verse also some Expositours understand of his mourning for others that were in misery, to wit, that he went mourning up and down for them, and that his sorrow was so great, that he could take comfort in nothing, he seemed not sensible of the warmth of the sun shining upon him; and that he *stood up and cryed in the congregation*, that is, that in publick assemblies he bewailed their miseries, labouring to stirre up others also to take pity of them. But I rather take this also, as the rest, to be an expression of his sad condition in regard of his own miseries: and accordingly the first

first clause, *I went mourning without the Sun*, may be very probably understood three severall waies: to wit, either first, of his black skin, that his body was clad all over with a black mourning skin in stead of a mourning vesture, and yet it was not the scorching heat of the Sun, but the strength of his diseases that had put this hue upon him; and so this should be the same with that which is said afterwards in plainer tearms vers. 30. *My skin is black upon me*: or secondly, of his solitarinesse, that being in much heavinesse, he avoided as much as might be the light of the Sun, and loved to be alone by himself in the dark: or thirdly, of his sorrow only, that he was alwaies mourning, as being under the darknesse of very sad afflictions, and not having the least Sun-light of pleasure and comfort; and to the same purpose is that which follows, *I stood up and I cryed in the congregation*, that is, I could not contain my self, but (which was a very unseemly thing in one of my gravity and quality) I did even weep and howl in the very publick assemblies of people.

Vers. 29. *I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.*] Or, *ostriches*, as it is in the margin; and indeed so they must needs render the words, that will have the meaning to be, as some would have it, that Job herein complains of the mercilessnesse of those with whom he conversed, to wit, that they were barbarously cruel to him, like dragons, yea like ostriches, that are cruell to their own young ones. But rather, I conceive, he tearms himself *a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls*, because his condition was like to theirs, to wit, either for that he was forsaken, and left in a desolate and solitary estate, or because his complaints and cries, by reason of his extreme misery, were like the howling and screeches of these creatures, which make in the wilderness many times a very lamentable noise, according to that, Micah 1. 8. *I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls*: and indeed the phrase is much like this, which Solomon useth, Prov. 18. 9. *He also that is slothfull in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster.*

Vers. 30. *My skin is black upon me, &c.*] This may be meant of the blacknesse of the scabs and scurf which were all over his body: but besides, even the skin of a mans body may become black by extremity of grief and violent sicknesse; whence is that, Lam. 5. 10. *Our skin was black like an oven, because of the terrible famine*; and that also of David, Psal. 119. 83, *I am become like a bottle in the smoke*: see also the Note above vers. 28.

Vers. 31. *My harp also is turned to mourning, &c.*) Hereby is implied, that not only his joy was turned into mourning, but also that those things which formerly were used for his delight, did now only encrease his sorrow.

C H A P. XXXI.

Verf. 1. **I** *Made a covenant with mine eyes, &c.*] In this Chapter Job makes a solemn protestation how piously he had lived, thereby to confute his friends unjust censures, and to shew how strange therefore it was, that he should be brought into so sad a condition: and first he begins with this, how carefully he had suppressed all carnall concupiscence, because this is the sin that doth usually surprize men in their youth. And this he expresseth in these tearms, *I have made a covenant with mine eyes*, to imply, that he kept his eyes from gazing upon any wanton object, with as much care, as men use when they are bound to any thing by covenant; and perhaps also that he was on each side carefull, both that his eyes should not allure him to evil, and that he likewise would not imploy his eyes in any such dishonourable service. And then for the following clause, *why then should I think upon a maid?* the drift thereof is, to imply that as he watched over his eyes, so also over his thoughts, that he might not think upon a maid, (and much lesse upon a married wife, which would have been a farre greater sin;) and that either because there was the same ground for avoiding this evil of his thoughts, as for avoiding the other of his looks; or because it would have been in vain to have set such a strict guard upon his eyes, if in the mean season he should give liberty to himself for such wanton and lustfull thoughts; or because being so farre convinced of the evil of this carnall concupiscence, he durst not give way to an evil thought, for fear of Gods wrath, *why then should I think upon a maid?* as if he should have said, If I should, would not God have punished me for it? The first clause I know may be understood generally, of covenanting with his eyes against all that may be comprehended under that which Saint John calls *the lust of the eyes*, 1 John 2. 16; but commonly it is limited by Expositours to looking after women.

Verf. 2. *For what portion of God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?*] Some Expositours understand this thus, that unclean persons are no part of Gods portion and inheritance; or that they have no part nor interest in God: But because of these expressions, *from above*, and *from on high*, farre more probable it is, that Job speaks here of a portion and inheritance of recompence, which God from above shall allot to those that give way to such lustfull looks and thoughts, as he had mentioned in the foregoing words: *for what portion of God is there from above?* &c. as if he should have said, I dare not give way to such wanton looks and lascivious thoughts; for though such as doe so may scape well enough with men, that may never discern nor suspect any thing amisse in them, yet what will God from above allot them for their portion? which he answers in the following verse. See the Note, chap. 20. 29.

Verf. 3. *Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?*] That is, Is not this the portion of such wicked men, that God doth certainly at last destroy them, yea many times by some extraordinary, usuall and unheard of judgement? according to that, Esa. 28. 21. *The Lord shall rise up as in*
mount

mount Perizim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may doe his work, his strange work, and bring to passe his act, his strange act.

Verf. 4. *Doth not he see my waies, and count all my steps?*] That is, Not one of them can slip by him undiscerned; he knows them as exactly, as if he numbred them one by one. And this, concerning Gods seeing all that he did, he inserts in this place, either first, to imply, that this made him wonder why God, that knew him so thoroughly, should punish him so severely; or secondly, to shew, that in this profession which he made of his purity from all uncleannesse, he durst not affirm any untruth, since if he should, it could not be concealed from God; or rather thirdly, as a reason why he durst not give way to any lustfull looks or thoughts, to wit, because though man could take no notice of them, yet they could not be concealed from God.

Verf. 5. *If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit.*] That is, If I have walked in any sinfull course, and have greedily defrauded those that I have had any dealings with; or, If I have dealt falsly, dissemblingly, and deceitfully with any man whatsoever. By *vanity* may be meant any sinfull practice, and that because the expectation of men in such courses will prove vain and deceitfull; and so it is taken Prov. 13. 11. *wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished*: but most commonly in the Scripture by *vanity* is meant lying and dissembling, when there is no truth in that which men say or doe, but all is vain and deceitfull; and therefore is vanity and lying so often joyned together in the Scriptures, as Psal. 4. 2. *How long will you love vanity, and seek after leasing?* so also Prov. 30. 8. and in many other places.

Verf. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.*] By being *weighed in an even ballance*, he means his being tryed justly, to wit, whether his dealings with men had not been just, according to the word and revealed will of God, (which is the ballance of the sanctuary, the only sure rule to discover what is just and what is unjust;) or, whether his punishments were not greater then his offences had been. So that his drift is to professe, that he desired to be thoroughly tryed, so it might be done justly, to wit, by God, and not by man, of whose unjust censures he had too much experience.

Verf. 7. *If my step hath turned out of the way, &c.*] That is, If upon tryall it be found that I have lived wickedly, and dealt unjustly with men; and *mine heart hath walked after mine eyes*, that is, if I have coveted that which I saw of another mans, which is called *the lust of the eyes*, 1 John 2. 16; and *if any blot hath cleaved to my hands*, that is, if I have run on in any sinfull practice, or, if I have greedily gotten, and unjustly kept any thing, by any base unwarrantable way: And observable it is, that in that last clause he speaks of such filthy lucre, as of pitch or some such thing, that will soon cleave to and defile the hands of him that toucheth it. Some Expositours I know limit this, which is here said, to his carriage of himself in the place of a magistrate; *If my step hath turned out of the way*, that is, If I have perverted justice, and *mine heart hath walked after mine eyes*, that is, if I have had any respect to persons, and *if any blot hath cleaved to my hands*, that is, if I have taken any bribe. But the more generall Exposition I judge the best. And yet we must

not think that Job intended hereby to clear himself of all sin, as if he had never stepped awry: for the resolving whereof see the Note chap. 16. 17.

Verf. 8. *Then let me sow, and let another reap; yea let my off-spring be rooted out.*] This last clause seems to be added, because it is usually to make their posterity rich and great, that men seek gain to themselves in unjust wales; which if I have done, saith Job, it were just that I should have none to inherit what I have gotten. But may some say, Job had now no children. I answer, this might be meant of his childrens children; or of rooting out his children hereafter, if he should have any; or the meaning may be only this, that if he had never so great a posterity, it were just with God to root them all out.

Verf. 9. *If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, &c.*] That is, If I have been wonne by any woman to commit uncleanness with her, even when she may have used all the art she had to entice and entangle me, as by her beauty, by her wanton flattering words, which *drop as an honey-comb*, Prov. 5. 3. by her lascivious behaviour, or any other of those wicked arts, for which the heart of the whorish woman is said to be *as snares and nets*, Eccles. 7. 26.

Verf. 10. *Then let my wife grind unto another, &c.*] That is, Let her become a bond-slave to some other man, and be put by him to grind in a mill; concerning which see the Note Exod. 11. 5: or rather, Let me be paid in the same kind, let my wife commit adultery with another man, yea let her be a common whore to many (which also the following clause expresseth more clearly, *and let others bow down upon her*) as a mill that for hire receives and grinds the corn of all comers. For indeed this phrase of grinding is a modest expression of that act of uncleanness; and so we find it used in other writers, as in that of Horace, *alienas Permolere uxores*.

Verf. 12. *For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, &c.*] Some Expositours understand this thus, that the adultery of the wife doth kindle in her husband such fury and wrath, that as a fire it breaketh forth to the destruction of her and all that belong to her, of which see what Solomon saith, Prov. 6. 34, 35. But the words plainly shew, that he speaks of the sin of adultery, to wit, that as it is as a fire in regard of its burning concupiscence, so also as a fire it consumes all a man hath, by reason of the wrath of God, which usually pursues them that are guilty of it, though men wink at it: it consumes a mans health, wealth, body and soul, and makes him burn at last in hell fire unto eternity: and then, because God usually punisheth this sin more particularly, by cutting off the adulterers posterity, therefore he addes the last words, *and would root out all mine increase*.

Verf. 13. *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me.*] His meaning is, that though he might have stopped their mouths with stripes, yet he gave them free liberty to speak for themselves; yea perhaps sometimes when they contended with him, too malapertly *answering again*, which is a sin in servants, Tit. 2. 9. Now this was in Job the clearer proof both of his innocency and gentleness, (if to his servants, much more to others) because in those times their servants were usually perpetuall bond-slaves, and both

both they and all that they had were so their masters, that they might doe what they pleased to them, even to the taking away of their lives, and there was no calling them to an account for it.

Verf. 14. *What then shall I doe, when God riseth up? &c.*] As if he should have said, God is no respecter of persons, he is farre more above me, then I could be above my meanest servant, and more power he hath over me to crush me, then I could have over them to oppresse and crush them: now therefore, though man should never question me for this, yet when *God riseth up*, to wit, to call me to an account and to punish me for dealing so harshly with my servant, *when he visiteth me*, namely at the time when he brings any great calamity upon me, at the hour of death, or at the day of judgement, *what then shall I doe?* that is, how should I carry my self towards God? I should not dare to look him in the face, I should be afraid to appear in his presence; at least I should not know what to answer him, not being able any way to excuse my self, nor knowing why God should hear me, when I have formerly refused to hear my servants. See Ephes. 6. 9. and Col. 4. 1.

Verf. 15. *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?*] Here he affirms, first, that his servant was Gods creature, as well as he; the same God made them both: secondly, that his servant was a man, a reasonable creature, as well as he; they were both of the same nature, and he was therefore a mortall creature no lesse then his servant: and thirdly, that he and his servant were made after the same manner, and fashioned in the same mold, and so were descended of the same stock. Which two last some conceive are more fully expressed, if we read the last clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and did he not fashion us in one womb?* But however the drift of the words is, to imply that there was no cause therefore, why he should tyrannize over his servant, or, that if he should so doe, he that made them both would plead the cause of his servant.

Verf. 16. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire, &c.*] To wit, by detaining their pledge, or any thing else unjustly from them, or by refusing to grant them any thing they desired of me, or which I knew they desired, though out of modesty they did not ask it. As for that which is added in the next clause, concerning the failing of the widows eyes, who indeed are apt to marre their eyes with weeping, see the Note chap. 11. 20.

Verf. 17. *Or have eaten my morsell alone, and the fatherlesse hath not eaten thereof.*] That is, If I have not imparted of my provision for the feeding of the fatherlesse. Yet some adde also, that by this expression of not eating *his morsell alone*, he meant to imply, that even of that which was daintiest, that which was provided for his own eating, as any occasion was, the fatherlesse had a share.

Verf. 18. *(For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, &c.)*] This clause some understand of fatherlesse boyes: and then accordingly the following clause they understand of the fatherlesse of the other sex, *and I have guided her from my mothers womb*. But because there is mention made in the foregoing verses of his respect to poor widows, and they are frequently joyned with the father-

therlesse, therefore the last clause, *and I have guided her, &c.* most Expositours understand of the widow: and so the meaning of this passage is, that from his youth, yea from his very childhood, he used to be charitably affected to the fatherlesse and widows; his naturall inclination, which he had from his mothers womb, seemed to carry him that way. Indeed Solomon tells us, that much of a mans naturall disposition to good or evil will often be discovered even in his childhood; Prov. 20. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, &c.* and therefore Jobs intent in these words might be to imply, that even in his tender years he used to pity the fatherlesse and widows, and was still ready to carry them home to his fathers house, and many waies to be helpfull to them.

Verf. 20. *If his loyns have not blessed me, &c.*] That is, the loyns of the poor naked man, whom he had clothed. And the loyns of such a man may be said to blesse him that covered them with raiment, either first, because they being refreshed hereby, do move such a poor wretch to blesse him that shewed him such mercy, as it is expressed Deut. 24. 13; or secondly, because such a poor man will blesse him that clothed him with all his might and strength; or thirdly, because such an act of charity doth move God to blesse him that did it. And so the phrase is much like that Gen. 4. 10, where the blood of Abel is said to cry for vengeance.

Verf. 21. *If I have lift up my hand against the fatherlesse, &c.*] Some understand this of the lifting up the hand by way of suffrage in giving his vote against the fatherlesse, and others of lifting up the hand by way of giving a sign to any at his command to fall upon them. But I rather take this to be the plain meaning of the words; *If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherlesse*, that is, If I have threatned, injured, or oppressed the fatherlesse, or any other poor helpless creature; *when I saw my help in the gate*, that is, when I saw well enough that the magistrates would, either for favour or fear, take my part, and save me harmless.

Verf. 22. *Then let mine arme fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arme be broken from the bone.*] That is, Let some horrible judgement fall upon me, worse then all I have yet suffered; let me rot in pieces, or be torn in pieces; or let the arme that hath been so lifted up against the poor, rot off from my body, or let it wither or be disjoynted, and become uselesse. That he wisheth to himself is much like that which befell Jeroboam, 1 Kings 13. 4.

Verf. 25. *If I rejoyced because my wealth was great, & because mine hand had gotten much.*] To wit, as ascribing all I had to mine own wit and industry. For men to rejoyce with thankfulness, when the Lord blesseth them with a great estate, is doubtlesse praise-worthy; Deut. 12. 7. *Ye shall rejoyce in all that you put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord your God hath blessed you.* But that which Job here protests against is, rejoycing in the greatnesse of his wealth carnally, inordinately and immoderately, as those do that set their hearts upon their wealth, as if all their happinesse consisted therein; or that give themselves to live therewith in all kind of voluptuousnesse.

Verf. 26. *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightnesse, &c.*] Many

Many later writers understand this allegorically, as a protestation against pride and arrogancy of spirit, or against confidence in his great wealth and power, or in his own works and innocency of life: as first thus, *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, &c.* that is, *If mine heart hath been exalted, and my looks stately and lofty, because of my greatnesse, or transcendent holinesse, so that I scarce deigned to look downwards upon other men, as deeming my self some little God, and fitter to live with the Sun and Moon then with mortall man; or secondly thus, If I observed and viewed with delight the lightsome and glorious condition wherein I lived, (as indeed usually in the Scriptures a prosperous estate is expressed by light, and the bright shining of the heavens upon men;) or thirdly thus, If I beheld my gold glorious and glittering as the Sun, or my silver bright as the moon: And accordingly also they understand the following words vers. 27. *And my heart hath been secretly enticed, to wit, to exalt my self in this my great wealth and glorious condition, or to put my confidence therein; or my mouth hath kissed my hand, namely, by way of applauding my self, or ascribing these things to my self, to mine own industry, endeavours, or righteousness: And so also that which follows, vers. 28. This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judges; for I should have denied the God that is above;* to wit, that if he had thus gloried or trusted in his greatnesse, or wealth, or righteousness, or ascribed them to himself, it would have been a manifest denyall of God, (and consequently *an iniquity to be punished by the judge:*) and indeed we see that accordingly the Apostle saith, that *Covetousnesse is Idolatry;* and Agur, Prov. 30. 8. having disclaimed the desire of a great estate, adds vers. 9. *lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord?* But yet first, because Job speaks of the moons *walking in brightness*, which is certainly meant of the moons constant motion in the heaven, and cannot well be understood allegorically, and secondly, because a mans pride of heart, or confidence in his wealth or righteousness is a sin, known only to him that searcheth the heart, and cannot therefore be called *an iniquity to be punished by the Judge;* I rather conceive that these three verses are to be understood literally, concerning the Idolatry of worshipping the Sun and moon, &c. *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, &c.* that is, *If when I beheld those glorious lights of heaven, the Sun and Moon, shining in their full brightness, without the interposition of any clouds, and hereupon, to wit, by viewing their exceeding brightness, and by other considerations of the manifold benefits which men enjoy by their means, my heart hath been secretly enticed, that is, my heart hath been inwardly moved to adore them, as Gods; or my heart hath been perswaded to worship them in secret (which may seem the more probable Exposition, because he speaks of an offence punishable by man;) or my mouth hath kissed my hand, to wit, by way of externall adoration, as the heathens used to doe, kissing as it were the light of the Sun and moon upon their hands, because they could not kisse the Sun and moon themselves, concerning which see the Note 1 Kings 19. 18: This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, (as he had said before vers. 11. concerning adultery, to which this word (also) hath reference) for I should have denied the God that is above;* to wit, by making*

Gods of those Creatures. This is, I conceive, the plain meaning of these words. I know some Expositours limit that which is said of beholding *the Sun when it shined, and the moon walking in brightness*, to the welcome and pleasing brightness of the Sun at its first rising, and to the moons shining when it is in the full; (and indeed the heathens used to worship the Sun at his rising, as did also the Idolatrous Israelites in Ezekiels time, Ezek. 8. 16. *they worshipped the Sun towards the East*;) but I see not but that it may be extended more generally to the worshipping of the host of heaven, when at any time they shined in their brightness.

Verf. 29. *If I rejoyced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lift up my self when evil found him.*] To wit, by insulting over him, and trampling upon him. A man may lawfully rejoyce at the ruine of his wicked enemies, if he doth it with respect to the glory of God, and the good of the Church, and other such like holy respects; Psal. 58. 10. *The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance.* But that which Job here protests against is, rejoycing at the destruction or hurt of his enemies out of private malice, and desire of revenge: and so also the words of the following verse must be understood, *Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.*

Verf. 31. *If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.*] A very difficult passage this is; insomuch that though there be four different Expositions given of it, yet it is not very easie to say which of them is the most probable. First, some hold that Job having in the foregoing verses protested, that he had not rejoyced at the destruction of his enemy, nor wished him any hurt, here he adds how farre he was provoked to the contrary, to wit, because those of his own household were so enraged against his enemy, and so greedy to be revenged on him, that they said amongst themselves, *Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied*; as if they should have said, we could even tear him with our teeth, and eat his very flesh, and yet that would scarce satisfy our rage: all which notwithstanding Job contained himself, and was so farre from being stirred up by his household, that he rather restrained them, as David did his servants when they would have provoked him to have slain Saul, 1 Sam. 24. 5. Now concerning this phrase of not being satisfied with eating his flesh, see the Note chap. 19. 22. Secondly, some understand it thus, that the love of those of Jobs household was so impetuous and vehement to him, that they thought they could have eaten his flesh; so sweet and delightfull he was to them, that they could not be satisfied with enjoying his presence, but seemed to desire even to have him within them. And indeed though this Exposition may seem somewhat harsh, yet we know that it is not unusuall for men to say even in a way of love, *Methinks I could eat thee*: and many learned Expositours do thus conceive of these words; for thus say they, Job implies here how good and amiable he was to those of his own household; and then he adds, in the following verse, how good he was to strangers. Thirdly, others again, on the contrary, hold, that Jobs intent in these words was to shew, that some at least even of his own household were ready to say, that they could out of hatred to Job eat his flesh without being satisfied.

ed, and that because he did so continually day and night overburthen them, and weary them with the entertainment of strangers in his house: for this they say is premised with relation to that which follows in the next verse, *The stranger did not lodge in the street, but I opened my doors to the traveller.* And fourthly, others, though they conceive also that these words are premised with respect to that which follows in the next verse, concerning his frequent entertaining of strangers, yet not thinking it probable that Iobs servants should be so inhumane to so good and gentle a master, as to wish they might eat the flesh of his body, do rather understand these words, *his flesh*, of the flesh provided for the feeding of himself and his guests, *If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied:* as if they had said, Strangers are fed daily with the flesh he provides for his food, but we that are of his own household, have scarce leasure to tast of his provision; we are so continually imployed in providing for, and attending upon strangers, that we have not so much leasure as to satisfy our hunger. And indeed this last seems to me the best Exposition.

Verf. 33. *If I covered my transgressions, as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosome.*] There are some Expositours that would have the drift of these words to be this, that he had not been guilty of any such transgressions, that he should need to dissemble or conceal them, or cover them with a vizar of hypocrisie. But the words do clearly professe this, that where he was in a fault, he had not gone about to hide it, as Adam did, or as men naturally are wont to doe, to wit, by excusing or denying it. And thus he intimates, that what he had said in his justification, was not because he judged himself free from sin: No, he knew that he had many waies offended God, and wherein he was guilty, he was alwaies willing to acknowledge it.

Verf. 34. *Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrifie me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door?*] By the contempt of families may be meant, either first, the most contemned in any family, the meanest and basest amongst them, the scum of the people; or secondly, the contempt which he had brought upon any families; or thirdly, any families contemning of him. But which way soever we understand that expression, the drift of Job in these words is very obscure; and yet, according to our Translation, there are only two Expositions that have any probability in them: as first, that Job spake this with reference to that he had said in the foregoing verse, concerning hiding his iniquities; affirming, that he did not hold his peace, or keep within door, forbearing to acknowledge his sin, lest his contemning of families should be known, or lest any other sin of his should be divulged amongst the multitude, yea even amongst the rascall crew of the people, and so he should be scorned and contemned, and become a by-word amongst all the families that lived about him, his offences were not of that nature; but that he was willing, if occasion had been, to have gone forth and confessed them openly before all men, even the most despised of all the people: or secondly, that Job here protests, that he did never out of base cowardise and fearfulness neglect to doe his duty; *Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrifie me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door?* as if

he should have said, No, I did not; I did never forbear to reprove sin, to defend the oppressed, or otherwise to speak what I deemed just and equall; I did never forbear to goe forth and shew my self, or I did never flink out of doors, and goe away from the place of judgement, for fear of an enraged multitude, or for fear of being contemned by families incensed against me for that which I did, though they were of never so considerable quality or number. And this indeed is the Exposition that is most generally approved: only some alter it a little thus, to wit; that he did not in these words deny that he *kept silence, and went not out of the door*, but only that he did it not for fear; if he did hold his peace, and went not forth, it was not out of timorousnesse, but for some other reason, as because he judged that the patient bearing of injuries was the best way to overcome them, or some such like motives.

Verf. 35. *Oh that one would hear me! &c.*] That is, Oh that any one would undertake as a Judge to hear me plead the cause between God and me! *behold, my desire is that the Almighty would answer me*; that is, my desire sincerely is, that God, who hath seen and known all my waies, and discerns what the thoughts and intentions of the heart are, would satisfie me when I desire to know why he hath so sorely afflicted me, and would answer the arguments I shall bring to prove mine innocency: (concerning which see also the former Notes chap. 9. 34, 35. and chap. 13. 18, 19, &c.) *and that mine adversary had written a book*; that is, that any adversary of mine had brought in his accusations and allegations against me in writing, that so I might know them, and answer them, as I could; for such it seems was the custome of those times in all judiciall proceedings.

Verf. 36. *Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.*] In the first words, of taking it upon his shoulders, some conceive that Job alludes to the writings that used to be fastned on the shoulders of malefactours, wherein the cause of their suffering was written in great capitall letters, that all men might read it; and so that his meaning therein was, that he would be glad that all men might see what could be said against him. Others hold, that he alludes to mens taking up and carrying on their shoulders those things which they do dearly prize and esteem; and so that he meant, that this book of accusations brought in against him he should highly prize, and should esteem it as some choice treasure, not doubting but that thereby his innocency would the more clearly appear. And lastly, others think that he alludes to the custome of carrying Ensignes and scepters on mens shoulders, or any other signs of mens dignity or victory, according to that Esa. 22. 22. *And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder*; and so that Jobs intent in these words was, to intimate, that he was confidently perswaded that if his adversary had written such a book against him, it would be an honour and a glory to him, and withall a certain trophée of his victory over his adversary; and that because all the accusations brought in against him would be so apparently found to be lyes and calumnies: and indeed the last words, *and would bind it as a crown to me*, do clearly hold forth this to be the meaning.

Verf. 37. *I would declare unto him the number of my steps, &c.*] That is, To him that

that should thus undertake to hear, and give judgement in my cause; or rather, To this mine adversary that had written a book against me, I would truly declare all that I know by my self, faithfully relating to him (if that might be any way a help to him) the whole course of my life. As for the following words, *as a prince would I goe near unto him*, the meaning is, either that he would draw near to him that would undertake to hear, and give sentence in his cause, as subjects to their Prince, wholly submitting himself and his cause to his judgement; or else secondly, that he would draw near to this his adversary that had written a book against him, as to some great Prince, that is, that he would honour and reverence him, and have him in high esteem, even out of respect of the good he had done for him; or else thirdly, (which seems most clearly expressed in our Translation) that he as a Prince would draw near to this his judge or adversary, that is, freely and without fear, with an heroicall and undaunted spirit, as one that was no way self-condemned, but desirous to hear the worst that could be alledged against him.

Verf. 38. *If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain.*] The following imprecation verf. 40. *Let thistles grow in stead of wheat, &c.* shews plainly that Job meant this of land that was his private possession, and not (as some would have it) of a land subject to his government, which should cry against him, because of his tyrannizing over the inhabitants; for so he should wish that his country might be cursed of God, if he had oppressed his country, which is a most absurd conceit. It must needs therefore be meant of the land of his possession, thus, *If my land cry against me*, &c. to wit, because I have gotten it unjustly, or because I have oppressed my tenants therein, or because I have overtoyled the husbandmen imployed in the husbandry thereof, or detained their wages from them.

Verf. 39. *If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, &c.*] That is, not having duly paid for the land, or not having justly paid my husbandmen, &c. *or have caused the owners thereof to loose their life*, that is, those that were formerly the true owners of it, (by direct putting them to death, as Ahab did Naboth, or by heart-breaking oppressions) or those that were the occupiers of it under me, by oppressing them to their utter undoing: *Then* (verf. 40.) *let thistles grow in stead of wheat, &c.*

C H A P. XXXII.

Verf. 2. **T**hen was kindled the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram, &c.] This Elihu was, it seems, one of those that stood by, and had heard all the dispute betwixt Job and his three friends; & because he misliked what he had heard from both parties, when he perceived that Job had made an end of speaking, and that his friends were resolved to make no farther reply upon him, he stepped up, and undertook to deliver his judgement, and as it were to determine and compromise the controversie betwixt them. Now in setting down this, first this Elihu is described by the family from

which he was descended, to wit, that he was *the son of Barachel the Buzite*, that is, of the family of Buz, who was the second son of Nahor the brother of Abraham, by his wife Milcah, Gen. 22, 20, 21. (for that I judge farre more probable, then that which some say, that Barachel should be called *the Buzite*, because he was of the province or city of Buz in Idumea mentioned Jer. 25, 23.) and *of the kindred of Ram*, that is, of Abram; and this I hold too more probable, (because he was the brother of Nahor, and for his eminency like to be expressed,) then that this Ram should be, as others would have it, some obscure man of the stock of Nahor: all which I conceive is thus punctually expressed, partly for the greater honour of Elihu, because he spake more prudently concerning Jobs cause then his three friends had done; and especially to make it the more evident, that the story of Iob here related was a true, not a devised story. Secondly, the cause of Elihu's speaking is mentioned, to wit, that his wrath was kindled, namely against both parties. And thirdly, the reason hereof here is particularly expressed: *against Iob was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather then God*: not because he had maintained his own innocency and integrity against his friends, but because, though not in expresse tearms, yet in effect, he had justified himself rather then God, that is, he had taken more care to justify himself, then to justify God; and in his eagernesse to justify himself, had charged God with injustice, to wit, in that he had, giving way to his passion, with much bitterness complained of Gods dealing with him, charging him in a manner that he had laid upon him farre greater punishments then his iniquities had deserved, and so had oppressed him with his majesty and power; and in that he had over-peremptorily called God as it were to an account, and challenged him that he might be suffered freely to plead his cause, and that God would answer him. And then again secondly, *vers. 2. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Iob*; that is, because they had condemned Iob for a wicked man and an hypocrite, and yet had proved nothing against him, nor had given any satisfactory answer to that which Iob had alledged to make good his innocency. It is evident therefore, that Elihu's aim was to shew both Iob and his friends too wherein they had erred; though indeed towards Iob he carries himself far more mildly and equally, then his three friends had done. Many Expositours, I know, hold that Elihu doth condemn Iob as sharply and insolently, as the other had; and accordingly they conceive, that for this God, when he began to speak, checked Elihu, in those words chap. 38. 2. *who is this that darkneth counsell by words without knowledge?* But first, because it will be found farre more probable, that God spake those words to Iob, and not to Elihu, secondly, because it is evident that Elihu no where chargeth Iob for being a wicked man and an hypocrite, as his friends had done, and thirdly, because chap. 42. 7. where the Lord condemns the three friends of Iob, he speaks not the least word against Elihu; therefore I rather conceive, that Elihu's speech is full of gentlenesse and prudence, and that he only blames him for his unadvised speeches in pleading his own innocency; and that though he seems to misconstrue some things that Iob had spoken, yet because he did this also out of a holy zeal for Gods glory, therefore

God

God did not so much as take notice of this, to charge it upon him.

Verf. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Iob had spoken, &c.*] That is, till Job had finished his last long reply in the foregoing chapters, and so consequently all the time that he and his friends had been arguing one against another; and therefore the reason that is added hath reference to them all, *because they were elder then he.*

Verf. 8. *But there is a spirit in man, &c.*] Some Expositours understand this of the holy spirit of God, to wit, that this it is, and not years, that makes men wise: which they say is again more clearly expressed in the following clause, *and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding*: as if he had said, I expected that *multitude of years should teach wisdom*; but now I perceive that it is only the spirit of God in men that gives wisdom where he pleaseth, and that he gives it many times to the young and not to the aged. But because the first clause is so general, *there is a spirit in man*, I rather conceive it is meant of the reasonable soul in man, thus, *But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding*; that is, Though age be an advantage for the getting of knowledge, yet there is a spirit of reason, understanding and judgement, in one man as well as another, and it is God that by the inspiration of his spirit gives wisdom, especially in spirituall things, whereever he pleaseth.

Verf. 11. *Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say.*] That is, I waited patiently all the time you were speaking, expecting you would alledge something against Job, that should clearly prove what you had affirmed, to wit, that he was a wicked man, and that therefore God had laid his hand so heavily upon him; and finding that you strained your inventions to the utmost, to find out what you might say against him, I diligently attended, and observed the reasons and arguments that you brought against him. Now hence Elihu would inferre, that it was most equall that they should patiently hear him, as he had heard them; and the rather, because he had well weighed their speeches, and had not rashly judged that they had not convinced Job, as they ought to have done.

Verf. 13. *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.*] These words, *Lest ye should say*, I conceive, have reference to that he had said in the foregoing verse, *there was none of you that convinced Iob, or that answered his words*: and so the meaning is, either that Elihu had confidently affirmed, that none of them had convinced Iob, lest they should say, *We have found out wisdom*; or that their not being able to answer Job, and so Iobs getting the better of them, was of God, to shew them the weaknesse of that argument whereon they grounded their accusation of Iob, lest they should say, *We have found out wisdom*. And then for the wisdom whereof he gives them warning not to boast, though some understand it of the wisdom of keeping silence, and not replying any more upon Iob, *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom; God thrusteth him down, not man*, that is, *Lest ye should say, We have done wisely in giving over talking any farther with Iob; whereas you blame us, because we did not answer, we say it was a point of much wisdom, not to argue any farther* with.

with a man so obstinate; and that because *God thrusteth him down*, and not man, that is, Gods hand hath or will humble him sufficiently, and so we need not farther presse upon him, so to adde affliction to the afflicted: yet I rather think it is meant of the wisdom of his friends former arguing against Iob, *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom; God thrusteth him down, not man*; that is, Lest ye should say, However you, Elihu, deny it, yet we have sufficiently enough convinced him, and that there is so much wisdom in the argument we have alledged against him, that all the world is not able to answer it, namely, that God, who is omniscient, and infinitely just and wise in all his waies, hath brought these miseries upon him, and not man, who may be deceived, and may judge unjustly; and therefore were he not a wicked man, God would never have punished him, at least in such an extraordinary manner.

Verf. 14. *Now he hath not directed his words against me, &c.*] This might be alledged to imply, that it could not be therefore any discontent that he had taken against Job, that moved him to speak, but that it was merely out of zeal for God and for the truth, and because his friends had not answered him aright: to which purpose also is that which follows, *neither will I answer him with your speeches*, that is, I will not answer him with railing, reviling and scornfull language, as you have done; nor will I take that course to convince him, that you have taken, to wit, by condemning him to be a wicked hypocrite, because Gods hand is so heavy upon him. It is evident in the following Chapters, that Elihu urgeth many things that the other three had objected before: but this is only in the way of reproving him for his impatient murmuring against God, and not thereby to prove him an hypocrite, as the other had done. Neither was it doubtlesse without the secret counsell of God, that when Iobs spirit was almost overwhelmed, with the rough usage and the peremptory uncharitable censures of his other friends, he should now be reproved by one in a juster and more gentle way, that so he might be brought to see wherein he had indeed offended, and yet withall his sorrows might be a little abated.

Verf. 15. *They were amazed, they answered no more, &c.*] Here Elihu turns himself on a sudden from speaking to Iobs friends, to speak to Iob himself concerning them, or rather to the standers by: and by their being amazed may be meant, either that indeed they were amazed to hear Iob so confidently still to maintain his integrity, or only that they were silent, as men that stand astonished are wont to be. Neither doth Elihu speak this by way of a vain-glorious insulting over the other three friends of Iob, but only to shew how he was driven to speak: *They were amazed, they answered no more*; as if he should have said, I appeal therefore to all that stand by, whether it be not very strange, that such wise men should have nothing to say to one so faulty as Iob hath been, and whether I be not now at last necessitated to speak.

Verf. 16. *They spake not, but stood still, &c.*] That is, They proceeded no farther.

Verf. 17. *I will answer also my part, &c.*] That is, Having afforded them, out of respect to their years, liberty to speak, as long as they had any thing to say, now I shall also, as I hope I well may, take my turn to speak.

Verf. 18.

Verf. 18. *For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.*] That is, I have much to say, and inwardly my spirit is moved with such vehemency to speak, that I can no longer forbear. Neither yet doth Elihu here in a youthfull arrogancy oppose his fulnesse to their emptinesse, that had no more to reply upon Job; but only to justifie himself for speaking, he affirms that by his zeal for God and for the truth, yea and perhaps by an extraordinary inspiration of Gods holy Spirit, he was so strongly moved to speak, that he could hold no longer. He compares himself to a woman in travel, that is pained to be delivered, or to bottels that are filled with wine, as it follows in the next verse.

Verf. 19. *My belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottels.*] That is, like bottels filled with new wine; or, like bottels which new wine will burst asunder, yea though they be new bottels, (for indeed the older the bottels are, the liker they are to burst asunder, when they are filled with new wine; according to that of our Saviour, Matth. 9. 17. *Neither do men put new wine into old bottels; else the bottels break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottels perish: but they put new wine into new bottels, and so both are preserved.*) However, the meaning is, that he did inwardly in his mind even swell as it were with a desire to speak, so that he could forbear no longer. Usually in the Scripture what is done inwardly in a man, to wit, in his mind, it is said to be done in the belly, as before chap. 15. 35. *their belly prepareth deceit:* and so it is here, *My belly is as wine which hath no vent*, that is, my mind is ready to burst with a desire to utter what I have to say, even as wine which hath no vent.

Verf. 20. *I will speak, that I may be refreshed.*) That is, to ease my mind.

Verf. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man.*] As if he should have said, Do not desire I should, or do not think I will, out of fear or favour to either side, speak any thing but the downright truth. By giving flattering titles unto man may be meant, first, the applauding of men with the fawning tearms of holy, wise, just, only to curry favour with them, when we know they no way deserve such titles: and secondly, the going about the bush, as we use to say, when we are to reprove any man, or any evil that we discern in man, the doing of this covertly, and by secret insinuations, rather then with plain and expresse tearms; as when Jobs friends would not directly tell Job that he was a wicked hypocrite, and that therefore God had so destroyed him, but only expressing themselves in generall tearms, *This is the place of him that knoweth not God*, and, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God*, did yet intentionally strike at him: and thirdly, the mincing of the matter, when we come to tell men of their faults, using favourable tearms, and not setting forth their sins in their proper colours; as when Eli did so gently reprove the horrible villany of his sons, 1 Sam. 2. 24. *Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear.* Now in all these respects Elihu protests against this giving of flattering titles.

Verf. 22. *For I know not to give flattering titles.*] That is, I am not skilled in the way of flattery; I never used to take this course, but have been alwaies wont to speak my mind clearly and plainly.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Verf. 1. **W**herefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, &c.] Having in the foregoing Chapter blamed Jobs three friends, here he turns his speech to Job, whom principally he desired to convince; and with much gentleness and modesty he begs audience of him, that so he might the more willingly attend to what he would say: and by pressing him to *hearken to all his words*, he implies, first, that he would not utter an idle frivolous word, nothing but what was worth his attending to; secondly, that if he did not attend to his whole discourse, but only here and there a snatch, that would be no advantage to him; and thirdly, that he desired he would not interrupt him, till he had fully declared his mind, and then he might answer freely what he had to say.

Verf. 2. *Behold, now I have opened my mouth, &c.*] That is, now that upon due deliberation I have begun to speak. See the Note chap. 3. 1.

Verf. 3. *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, &c.*] That is, I shall speak truly what I think, and with a sincere desire of your good, not out of hatred or partiality: *and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly*; that is, I shall utter nothing but what I know to be true, and shall make it clear and evident to thee that it is so.

Verf. 4. *The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*] Some Expeditours conceive that the drift of these words is, to satisfy Job, that there was no cause why he should not carefully attend to what he had to say; *The spirit of God hath made me, &c.* that is, God hath made me, and given me a reasonable understanding soul, as he hath to others, (in the expression here used, there seems to be an allusion to that which is said of the first making of man, that *the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*, Gen. 2. 7.) and therefore you have no reason to despise my words, since, to me, though young, God may reveal the truth, as well as to another. But I rather conceive the drift of the words to be this: Job had often wished that he might plead his cause with God, as chap. 16. 21. and chap. 23. 3, 4, 5. and in other places; but yet still upon this condition, that God would withdraw his hand, and not overbear, and daunt, and oppress him with his Majesty and power, as we may find it clearly expressed chap. 9. 34, 35. and chap. 13. 20, 21, 22. Now therefore Elihu tells him, that he would undertake, as in Gods stead, to plead with him; and saith he, *I am a man as thou art, with whom thou mayst plead upon equal terms, and needest not be afraid*: which is again expressed more fully verf. 6. *Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead; I also am formed out of the clay*; that is, according to thine own desire, I in Gods stead will undertake to maintain his cause, who am a poor earthly man, as thou art: and so verf. 7. *My terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee*; which are almost the very words that Job had used in the places before cited.

Verf. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, &c.*] As if he should have said, I do

do not charge thee, as thy friends have done, with secret wickednesse and hypocrites: that which thou hast professed concerning the holinesse of thy life and conversation, I conceive is true: all that I lay to thy charge is, the unseemly and unreverent speeches that thou hast uttered concerning God in my hearing, which I am sure thou canst not deny.

Verf. 9. *I am clean without transgression, &c.*] We do not find that Job ever said thus much in expresse tearms: but Elihu meant this doubtlesse of those words of Iob, which he took to be the same in effect, as those chap. 10. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, and 13. 18, 19, *Behold, now I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified: who is he that will plead with me? &c.* and many others of the like kind, as we may find chap. 13. 23. & 16. 17. and 23. 10, 11, 12. and 31. 6. Now, however some Expositours conceive that Elihu did misinterpret Iobs words, making account that Iob did directly indeed maintain that he was pure and free from sin, whereas he only meant by those speeches to justify himself thus farre, that he had not been a wicked man and an hypocrite, as his friends affirmed, and consequently, that it was not for any such grievous enormities of his life, that Gods hand had been so grievous upon him: yet because Iob had so often in the hearing of Elihu clearly affirmed the contrary to this, to wit, that he was a vile unclean wretch in Gods sight, and that he nor no man else could possibly be justified in this regard before God, nor could be able to answer one of a thousand of that which God could charge upon him: (as we see chap. 9. 1, 2, &c. and chap. 14. 4. and in many other places,) I cannot think that Elihu meant to accuse Iob for boasting in this sense, that he was void of all sin, and that there was no iniquity in him: but only that out of an over-eager desire to maintain his innocency against the calumnies of his friends, he had talked so much of that, in his expostulations with God for dealing so hardly with him, and in his frequent protestations how earnestly he desired that he might plead his cause with God, as if he thought himself perfectly pure and spotlesse, and that God could not in justice punish him as he had done. So that it is not for thinking himself clear from sin, or for maintaining his integrity against his friends, that Elihu here reproves Iob; but it is for his alledging of this in a way of impatience and murmuring, to the impeaching of Gods justice. And therefore though Iobs other friends did seem to object the same thing to Iob, that Elihu doth here, as we see in that of Zophar, chap. 11. 4. *Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes*, and in many other places; yet they did it upon different grounds: For his three friends upbraided him for boasting of his righteousness, because they judged he played the hypocrite herein, being in truth a wicked man; but now Elihu expostulates with him for this, only because by pleading his righteousness in that manner as he did, he did in effect charge God with injustice. Nor can it therefore be said, but that Elihu still holds to what he had said to Iobs friends, chap. 32. 14. *neither will I answer him with your speeches.*

Verf. 10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me, &c.*] This also which Elihu here chargeth Iob to have spoken, we find not any where in expresse tearms; but some passages there are, which he might take to be as much in effect, as if he had said,

Behold, he findeth occasions against me: as where he said chap. 10. 6. *thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin;* and chap. 14. 16. *thou numbrest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sins?* and some other such like expressions. As for the next clause, *he counteth me for his enemy*, this we find that Job said of God severall times, as chap. 13. 24. and chap. 19. 11: and so also that which follows in the next verse, *He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths*, we have it in expresse tearms chap. 13. 27. However that which he condemns Job for in these speeches of his is, that out of the opinion he had of his own righteousness, he durst so presumptuously complain of God, as if he had dealt cruelly with him.

Verf. 12. *Behold, in this thou art not just, &c.*] As if he had said, I deny not but that thou art a holy, just man, and hast lived so strictly and exactly as thou hast spoken; nor do I blame thee generally for all that I heard came from thee; that thou shouldest bemoan thy self for thy miseries, is not strange at all; and in many things I acknowledge thou hast spoken very well, both concerning God and concerning man: but in this, that because of thy righteous life thou hast thus murmured against God, in this, I say, I am sure thou canst not be justified: and to all thy pleas concerning thine own righteousness and Gods severe dealing with thee, *I will answer thee*, and this one answer may well serve for all, *that God is greater then man*, that is, infinitely greater in majesty, wisdom, power, justice, mercy, and in every other respect. And indeed this did necessarily imply how unreasonable a thing it was, that man should contend with God, and quarrel against God; first, because there must needs therefore be more wisdom, justice and mercy in God, then there can be in man, whereas he that complains of Gods dealings with him, doth in effect conclude, that there is more wisdom, and justice, and goodness in him, then there is in God; secondly, because man therefore cannot comprehend the waies of God, and so there may be much wisdom, and justice, and mercy in his proceedings, which we cannot discern; thirdly, because there being such an infinite disproportion betwixt God and man, it must needs be great arrogance in man to contend with God, as if he were his equal; if he had to do with a man as himself, he could doe no more; and fourthly, because this greatness of God implyes his sovereignty over man as his creature, in regard whereof he may doe with man what he pleaseth; and it must needs argue boldness in man to contend with God, as if he had no such power and authority over him. Now whereas it may be said that Jobs three friends had often pressed Job with this greatness of God, and the baseness of man in comparison of God: to this I answer, that they alledged this, to inferre from thence, that therefore Job was certainly a wicked man; God being so infinitely wise and just, would not else have punished him so severely: but now Elihu alledgeth it upon a better ground, only to convince him of his fault in murmuring against God, and pleading so peremptorily with him as he had done.

Verf. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not an account of any of his matters.*] That is, He is not to be called to give a reason of what he doth: his will is a law most righteous, and it is reason sufficient, that it is his pleasure it should be so. And thus he covertly reproves Job for complaining so often, that God
had

had not made known to him why he used him so hardly; as chap. 10. 2, *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me*: and in many other places.

Verf. 14. *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.*] As if he had said, For the truth is, that God doth sufficiently make known to men, sometimes by one means, sometimes by another, why he punisheth them, and what it is he would have them doe, though men, through the ignorance, or pride, or security of their hearts, perceive it not. It cannot therefore be said, that God forewarns them not; *God speaketh once, yea twice*, that is, again and again, by severall waies and means. We have the same phrase Psal. 62. 11. *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.*

Verf. 15. *In a dream, in a vision of the night, &c.*] This is mentioned, as one of the waies whereby God warns men of their sins, either before, or when he afflicts them. Indeed in those daies of Iob, before God had given men his written word, such divine revelations were the chief way whereby he made known his will unto men: and besides, it is probable that Elihu hath respect herein to that which Iob had said, chap. 7. 14. *thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.*

Verf. 16. *Then he openeth the ears of men, &c.*] That is, Then he revealeth his will to men, by shewing them their sins, and what he would have them doe; and causeth them to attend to what is discovered to them, as coming from God. As for the following clause, *and sealeth their instruction*, I conceive the meaning of it to be plainly this, that he causeth that instruction which he affords them in such dreams and visions, to be surely imprinted upon their minds. Yet I know many Expositours do otherwise understand it: as first, that when God hath thus declared to them his will, and warned them of their sins by dreams and visions, then he sealeth those instructions by following corrections, that is, he confirms and makes good what he had so spoken, he makes them see the certain truth of that which he had so revealed to them; or secondly, that he drives home the instruction given them, by assuring them in the same divine revelations, as certainly as if he gave it them under his hand and seal, that if they will not receive instruction, judgement shall follow.

Verf. 17. *That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*] That is, that he may take man off from those sinfull courses upon which he was fully bent, and cure him of his pride, to wit, that pride which is the root of all evil, that makes men exalt themselves to the contempt of God, as if they might doe what they pleased themselves. For then may pride be said to be hid from man, when he ceaseth to be proud, & there is no more pride to be found in him, but he is humbled, being as one that is ashamed and confounded in himself, and blusheth even to hold up his face before God.

Verf. 18. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.*] That is, And thus by bringing him to repentance, he saves him from that temporall and eternall destruction, which otherwise would have fallen upon him: for by *the pit* may be meant both the grave and Hell;

and by *the sword*, the sword of Gods vengeance, both here and hereafter.

Verf. 19. *He is chastned also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.*] This is mentioned, as another way whereby God speaks to man, as he had said before, verf. 14. to wit, by the rod of correction, when God strikes a man with some sore sicknesse; so that *the multitude of his bones*, that is, every bone in his body (as many as they are) is tortured with pain. And this Elihu the rather mentions, because this was Jobs case, who had often complained that his very bones were pierced with pain, as we may see chap. 30. 17, and in many other places.

Verf. 20. *So that his life abhorreth bread, &c.*] That is, his soul, as it is expressed in the next clause, *and his soul dainty meat*; and the soul, we know, is usually put for the whole man: and so the meaning is only this, that the poor sick man abhorres all meat, even the daintiest that can be brought him.

Verf. 22. *His soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.*] Some by *the destroyers* understand those paroxysms and pangs that seise upon men when they are dying, and are usually counted the forerunners of death; others, the angels, whom God many times imployes in cutting off men by deadly plagues, as in that pestilence wherewith so many were so suddenly destroyed in Davids time, 2 Sam. 24. 16; others, the worms, or whatever else there is in the grave, that consumes the dead bodies that are laid there; and others again conceive it is meant of the devils, who are wont to drag the souls of wicked men to hell, when they die, and to torment them there. But I conceive it is best to comprehend therein all that in death tends to the destroying of men.

Verf. 23. *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, &c.*] Some understand this of an angel sent from heaven to this sick man, (and indeed in those times God did usually make known his mind to men by his holy angels,) to wit, that if of those thousands of angels that attend upon God, there be any one sent to him as a messenger, and interpreter of Gods will, *to shew unto man his uprightness*, then he will be gracious unto him, &c. But it is farre better understood of a prophet or man of God, sent unto him from God, *an interpreter*, that is, one whose office and work it is to declare the will of God to men, and that is then accordingly to make known to the sick man the purpose of God in laying that affliction upon him, *one of a thousand*, that is, one that will skilfully and faithfully deal with him, (and amongst a thousand such a one is hardly to be found,) *to shew unto man his uprightness*, that is, to shew to the poor sick man, how he must come to be presented righteous and upright in the sight of God, to wit, that he must acknowledge his sins, lay hold upon the promises of mercy made unto him in Christ, and so repent and turn unto the Lord. I know there are some that do otherwise expound the last clause, namely thus, *to shew unto man his righteousness*, that is, to clear it to the sick man, that God hath dealt justly and equally with him. But our Translation will hardly bear that Exposition.

Verf. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ranfome.*] This some understand of the messenger, the interpreter mentioned in the foregoing verse, to wit, that he is "gracious to the sick man,

and saith, namely in his prayer to God for him, *Deliver him from going into the pit; I have found a ransom.* For though the last words can hardly be applyable to man, yet the meaning they say is only this, that the man of God alledgeth, that knowing by the revelation of Gods spirit, that there is a ransom in the blood of the promised Mediatour for poor sinners, he knew also that God would be pleased to accept of this ransom in the behalf of this penitent sick man. But I conceive it is farre better understood of God, to wit, that he is gracious to this sick man, when his messenger hath brought him to repent, and believe in Christ: and that thereupon *he saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit;* the meaning whereof may be, either first that God determines, that he shall be delivered from the grave whereinto he was dropping, and withall from the pit of eternall destruction; or secondly, that he gives charge to the angel sent to him, that he should deliver him from his dangerous sicknesse; or thirdly, that he enjoynes the man of God to deliver him, that is, to assure him, that he shall be delivered, both from his present sicknesse, and from hell hereafter; and that because God hath found out a ransom for him, which can be meant of no other but the blood of Christ.

Verf. 25. *His flesh shall be fresher then a childs, &c.*] To wit, By reason of the cure of his sicknesse, and the reviving of his spirit by his assurance of Gods love to him in Christ.

Verf. 26. *He shall pray unto God, &c.*] Whether this be meant of the sick mans praying before or after his recovery, (which is questionable, though the last be more probable) it is mentioned, doubtlesse, as a comfortable effect of the sick mans reconciliation with God, to wit, that then he can go with confidence to the throne of Gods grace, which before he could not; and that then God shall be *favourable unto him* in hearing his prayers, which before he regarded not. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *and he shall see his face with joy;* that is, he shall with boldnesse and comfort look God in the face, who before was a terrour to him: (though some I know understand it otherwise, to wit, that God shall look chearfully and favourably upon him.) And then the last words alledge again the cause of this comfortable change: *for he will render unto man his righteousness;* that is, the righteousness which he had lost by sin, shall be restored in Christ; or rather, God shall deal with him according to that present righteousness of his, when upon his faith and repentance he is reconciled unto God.

Verf. 27. *He looketh upon men, &c.*] That is, God looketh upon men, as desiring, longing, and waiting for mens repentance and salvation: *and if any say, I have sinned, &c. and it profited me not,* that is, all the good I got by it was, that I provoked God to lay his hand in great displeasure upon me; then (as it follows verf. 28.) *he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light;* the meaning whereof is principally, that God will deliver such a man from the grave, that he may again live comfortably here in this world; though it may be also extended to the deliverance of his soul out of hell, and bringing him to the light of Gods glory in heaven. But now if we read these verses as they are in the mar-

gin of our Bibles, *He shall look upon men, and say, I have sinned, &c. He hath delivered my soul from the pit, &c.* then they contain the sick mans confession of Gods dealing with him; to wit, that being recovered, he looks upon others with pity, and out of a desire of their conversion should acknowledge how he had sinned, and did thereby bring Gods hand upon him, and how upon his repentance God shewed him mercy again.

Verf. 29. *Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, &c.*] That is, all these means doth he use, many times bringing man to the grave, and then raising him up again; and all this he doth to save him from death temporall and eternall, as it follows in the next verse, *To bring back his soul from the pit, &c.*

Verf. 31. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verse desired liberty, that he might yet farther speak his mind to Job, he interposeth this, that notwithstanding, if Job had any thing to answer to what he had said, he was very willing he should so doe: *Speak, saith he, for I desire to justify thee;* that is, I had rather thou shouldest be justified, then condemned, if thou art able to clear thy self.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Verf. 1. **F***urthermore Elihu answered.*] That is, when he perceived that Job made no reply, (for it may well be that he began now to be convinced) he proceeded to answer what Iob had formerly spoken.

Verf. 2. *Hear my words, O ye wise men, &c.*] Hereby Elihu sought to imply, first, that what he had to say, the wisest of them might with profit hear: and secondly, that he would not be his own judge, but was willing to appeal to the standers by, at least to those that were wise amongst them, concerning the truth of that which he should say.

Verf. 3. *For the ear tryeth words, &c.*] As if he had said, For that which Iob formerly said is true, that *the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat:* see the Note chap. 12. 11.

Verf. 4. *Let us chuse to us judgement, &c.*] That is, Let us not judge rashly; but let us state the question rightly, and then argue the cause: not with angry language, nor by alledging any thing, wherein our consciences may tell us we do misinterpret Iobs words, or merely cavill with him, or build upon uncertain conjectures; but by clear and certain truths; and so let us chuse and upon good deliberation resolve upon that which is just and equall: *Let us know among our selves what is good,* namely, whether Iob or I be in the right.

Verf. 5. *For Iob hath said, I am righteous, &c.*] The same in effect he objected against Iob in the foregoing chapter verf. 9. (concerning which see the Note there.) As for the following clause, *and God hath taken away my judgement,* this we find Iob spake in expresse tearms chap. 27. 2. But yet, neither did Iob intend thereby to charge God with punishing him unjustly, (concerning which see also the Note there;) for then he had directly blasphemed, and the Devil had gotten his

his will of him : nor do I think that Elihu intended to charge him with this blasphemy, as his friends had done, as we may see chap. 8. 2, 3. and elsewhere. For Elihu judged more favourably of him, and had professed before, chap. 32. 14, that he would not answer him as they had done. No; all that Elihu chargeth him with is, that by his pleading the innocency of his life with such vehemency, and by his impatient complaints of his sufferings, and of the Lords not discovering to him the reason thereof, he did in a manner imply, that God had dealt unjustly with him.

Verf. 6. *Should I lie against my right? &c.*] Some Expositours say, that Elihu in these words chargeth Job with saying, that God would have had him lie against his right, or that unlesse he would doe so he might not be suffered to speak. But methinks he doth plainly allude to that which Job had said, chap. 27. 4, 5, 6, where he protested that he would not against his conscience condemn himself. As for the next clause, *my wound is incurable without transgression*, that Elihu seems to have gathered from that which Job said, chap. 6. 4, and 9. 17; concerning which see the severall Notes there.

Verf. 7. *What man is like Iob, who drinketh up scorning like water?*] That is, who scorneth and reproacheth not man only, but God too, with as much greedinesse and delight, as thirsty men drink water, which neither for the costlinesse of it, nor for the strength of it, they need drink sparingly. The like expression we had before chap. 15. 16. concerning which see the Note there. Yet I know there are divers learned Expositours that understand this otherwise; to wit, that there was never man like Iob, of such wisdom, and gravity, &c. that by speaking such absurd and ridiculous things, did so expose himself to the scorn and derision of all men, as if he were glad to swallow down all the reproaches and scorn that could be cast upon him.

Verf. 8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, &c.*] That is, Who carrieth himself so, as if he would be numbred amongst wicked men; because he treads in their steps, and useth their language, whilst in the mean season he stands so much upon his innocency and righteousness.

Verf. 9. *For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself in God.*] This Elihu would gather from those words of Iob, wherein he maintained that God doth often afflict the righteous as sorely as the wicked, and prosper the wicked as much or more then the righteous, as we may see chap. 9. 22, and 21. 7, &c. as likewise from those complaints of his, that God had dealt so severely with him, who had yet endeavoured in all things to approve himself to God. Yet I conceive the utmost that Elihu intended here to charge upon Iob was, that by uttering these things in such an impatient manner, he seemed to think that it was no advantage to a man to live holily and righteously; not that he did indeed think so, or had in expresse terms said so. Many things Iob had spoken, wherein he had so clearly expressed his hope and confidence in God, that Elihu could not have so hard an opinion of him: only God would have Iob reproved thus sharply, that he might see how much evil there was in his murmuring against God.

Verf. 13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?*] This is added, to prove what he had said in the foregoing verses, namely, that there was no possibility that God should deal unjustly with any man. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? &c.* as if he should have said, God is of himself the supreme Iudge and Governour of the whole world, as being the sole Creatour of it; he is not appointed thereto by any other Power that is above him, who should give him in charge how he should govern the earth, nor hath he any counsellor; but as in making he alone disposed all things as they are, so he only disposeth of them by way of Providence and government, and therefore he cannot judge unjustly. And indeed the inference is unquestionable, upon these three grounds. First, because there being none above him, there is no danger lest he should deal unjustly, through being constrained or overawed by any higher power, as amongst men inferiour magistrates often doe. Secondly, because if there were none to give him a charge over the earth, there was none whom he could offend in not following his charge; he was absolute in his power, and might doe with his own creatures what he pleased, there being none that could say, Why have you done thus? I gave you no such command. And thirdly, because the supreme Iudge of the world, from whom there can be no appeal, must needs be just by his nature and essence; or else there were no assurance but that all things might be brought into utter confusion.

Verf. 14. *If he set his heart upon man, &c.*] To wit, to observe exactly all that he doth amisse, or, to destroy and cut him off: *if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath*, that is, if he call back to himself that soul, life and breath, which he, as the fountain of life, hath severally imparted to the sons of men; (the phrase here used is much like that Psal. 26. 9. *Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men;*) all mankind must needs then perish at once, and turn to dust, as it follows in the next verse, *All flesh shall perish together, &c.* But why is this here alledged, how easily God can in an instant destroy all mankind? I answer, farther to clear what was implied in the foregoing verse, by affirming that God had no power above him, that had committed to his charge the government of the world, but that the absolute sovereignty thereof as he was the Creatour of it was solely in himself, namely, that God is most just, and cannot do wrong to any man whatsoever; (and that upon the three grounds alledged in the foregoing Note,) as likewise also that he is infinitely good and gracious, and cannot be cruel and tyrannicall, as is evident by his gracious supporting and continuing all things in their being so long as he hath done, whereas he could so easily in a moment bring all to nothing.

Verf. 16. *If now thou hast understanding, hear this; hearken to the voice of my words.*] As if he had said, As thou art therefore an understanding man, Iob, observe this that I have spoken, and hearken to what I shall farther say.

Verf. 17. *Shall even he that hateth rights, govern?*] That is, If God be not just, how can he govern the world? It is not possible that God should be unjust, who is by his Nature and Essence the Iudge of all the world, and hath absolute sovereignty

raignty over all things, and is to punish those that deal unjustly with others. See the foregoing Notes, vers. 13, 14.

Vers. 18. *Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? &c.*] That is, It is a thing both unseemly and unsafe to revile Kings and Princes, though men as our selves, because God hath made them his Vicegerents, and they are armed with such power to take vengeance on them that do it; and must it not needs be then an act of much more boldnesse & danger to speak evil of God himself? This doth not therefore prove, that those that are lawfully called thereto, may not in a decent manner tell the greatest of princes of their faults: for the prophets of God have done so to kings, Hof. 1. 1; and there is a woe denounced against them, that in a way of flattery do call evil good, Esa. 5. 20. All that can be rightly inferred from hence is, that it is dangerous to tax earthly kings of the evil they have done, or at most that it is not lawfull to revile them, which indeed the law of God forbids, Exod. 22. 28.

Vers. 20. *In a moment shall they die, &c.*] To wit, the Princes and rich men, of whom he had said, in the foregoing verse, that God accepteth not their persons, nor regardeth them any more then the poor; God destroyes them both alike: and therefore it follows, *and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and passe away;* that is, troubles shall come upon them, and so they shall be surprized with terrors, when they are secure, and think nothing of any danger; *and shall passe away,* to wit, into captivity, or rather into the grave; (for so this phrase is used before, chap. 14. 20.) *and the mighty shall be taken away without hand,* that is, easily or without any humane help. God needeth not raise any armies, or imploy his servants to destroy his enemies, as earthly princes must doe; he can doe it by the ministry of angels; or if he doth but blow upon them, or withdraw the spirit that he hath given them, it is enough.

Vers. 23. *For he will not lay upon man more then right.*] That is, he will not lay to their charge any evil they are not guilty of, or rather, he will not lay upon them any heavier punishment then their iniquities deserve.

Vers. 24. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number.*] This is added to shew, that when God resolves to destroy men, he fears their number no more then their greatnesse.

Vers. 25. *Therefore he knows their work, and he overturneth them in the night, &c.*] That is, Hereby it is evident that he knows their works, and consequently, that according to their deserts he cuts them off on a sudden, when they think not of it, without any warning given, and without trying them after the manner of earthly Judges.

Vers. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*] As if he should have said, Be they never so great, and in place of magistracy, the Lords Vicegerents, yet being wicked men, and he knowing them to be so, (whatever they may say, or others may think to the contrary) he accordingly proceedeth against them as wicked men, and punisheth them openly, that others may take warning.

Vers. 29. *When he giveth quietnesse, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth*

deeth his face, who then can behold him? &c.] Some understand the first clause of Gods giving quietnesse to the oppressed, to wit, that if God will give them rest by cutting off their oppressours, no power of man is able to withstand it: and others again understand it of the Lords giving quietnesse to the oppressours, to wit, that as long as God will have them run on in those waies without molestation, no man shall be able to raise any trouble against them. But I think it is better to understand it generally, that it is not possible to trouble those whom God will have to be quiet, whether it be meant of inward peace of conscience, or of outward peace and tranquillity; as on the contrary, if God hides his countenance in displeasure, it is not possible to turn away his displeasure, that so his face may be beheld with peace and favour: *whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only*; that is, and herein it fares alike, whether it be against one particular person, or against a whole nation. I know that there are some Expositours that do otherwise understand that clause, *and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* namely, that it is not to be expected, that any man will with a favourable countenance behold him, from whom God hides his face; or, that if God will not discover why he punisheth men, no man can find out the reason of it. But the first Exposition I conceive is the best.

Verf. 30. *That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be insnared.*] By the hypocrite here is meant the oppressing King or ruler; and he is so called, because such Princes do usually pretend that they seek only the good and safety of the people, whereas indeed they mind themselves only, and the advancing of their own covetous and ambitious designs, and make use of laws only as snares to entangle the people. Having spoken in the foregoing verse of the unavoidableness of Gods indignation, *whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only*, here he instanceth how and why God is offended, and proceeds accordingly, sometimes against one particular person, namely, when he cutteth off some tyrannizing king; *That, saith he, the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be insnared*: that is, lest the people should be still continually insnared, injured and oppressed, as they had too long before been; or, lest the people should be insnared with a thought that God regards not the wickednesse of men, by seeing such hypocriticall oppressours run on in their base courses without being punished: for so some understand the last clause.

Verf. 33. *Should it be according to thy mind? &c.*] That is, must not God doe any thing, but as you will advise him? must you prescribe God when, in what manner, and how long he shall afflict you? *He will recompence it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse, and not I*: that is, he will render to thee according to the evil thou hast done, whether thou beest pleased or displeased; whether thou dost refuse the punishment he inflicteth, or whether thou dost accept of it, it is all one for that, he will doe what he lists himself; nor must I think of prescribing him what course he shall take with thee: for so those words *and not I* must be understood. Therefore, saith he, *speake what thou knowest*; if thou hast any thing to reply, speak freely.

Verf. 36. *My desire is that Iob may be tryed unto the end, because of his answers for wicke*

wicked men.] That is, because of his answers whereby he hath as it were justified wicked men, to wit, by murmuring against God as they do, or by affirming that good and bad fare alike, and God prospers the one as much as the other. But what is meant by this desire of his, *that Iob may be tryed unto the end*? I answer, that either his desire was, that God would continue his afflictions upon him, till he had gotten the day of him, till he had attained the end for which he afflicted him, namely, till he had brought him upon his knees, and made him confesse his fault, and yield under his hand, (and if we understand it so, the words may well be read, as in the margin, speaking to God, *My father, let Iob be tryed unto the end, &c.*) or else rather, (because it seems somewhat hard that Elihu should tell Job, that his judgement was, that his afflictions should be continued still upon him) that his desire was that Jobs cause should be argued to the utmost, till he had not a word more to say for himself.

Verf. 37. *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, &c.*] To wit, by murmuring and quarrelling against God, when he punisheth him for his sin, and by justifying himself in the evil he hath spoken: *he clappeth his hands amongst us*, to wit, as some expound it, by way of anger and impatience at Gods dealing so hardly with him, or rather, as by way of rejoycing and triumphing; and so the meaning is, that he did openly before all their faces carry himself, as if he had prevailed both against God and his friends in point of justifying himself.

C H A P. XXXV.

Verf. 1. **E** *Lihu spake moreover, and said.*] See the Note chap. 34. 1.

Verf. 2. *Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidest, My righteousness is more then Gods?*] We no where find that Job said this in so many words, nor can it be imagined that Elihu could entertain such a thought of so righteous a man as he took Job to be, that he should be so mad as to think that he was more righteous then God: his meaning therefore was only this, that whilst he did so confidently plead his own righteousness, and so bitterly complain of Gods hard dealing with him, as chap. 19. 6, 7. and chap. 23. 3. and in many other places, it was as much in effect as if he had said, that he was more just then God; which he urgeth, that he might be the more ashamed of his impatience.

Verf. 3. *For thou saidest, what advantage will it be unto thee? &c.*] That is, Thou saidest that it would be no advantage to thee, if thou wert clear from sin; as it follows in the next clause, where this is expressed, as it were, in Jobs own words, and *what profit shall I have if I be cleansed from my sin?* According to the usuall form of interrogations, the first clause should also have been expressed thus, *what advantage will it be unto me?* as is the second, and *what profit shall I have?* &c. but in the Hebrew the persons are thus usually changed. However the meaning is, that because he had said that it would be no benefit to him, though he were never so righteous, God laying his hand as sorely upon the righteous as upon the wicked, herein he made himself more righteous then God. The very same Elihu had charged Job with chap. 34. 9. concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 4. *I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.*] That is, thy three friends,

friends, who by their silence seem now at length to be convinced, and to consent to that which thou hast spoken; or rather, all those that are thy companions in these courses, wherein thou art so faulty, all that shall stand upon such high tearms of justifying themselves, and quarrelling against God, as thou hast done, though they be never so many. This last I conceive Elihu intended, because it is clear, that Eliphaz had alledged the very same thing against Job chap. 22. 2, 3, which Elihu doth here in the following words vers. 6, 7.

Vers. 5. *Look unto the heavens, and see, and behold the clouds that are higher then thou.*] The drift of these words is to imply, first, that by beholding the heavens, and considering the exceeding height thereof, yea even of the clouds, though nothing so high as the heavens, he might see, first, that God was infinite in all his excellencies, and therefore must needs be more righteous then he was; secondly, that in regard God was of such infinite Majesty and glory, it was fit that he should consider the infinite distance and disproportion that was betwixt God and him, and so speak more modestly and reverently of God; and thirdly, that if the heavens be so farre above mans reach, so high above him, that he can scarce see so farre, then must God be above his reach too, who hath the heaven for his throne, Psal. 11. 4. his dwelling-place, 1 Kings 8. 30. yea much rather must God be above his reach, who is infinitely higher then the highest heavens: and so this makes way to that which follows, that man therefore can neither hurt God by his wickednesse, nor benefit God by his righteousness, vers. 6, 7. *If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him?* &c. whereby he intimates to Job, that he had no cause to complain, that his piety towards God and man was not regarded by God, since God received no advantage thereby. The very same argument Eliphaz had used before, chap. 22. 2, 3. concerning which see the Notes there.

Vers. 8. *Thy wickednesse may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.*] That is, thy wickednesse may hurt thy self, or such sinfull poor wretches as thou art, both in regard of their outward condition and spirituall estate; and so also thy righteousness may benefit thy self or others; but they cannot hurt or benefit God. And hereby he intimates, that Job had no cause to complain that his righteousness was not regarded of God, seeing it could be no advantage to him; nor to complain of his punishing him, since God never punished man, because of any harm he had received by him, but because he did not doe what he enjoyned him.

Vers. 9. *By reason of the multitude of oppressions, they make the oppressed cry, &c.*] Some conceive that this is here added, to shew the reason why God often punisheth men, though their wickednesse is no way hurtfull to him; to wit, because it is hurtfull to others, (as he had said in the foregoing verse;) and so for this, as a just judge, he takes vengeance on them. But the better connection of the words to that which went before I conceive to be this, that having said in the foregoing verse, that mans wickednesse may be hurtfull to men, though not to God, he here gives an instance of the hurt that man by his wickednesse doth to others, namely, that tyrants do sorely oppress those that are under their power: and so
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withall he takes occasion to shew, that however the oppressour be unjust, yet God is just, in suffering the oppressed thus to cry under the hand of the oppressours, and not sending them help; and that because though the oppressed howl and take on because of their pressures, *they cry out* (saith he) *by reason of the arm of the mighty*, yet they do not seek to God, as they ought to doe, as is expressed in the following verses. And thus also there is an answer given to that which Job seemed often to complain of, to wit, that God regards not the cries of the oppressed, as we see chap. 24. 12. and in divers other places.

Verf. 10. *But none saith, Where is God my maker, that giveth songs in the night?*] This is alledged as a reason, why though men under oppression do cry out and take on grievously, as was said in the foregoing verse, yet God doth not regard it; (as Elihu saith afterward verf. 12.) to wit, because for the most part they do not say, *Where is God my maker?* &c. the meaning whereof is, either that they are not thankfull to God for the mercies and comforts they enjoy, yea even in the midst of their greatest afflictions; or else, that though they cry and howl because of their misery, yet they do not pray to God for help, (for these words, *Where is God my maker?* seem rather an expression of prayer, then of praise, according to that of Elijah, 2 Kings 2. 14. *where is the Lord God of Elijah?* at least they do not pray unto him in the right manner, according to that expression, Hos. 7. 14. *they have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds;* they do not pray as those that seriously consider that God is their maker, and therefore do believe that God will take care of them, and are willing to submit themselves to his disposing: and that God *giveth songs in the night*; that is, either first, that he only can give joy, even unto singing, in the darkest night of tribulation, stirring them up by his spirit to praise him, when nothing is to be seen to quicken them in this service; or secondly, that in the night season he gives them occasions of rejoycing and praising God, in that he gives them rest, and watcheth over them for their safety, when they are as dead men, not minding God; or thirdly, that he comforteth and cheareth up their spirits, even in the night, when men are most exposed to dangers, and sorrow is wont to lye heaviest upon the heart, and so they take the opportunity of the night season, when they are freest from worldly cares and imployments, with hymns and Psalms to praise God; whence is that of David, Psal. 119. 62. *At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee*, and Psal. 42. 8. *the Lord will command his loving-kindnesse in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me*. I know some Expositours have other thoughts concerning this phrase of Gods giving songs in the night; as that it is meant of Gods causing the cocks to crow, and nightingales to sing in the night; or of his placing the stars to shine in the night, which in their kind do praise God, or stirre up men to praise him; or of Gods giving prophecies and revelations by night, which used afterward to be expressed in songs. But the former Expositions are farre the better.

Verf. 11. *Who teacheth us more then the beasts of the earth, &c.*] To wit, in that he hath endued men with reasonable souls, and accordingly makes known his will to them many severall waies. Now this is mentioned, as another argument, whereby

whereby those that are under oppression should be stirred up to be thankfull to God, or rather with faith to call upon God for help; which if they did not doe, it was no wonder though God did not help them: and that not only because this is a singular blessing to man, above all that God hath done for the other creatures; but also because in this regard man is able to search into the cause of his sufferings, and to use means to appease Gods anger, and not only to doe what beasts may doe, namely, to cry out to no purpose in the sense of the miseries which they lye under.

Verf. 12. *There they cry (but none giveth answer) because of the pride of evil men.* That is, Being crushed by the arm of their mighty oppressours, (as is said before verf. 9. whereto this hath reference) there or then they cry out, because of the pride or insolency of wicked men that thus tyrannize over them; but God regards not their cries.

Verf. 13. *Surely God will not hear vanity, &c.* That is, God will not hear vain ungodly men, men void of all true piety: or, God will not hear vain cries and complaints, or the vain prayers of those that pray not in faith, whose prayers are mere lip-labour, and a mere mocking of God, and therefore no way likely to prevail with God. As for the next clause, *neither will the Almighty regard it*, we may referre it either to such cries and prayers, that God will not mind such vanity; or else to their sufferings, which make them cry and pray, that though they be in never so much misery, he will not regard it.

Verf. 14. *Although thou sayest, thou shalt not see him, &c.* That is, thou shalt not be suffered to appear before him to plead thy cause, (which may have respect to that which Job said chap. 23. 8, 9.) or that thou shalt perish, and shalt never see God come in graciously for thy preservation; (and indeed Job had often complained that God regarded him not, as chap. 30. 20, and in many other places) *yet judgement is before him*, that is, God is exactly just, assure thy self of that; though we may not haply discern it in all he doth, yet he doth nothing unjustly: and *therefore trust thou in him*, that is, pray to him in a right manner, and then wait upon him with assured expectation of a gracious answer.

Verf. 15. *But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.* That is, Because Job prayeth not to God, and trusteth not in God, as he ought to doe, therefore God hath afflicted him in great anger; and yet Job, though he be in so great extremity, understands not Gods meaning herein.

Verf. 16. *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplyeth words without knowledge.* That is, whilst he prayes not, but only complains of his miseries, and all the while justifieth himself, all this is spoken ignorantly, and to no purpose.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Verf. 1. **E** *Lihu also proceeded.*] See the Note chap. 34. 1.

Verf. 2. *Suffer me a little, &c.*] Hereby he intimates, that he would be brief in what he had farther to say for the justifying of God; and that because he had already spoken a long time together.

Verf. 3. *I will fetch my knowledge from asarre, &c.*] As if he should have said, In declaring what I know concerning the Question in hand, namely, whether thou hast done well in charging God for dealing too severely with thee, I will open the matter, as it were, from the very foundations. But yet what he means by these words, *from asarre*, it is not easie to determine. Some think that his meaning was, that he would utter nothing but what by inspiration from God he knew to be so: he would not speak what he in his reason might apprehend to be right, but what he had by speciall enlightning from above, and therefore was sure it was true. And then again, others understand it thus, that he would fetch his proofs for the justifying of God from the eternall nature of God, or from the works of creation, as we see towards the end of this chapter he argues from those meteors of rain, thunder, and lightning, &c. and these things he calls *knowledge from asarre*, either because the things he meant to speak of were of a high nature, farre remote from us, and not easily comprehended by humane reason; or, because they were such things as had been from the first creation, yea (as concerning the nature of God) from all eternity; or, because they might seem to be farre from the matter in question, though indeed they were principles and generall grounds, from whence that truth, which he was to maintain, might be unquestionably concluded and proved. As for the following clause, *and will ascribe righteousness to my maker*; in these words *my maker* Elihu implies, that in regard he had his being from God, he was bound to plead his cause; and withall he might intend thereby, covertly to charge Job with being ungratefully injurious to his Creator.

Verf. 4. *For truly, my words shall not be false; he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.*] This last clause many good Expositours understand of God; and so hold that Elihu doth hereby put Job in mind, either that he had to deal with God, who was *perfect in knowledge*, as being omniscient, who could not therefore through any mistake deal unjustly with him; or that God, who was *perfect in knowledge*, spake now to him by him, that he would not speak any thing of his own head, but what he received by inspiration from God, in whose stead he now spake unto him. But more generally it is held, that Elihu doth modestly here speak of himself in the third person, as the Apostle also doth 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3. *He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee*; as if he should have said, You have one to argue with you that is sound in judgement, and sincere in his intentions towards you, one that understands the cause we have in hand throughly, and that will in all things deal uprightly with you.

Verf. 5. *Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and*
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wise.

wisdom.] How Gods justice may be proved from his power and wisdom, see in the Note chap. 9. 4. Here these two are joyned together, *God is mighty, and despiseth not any*, to shew, that as he needs not fear those that are great, so neither doth he despise either great or small, because of his own supereminent greatnesse, he makes not so light esteem of any, as therefore to afflict them causelessly, or not to care what injury he doth them. And herein also it may well be, that Elihu had respect to some speeches of Jobs, wherein he might apprehend that Job had complained of God, that he carried all by his absolute power, and that by reason of the dread thereof he could not plead his cause before him; as chap. 10. 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppresse? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* and chap. 30. 21. *Thou art become cruell to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thy self against me;* and in divers other places.

Verf. 6. *He preserveth not the life of the wicked; but giveth right to the poor.*] That is, He doth not safeguard them in favour, as esteeming them precious in his sight, though he may see cause to keep them alive for a time; but he pleads the poors cause against them, though a while he may let them be oppressed.

Verf. 7. *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, &c.*] That is, He never forgets, nor forsakes them: *but with Kings are they on the throne, yea he doth establish them for ever*; that is, he continues them even unto death in those places of dignity whereto he hath advanced them, and often too their children after them. As for the last clause, *and they are exalted*, the meaning of that is, either that thus they are exalted, maugre all opposition that may be made against them; or, that being thus advanced, they rise in power and glory still more and more. Some understand it of their exaltation to heavenly glory after death, and others of their being puffed up in their minds and spirits: but the former Expositions are more probable.

Verf. 8. *And if they be bound in fetters, &c.*] That is, If the righteous, whether those that God had exalted or others, come to be streightned with affliction. It is probable that he alludes to that expression of Jobs, *Thou puttest my feet in the stocks*, chap. 13. 27.

Verf. 12. *But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, &c.*] That is, God shall slay them in his anger; *and they shall die without knowledge*, that is, in their folly, not knowing why Gods hand is upon them; or for their folly, because they would not learn by Gods corrections. Yet most probably it is thought by some, that Elihu still speaks here of the just, mentioned before verf. 7. who indeed may be cut off by death for their folly, according to that of the Apostle 1 Cor. 11. 30, 31, 32. *for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*; and that he speaks not of the wicked till the following verse.

Verf. 13. *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, they grow more and more enraged against God. But rather the meaning is, that they by their obstinacy and sinning more and more, yea even in their afflictions, do treasure up wrath to themselves against the day of wrath: *they cry not when he bindeth them*; that is, they call not upon God when he afflicts them, as not acknowledging that God doth punish them for their sins,

sins, or being every way of irreligious and profane spirits.

Verf. 14. *They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.*] Or, *among the Sodomites.* The meaning is, that their life is cut off after the same manner, as those are cut off that are most hateful to God and man, as being most abominably wicked; namely, that they are punished with as much severity, and are cut off by some vile and shameful death, and that in their young years. And indeed some Expositours conceive that this last is solely intended in these words; and so they conceive that the same thing that is affirmed in the first clause, *they die in youth*, is repeated again in other terms in the second clause, *and their life is among the unclean*, that is, they are cut off amongst such as themselves, wanton youngsters, that live in all kind of uncleanness. And some think also, that Elihu hath reference in these words to the destruction of Sodom.

Verf. 17. *But thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, &c.*] That is, thou hast carried thy self as wicked men use to doe, thy course hath been just like theirs; or, thou hast judged as wicked men use to doe, in censuring the waies of Gods Providence towards thee. It seems to be the same in effect with that which he had said before, chap. 34. 8. that Job went in company with the workers of iniquity: whereupon he adds, *judgement and justice take hold on thee*; as if he should have said, you see what you get by speaking so desperately of God; the just indignation of God hath already seized upon thee.

Verf. 18. *Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke.*] That is, Because thou hast shown such wrath and indignation against God; or rather, Because, though God be very long-suffering and patient, yet there is wrath with God, as well as mercy and patience; or, because Gods wrath is already broken forth upon thee, take heed that thou dost not provoke him farther, even to the cutting of thee off.

Verf. 19. *Will he esteem thy riches? no not gold, nor all the forces of strength.*] That is, As thou canst not by thy wealth, so neither by any force or strength be delivered, when once thou art cut off, or when once God hath determined to cut thee off.

Verf. 20. *Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.*] There are severall Expositions given of these words, which being considered apart by themselves the words would well enough bear: as first, that Elihu counsels Job that he should not desire the night, as thieves and robbers do, that he might doe mischief therein, when poor men are usually cut off in their places, by those that unexpectedly break in upon them: secondly, that he adviseth him not to desire the night of other mens afflictions and tribulations, that taking advantage thereof he should cut them off in the places where they live: thirdly, that he calls upon him not to desire the night, as thinking to find thereby some ease in his miseries, since there is no looking for ease, as long as God is angry with him; and God even in a night doth often cut off whole nations, at least many people together, and therefore may easily cut off him; and fourthly, that he wills him not to desire the night, that is, not to desire to know the night, when people are cut off in their place; not curiously to enquire into the cause of that judgement of God,

when in a night sometimes whole nations or multitudes of people are cut off in their place, they need not be driven forth, or scattered abroad into strange countries, they melt away in their own place: and hereby he would intimate, that Job should not make so strange of it, nor be so eager to know, why he being a good man should be so sorely afflicted. But because in the foregoing verses Elihu had warned Job to take heed, that he did not provoke God utterly to cut him off, therefore I rather think this to be the meaning of the words, *Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place*; that is, *Desire not death*, which is the common passage of all men, and by the stroke whereof men are utterly cut off, and so if they be not in the better condition do perish eternally: as if he had said, so farre you are from fearing Gods cutting you off, that you desire it; but take heed of this, &c.

Verf. 21. *Take heed, regard not iniquity, &c.*] That is, affect not this murmuring against God, and desiring death, and quarrelling against his proceedings: *for this hast thou chosen rather then affliction*; to wit, in that he chose to contend with God, rather then patiently to bear his afflictions.

Verf. 22. *Behold, God exalteth by his power, &c.*] This may be understood two severall waies: to wit, either that God exalteth and magnifyeth himself or his works by his power, that is, that by the manifestation of his almighty power God sheweth himself to be a great God, and his works appear exceeding glorious; and then the drift of this clause is to put Job in mind, that therefore there is no reasoning nor contending with him: or else rather, that God doth often by his great power exalt those that are afflicted and cast down; and then the drift of the words is, to intimate to Job, that God was able to exalt him, and that if ever he were raised again from his low condition, it was God that must doe it; in regard whereof it was fitter that he should humble himself before God, and seek his favour, rather then quarrell against him for that which he had done to him. And then in the next clause it is said, *who teacheth like him?* either because God being omniscient, and knowing all things of himself, must needs teach better then man that knoweth but in part, and as he receives from others; or, because God enlightneth the mind, and effectually teacheth the heart, which no man can doe; or, because God teacheth men by the afflictions he layes upon them: and then the drift of this last clause is to imply, that as God is great in power, so he is of incomprehensible wisdom, and that men should content themselves with that which God teacheth, and not search into those things which are above their reach; and especially, that it was a mere folly to murmur against any of Gods proceedings, as if man could teach God how to govern the world; and that Job might learn much by the afflicting hand of God, if the fault were not in himself, yea that particular lesson, that none could raise him but God, was clearly taught him, in that all the while he was so impatient, he was still kept in such a helpless condition.

Verf. 23. *Who hath enjoyed him his way?*] This is alledged to prove that therefore none can controll or condemn what he doth; concerning which see the Note chap. 34, 13.

Verf. 24.

Verf. 24. *Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold.*] That is, In stead therefore of searching into Gods secrets, busie thy self rather in magnifying those works which lye open to every mans view: and this may be meant of the works of God in generall, or of the heaven in particular, the meteors, rain and thunder and lightning, whereof he speaks in the following verses.

Verf. 25. *Every man may see it, man may behold it afarre off.*] That is, the heavens; or it may be better understood of all the works of God in generall, to wit, that men may behold them, even those that are afarre off, though indeed they cannot perfectly understand them.

Verf. 26. *Behold, God is great, and we know him not, &c.*] As if he had said, This you will find by observing diligently the works of God, to wit, that God is incomprehensibly great, and that therefore it is not for man to blame any thing that God doth.

Verf. 27. *For he maketh small the drops of water, &c.*] That is, He maketh the rain (which is by the heat of the Sun drawn up in vapours from the earth and sea) to distill down by degrees in round small drops, according to the proportion of the vapours that goe up; and this is mentioned, as a work which we are not able to comprehend. See the Note chap. 26. 8.

Verf. 29. *Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his Tabernacle?*] That which man cannot perfectly understand in *the spreadings of the clouds* may be, either how farre a cloud will spread when it riseth, or how the clouds come to be spread out in so vast an extent all the heavens over, and that many times in a very different manner, some being clouds without water, others yielding soft and gentle rain, others pouring forth violent and stormy showres, some bringing winds with them, others frost, or hail, or snow; and then by *the noise of his Tabernacle*, is meant the roaring of the winds or thunder above in the clouds, Gods Tabernacle or pavilion, as it is called 2 Sam. 22. 12, of which see the Note there.

Verf. 30. *Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottome of the sea.*] This verse is diversly expounded. Some understand it plainly thus, that God spreadeth his light over the clouds, Gods Tabernacle above, as they are called in the foregoing verse, and withall covereth the bottome of the sea with waters beneath. Others conceive that El hu speaks here of the sudden changes that God often makes in the air; to wit, that sometimes, the thick clouds being scattered, *he spreadeth his light* all over his Tabernacle above, and maketh the clouds that are there to be lightsome and bright; and then at other times with clouds gathered together he covereth the bottome of the sea, that is, he covereth all things with darknesse even to the bottome of the sea: a work the more wonderfull, because the same Sun that dispels the clouds at one time, doth also gather them at another. And lastly, some give this to be the meaning of the words, that God by the light of the Sun, or by the flashes of lightening, which he scattereth abroad in the clouds, doth not only enlighten the clouds above, but also causeth it to pierce through the waters, even to the covering or overspreading of the bottome of the sea with its light. And this seems best to agree with our Translation.

Verf. 31. *For by them he judgeth the people, he giveth meas in abundance.*] That is, By these clouds, causing showres and thunder and lightening, God both judgeth, that is, punisheth the wickednesse of men, to wit, by great fouds, which often destroy not only the fruits of the earth, but likewise men and cattel, and also moistneth the earth at other times, and makes it yield an abundant encrease for the nourishment of man.

Verf. 33. *The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattel also concerning the vapour.*] That is, the noise of the wind or thunder in the clouds above foresheweth the showres of rain that are coming; the cattel also by a naturall instinct discern the vapours ascending, and so foresee, and by severall actions and motions do as it were give warning to men of the wet weather that approacheth.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Verf. 1. **A**T *this also my heart trembleth, &c.*] To wit, at the consideration of that which he meant next to speak of, which is concerning the thunder, verf. 2. *Hear attentively the noise of his voice, &c.* Indeed this may have reference likewise to that which went before in the former chapter, especially if that which is said there verf. 29. and 33. concerning the noise in Gods Tabernacle, be meant of the thunder. But this word (*also*) *At this also my heart trembleth*, seems rather to imply, that he meant to alledge another special work of God, full of terrour, whereof he had not spoken before.

Verf. 3. *He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightening unto the ends of the earth.*] That is, he causeth the thunder and lightening to passe from one end of the heaven to the other; as Christ saith Matth. 24. 27. *The lightening cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West.* Yet withall those words, *He directeth it*, seem also to hint to us, that the thunder and lightening are guided by the special providence of God whithersoever they goe.

Verf. 4. *After it a voice roareth, &c.*] For the lightening is seen before the thunder is heard, though the thunder be before it: *he thundreth with the voice of his excellency*; that is, with an excellent voice, or with a voice that clearly discovers his transcendent excellency: *and he will not stay them when his voice is heard*; that is, he stayes not the lightnings, when once it begins to thunder, but they are presently with us before the clap of thunder is heard; or, he will not stay the storms of rain, (whereof he had spoken before chap. 36. 27, 28.) but immediately after the thunder, they come pouring down in a most vehement manner.

Verf. 5. *God thundreth marvellously with his voice, &c.*] This word *marvellously* may not only have reference to that marvellous noise that the thunder makes, but also to those strange effects of the thunder and lightening observed by many; as that it will melt a sword in the sheath, or mony in a purse, and neither hurt the sheath nor the purse, break the bones in a mans body, and kill a child in the womb, and yet not the least sign of hurt to be seen outwardly, and many other effects of the like nature: To which also some limit the following words, *great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.* But that I conceive must be extended also

also to that which follows, concerning snow and frost: for though philosophers do give the reason of all these things, yet they do it but imperfectly, and there is much uncertainty in many things they say; and, besides, why these things are done at such a time and in such a place, rather than another, they can never give a reason.

Verf. 6. *For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth, &c.*] This expression, *Be thou on the earth*, may seem to imply, not only the coming of the snow down upon the earth, but also its usuall lying for a time upon the earth before it melts away: likewise to the small rain, and the great rain of his strength; that is, the great mighty showres of rain, which sometimes fall, or those violent storms which discover the mighty strength of that God that sends them.

Verf. 7. *He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.*] There is a like expression before concerning Gods sealing up the stars, chap. 9. 7. concerning which see the Note there. The meaning of this here is, that God by covering the earth with snow, or by sending such tempestuous weather, as is before mentioned, doth wholly take men off from their labour; being driven home for shelter, there he lodgeth them, and locketh or sealeth them up fast, so that they cannot stirre abroad to follow their employments: and this he doth that all men may know his work, that is, that all men may hereby see and know what God is able to doe, who can thus at his pleasure take men off from their busineses, and make them wait upon him, till he is pleased to set them at liberty again.

Verf. 10. *By the breath of God frost is given, &c.*] That is, By the cold winds, which God doth as it were breath upon the earth, he causeth frosts; (and this he saith in reference to what he had said in the foregoing verse concerning the winds, *Out of the South cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the North;*) and the breadth of the waters is streightned, that is, the waters are frozen, and so being congealed into ice, and as it were bound together in a narrower compasse, they seem to be dried up, and take not up so much room as they did before.

Verf. 11. *Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud, &c.*] That is, the black full clouds: and it may be said, that God wearieth the thick clouds, whilst by them he watereth the earth, either first, because they are carried about to water the ground from one place to another, or secondly, because they goe laden with such abundance of rain within them, or thirdly, because by watering they are spent and wasted, even as the strength of a man will wast and consume, when he is wearied with much labour. As for the following clause, *he scattereth his bright cloud*, though some understand it thus, that by the wind, or by the beams of the Sun, he scattereth the clouds from whence flashes of lightening did before break forth; yet I rather take the meaning to be this, that by the wind or Sun he soon scattereth the white, empty, lightsome cloud, that it quickly vanisheth and comes to nothing.

Verf. 12. *And it is turned round about by his counsels, &c.*] That is, By the wise determinate counsels of God, and not by chance, is the cloud carried round about the earth, or rather whirled about, sometimes one way and sometimes another:

that they may doe whatsoever he commandeth them; that is, that these clouds, and the hail, rain, snow, &c. therein, may doe what God appoints them.

Verf. 13. *He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.*] To wit, the cloud, together with the showres and storms it brings along with it. It is not easie to distinguish the two last clauses in this verse, namely, where it is said that God causeth these things to come, *or for his land, or for mercy.* Some by *his land* understand that part of the earth which is not inhabited, in which none therefore challenge an interest, but the Lord only: and so they make the meaning to be this, that sometimes God causeth these showres to come *for his land*, those parts that are not inhabited; and sometimes *for mercy*, that is, in mercy to man, when he sends them to make the earth fruitfull where men dwell. Others say, that God causeth them to come *for his land*, when he sends them to moisten and fatten the earth, which is the Lords, as is all the fulnesse thereof, but more out of that common respect that he hath to all his creatures, then out of any respect to the wicked inhabitants, that are no way worthy that God should mind them; and that he causeth them to come *for mercy*, when he sends them in pity and mercy to men, upon their humbling of themselves before him. Again, others hold that then God is said to send these showres *for his land*, when he sends them in an ordinary way for the watering of the earth, and to make it fruitfull; and that then God is said to send them *for mercy*, either when he sends them in times of drought, taking pity of men in their misery, to restore again to them the fruits of the earth, or at least a little to refresh them, and allay their misery, or when he sends them in some other way of mercy, as to cool and cleanse the air, or any other such like favour.

Verf. 14. *Hearken unto this, O Iob; stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.*] That is, consider seriously of these mighty works of God, and think whether it be fit that such a poor Creature, as thou art, should murmur against so great a God, and whether it be possible for thee to comprehend his secret counsels, that canst not comprehend his ordinary works.

Verf. 15. *Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?*] As if he should have said, Wert thou of counsell with God from all eternity, when he decreed and determined how these things should be? (namely, the wondrous works mentioned in the foregoing verse, or the clouds and meteors, rain, snow, hail, &c. formerly spoken of) or when in time he did actually order and dispose of them, that so thou shouldst understand in what manner and to what end they are done? As for the particular instance that is added in the next words, *and caused the light of his cloud to shine?* either it must be understood of the lightening, to wit, that he did not know how out of such a thick, watry, cold cloud so many flashes of lightening should break forth; or of the light of the Sun, how that breaks forth through the clouds; or of those transparent lightsome clouds, which are sometimes in the skie, how they are gathered and ordered by the mighty power of God. For though some learned Expositours understand this of the rain-bow, yet that seems to me of all the least probable.

Verf. 16. *Dost thou know the ballancings of the clouds? &c.*] That is, How God hath

hath caused the clouds, which are oft very great and ponderous, to hang in the liquid air round about under the heavens, as in an even and equall ballance? As for the following words, *the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge*, by the mention therein made of Gods perfect knowledge, he intimates, that though God knoweth these things exactly, yet, alas, it is little or nothing which man can know of them.

Verf. 17. *How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the South wind?*] That is, whence it is that the South wind, that usually brings calm and still weather with it for the refreshing of the earth, doth make thy garments warm about thee, rather than any other wind.

Verf. 18. *Hast thou with him spread out the skie, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glasse?*] That is, like a looking-glasse of molten, polished brasse: See Exod. 38. 8. The skie is said to be *strong*, not because it is of a hard, massy, elementall thicknesse, but because it is of a solid substance, not subject in its own nature to wear and wast away, and especially because it stands firm and fast by its own strength, not having any thing else to support it: and it is said to be *as a molten looking-glasse*, because it is transparent and bright. Now the drift of Elihu in demanding of Job, whether he helped God in spreading out the skie at its first Creation, is to imply, that unlesse it were so, he could not exactly know the manner how it was done, and the causes of its strength and brightnesse; and that therefore there was no more likelihood, that he should know whence it is, that the skie, being of so thin and transparent a substance, should yet withall be so firm and strong, then that he had any hand with God in spreading it at first over our heads.

Verf. 19. *Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darknesse.*] As if he should say, Since you would seem so wise, and to know so much above others, as that you dare complain of Gods government, and the dispensations of his providence, and desire so earnestly that you may plead your cause before God, teach us, I pray you, how we should plead in this kind for our selves or others, or wherein we should object any thing against Gods; or, teach us what we should in your stead say in your defence, (which I like the best) of those many arguments, wherewith you say you could fill your mouth (chap. 23. 4;) let us hear but one of them, that we may alledge it on your behalf: for alas we professe, that through the ignorance and blindnesse of our minds, we are no way able to comprehend his works, and therefore must needs say that we know not how to alledge any thing by way of pleading against any of his proceedings; or, we cannot imagine any thing that can be said in the defence of your murmurings against God.

Verf. 20. *Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.*] Some understand this as spoken in reference to what Elihu had spoken concerning the meteors, *Shall it be told him that I speak?* &c. as if he had said, Who can or dares undertake before God to give a reason of these things, whereof I have spoken? He that should undertake it, would be swallowed up in seeking to comprehend the unsearchable wisdom that is in these works. And much more

then is that man sure to be overwhelmed with Gods glory, that shall search into his secret counsels. But the words in our Translation will hardly bear this Exposition. Rather they are added in reference to that which he said in the foregoing verse, *Teach us what we shall say unto him? &c.* And so the first clause, *Shall it be told him that I speak?* may be understood, either after the manner of judiciall proceedings, Shall it be told him that at such a time I will plead the cause I have undertaken? or else simply of some mans reporting to God, that he pleaded against the proceedings of Gods Providence: and accordingly the drift of Elihu in these words may be to imply, either first, that none would dare to make report to God of what he should say, if he should speak any thing by way of pleading against God, *Shall it be told him that I speak?* No doubtlesse, no man would dare to doe this for me, which I dare not doe my self; or secondly, that if he should speak, as Job had done, by way of blaming any of Gods dealings, he might well be afraid, lest the Lord should hear of it; or thirdly, that the complaints and murmurings of so base a creature as man is, would not be found with God worth regarding; (and this I like the best) *Shall it be told him that I speak?* as if he should say, Yes, it were pity else: as if it should be thought worthy to be carried to a king, that some base beggar, that were withall a very Idiot, had found fault with something in the kings governing of his kingdome. But however the following clause is clear, *If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up;* for the meaning of that is plainly this, that if any man should thus undertake to plead against God, or but to report what another man hath so pleaded, he would soon be confounded and overwhelmed with Gods Majesty and glory. Now all this tends to shew Job his error in quarrelling against Gods proceedings with him, and desiring in such a peremptory manner, that he might be admitted to plead his cause before God.

[Vers. 21. *And now men see not the bright light that is in the clouds; but the wind passeth and cleanseth them, &c.*] It is very hard to determine what the drift of the words is in this and the following verse, and how they depend upon that which went before. First, some hold, that having said in the foregoing verse, that the man must needs be swallowed up that dares to argue the case with God, here Elihu shews, that the very cause why some men are so overbold to contend with God is, because they do not consider the mighty works of God, as he had advised Job to doe, *And now men see not the bright light, &c.* as if he should have said, And now the reason of mens overdaring in this kind is, because they do not duly observe those wonderfull works of God before mentioned, as of *the bright light that is in the clouds*, namely, whence it is that some clouds are so bright and lightsome, and of so transparent a substance, that the light of the Sun doth so easily shine through them; and so likewise *how the wind passeth and cleanseth them*, that is, cleanseth the sky of them, or cleanseth them of that black and watry mixture, that was formerly in them; and how (vers. 22.) *fair weather cometh out of the North*, to wit, by means of the North-wind, that scatters the clouds and clears the air. And now those that hold this to be the drift and dependance of these words, do accordingly understand the last clause vers. 22. thus, *with God is terrible Majesty*, as if he had said,

said, Did men consider seriously of these great works of God, they would conclude that God is so dreadfull in Majesty, that it is not fit that men should carry themselves so boldly towards him. Again secondly, others will have these words to depend upon that which Elihu had said vers. 18: for having spoken there of Gods stretching forth the skie, *which is strong, and as a molten looking-glasse*, and having then inserted that passage in the two next verses, as it were to put Iob in mind how impossible it was to contend with a God that could doe such mighty things; here again Elihu returns to adde somewhat more of these mighty works of God, to wit, that sometimes men can hardly see the light of the Sun, by reason of the interposition of thick clouds, *And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds*, but that on a sudden oftentimes the winds come and scatter them, *but the wind passeth and cleanseth them; fair weather cometh out of the North*. From all which at last he layes down that conclusion, *with God is terrible Majesty*. But thirdly, the most and best Expositours would have the words understood thus, to wit, that Elihu here proves that there is no standing before God to contend against him, by an argument from the lesse to the greater; namely, that men cannot behold the light of the Sun, when the wind hath scattered the clouds, and so it shines clearly in the firmament, and much lesse can they stand before God, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, and is of *terrible Majesty*. And this indeed is very probable; yet the second Exposition seems best to agree with our Translation.

Vers. 23. *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out, &c.*] As if he should have said, And from all this that hath been said we may concerning the Almighty conclude, that *we cannot find him out*, he is altogether incomprehensible; of which see the Note chap. 11. 7. *he is excellent in power and in judgement and in plenty of justice; he will not afflict*; that is, not willingly, till men by their sins force him to it, and much lesse will he afflict them causelessly or unjustly.

Vers. 24. *Men do therefore fear him, &c.*] To wit, because he is of such infinite and incomprehensible power and justice, and especially of such goodnesse and mercy, that he will not afflict; this makes men fear God, and humble themselves under his hand, not daring to quarrell or contend with him: *he respecteth not any that are wise of heart*; that is, he minds them not. The drift of these words may be, either to shew what reason there is that men should so fear God, who is of such infinite power, &c. as not to dare to contend with him, to wit, because God will not vouchsafe to mind such a worm as man is, so infinitely beneath him, no not those that are *wise of heart*, as if he had said, not those that out of an overweening conceit of their own wisdom think they can maintain their cause against God; or, because God is able to punish them, and will punish them, if they be too peremptory with him, be they never so wise of heart, they shall not be able thereby to rescue themselves out of his hands, he will neither fear nor regard their wisdom; or else, to shew why men ought to fear God for his goodnesse and mercy, and not to murmur against his chastisements, to wit, because God doth not shew them mercy out of any respect he hath to any wisdom or goodnesse in them, but merely of his own free grace.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Verf. 1. **T**hen the Lord answered Iob out of the whirlwind.] Job had often appealed to God, as desiring that he would decide the controversie betwixt him and his friends, and now and then had as it were challenged God, that he might plead his cause before God, and that God would answer him; and his friends had likewise wished, that God would satisfie Jobs desire herein, as chap. 11. 5. *O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee:* Accordingly therefore the Lord did now appear to them, and did at last chap. 42. 7. give judgement in this cause betwixt Job and his friends, by approving Job, and reproving them. Only the Lord finding, that though Job was much convinced by that which Elihu had spoken, (and therefore it was that he was all the while silent) yet he was not sufficiently humbled, before he would give sentence for Job, he first checks him for those things he had spoken foolishly and rashly, and not with that reverence towards God, as became him. Yea and observable it is, that though, after the manner of the visions and apparitions, whereby the Lord used to reveal himself to his servants in those daies, *the Lord answered Iob out of the whirlwind*, that is, out of the cloud, wherein there came a whirlwind, (it seems that first there appeared a cloud, out of which when the whirlwind had broken out with some terrour, then after that the Lord spake to Job out of that stormy cloud; which was to humble him, and to make both him and the rest the more attentive to what he should say: see the Note 1 Kings 19. 11.) yet he spake to him with much gentlenesse; whereas his three friends condemned him for a wicked hypocrite, and Elihu, though he acknowledged his sincerity, and only blamed him for his inconsiderate speeches, yet he had therein used some very bitter expressions, as in chap. 34. 7, 8. *What man is like Iob, who drinketh scorning like water, which walketh in company with the workers of iniquity?* &c. in Gods answer to him there is no such bitterness at all.

Verf. 2. *Who is this that darkneth counsell by words without knowledge?*] Many Expositours hold, that these words are spoken to Elihu: for they say, that the Lord undertaking to answer Job, as is said in the foregoing verse, doth first check Elihu, and take him off from proceeding any farther: and that he is charged with darkning counsell by words without knowledge, either because he did not sufficiently set forth the glory of Gods works; or because he did not clearly enough expresse his own meaning in the arguments he brought to convince Job; or because, though he spake truth, yet he uttered it not in a manner suitable to Jobs condition, but with such sharpnesse, as was likely to adde to his affliction, rather then to afford him any comfort. And indeed 2 Reasons they give why this should be spoken to Elihu, rather then to Job, which have much probability in them. First, because these words, *who is this that darkneth counsell?* &c. seem rather to intend one that was then speaking, as Elihu was, rather then Job that had not spoken of a long time together: and 2ly, because God doth no where reprove Elihu, as he doth Iob ch. 40. 2. & his other three friends, ch. 42. 7; and seeing Elihu had dealt somewhat

too tartly with Iob also, and had very much misinterpreted some things that Iob had spoken, it were strange that he only should passe unreproved. But methinks it is farre more probable, that these words are spoken to Iob, first, Because it is said in the foregoing verse, that *Then the Lord answered Iob out of the whirlwind, and said,* and then immediately this is added as his answer to Iob, *Who is this that darkneth counsell by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loyns like a man,* &c. secondly, Because chap. 42. 3. Iob doth afterwards repeat these words, as acknowledging himself therewith justly checked, *who is he that hideth counsell without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not,* &c. & thirdly, Because it is very hard to shew, why Elihu should be charged with darkning counsell by words without knowledge, seeing the Lord here pleads with Iob after the same manner, and urgeth the very same, or the like works of God, as Elihu had done: whereas now we may easily conceive that Iob might well be charged with darkning counsell by words without knowledge, whether we understand it of his own counsell or Gods. For first, he had darkned his own counsell, in that he had not clearly enough expressed his meaning, but in his passion had expressed himself so simply and foolishly, that his words seemed to import worse then he thought, to wit, that there was no difference at all in Gods dealing with his faithfull servants and with wicked ungodly men, and that God had not dealt justly with him: and secondly, he had darkned Gods counsels by words without knowledge, in that he had seemed to imply, for want of expressing himself fully and plainly, that God had dealt with him as an enemy, and that there was no more love in the prosperity of the righteous then the prosperity of the wicked, nor no more wrath in the judgements of the wicked then in the afflictions of the righteous. So that the Lord doth not here charge Iob with speaking that which was false, but with uttering the truth unskilfully, *Who is this that darkneth counsell by words without knowledge?* As if he had said, What do I hear? Is this you, Iob, that talk thus foolishly and pettishly, as if you meant to charge me with injustice? whatever others might have done, I expected better words from you.

Verf. 3. *I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*] This seems to be spoken with reference to that proud challenge of Iobs chap. 13. 22. *Call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me;* wherein he gave God the choice, either to object against Iob, and then he would answer, or to answer what Iob should object against him: and accordingly therefore the Lord here puts Iob to answer to certain Questions that he propounds to him: the drift whereof is, to give Iob to understand, that if he could not give a full and clear account of these ordinary works, much lesse was he like to know his secret counsels; and therefore it must needs be a high degree of arrogance to charge him with injustice, whose works he was not able to comprehend, and who being of infinite wisdom and power, must needs be of infinite justice and holinesse too.

Verf. 4. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth,* &c.] As if he had said, Poor wretch, many ages after the earth was created thou hadst not a being, and how then canst thou know how it was done? *declare, if thou hast understanding,* that is, since you think your understanding so great, that you can di-

spute with me, and blame the dispensations of my Providence, shew me, I pray, how this was done.

Vers. 6. *Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastned? &c.*] See the Note chap. 26. 7. *or who laid the corner stone thereof?* As the foundations, so also the corner stones of a house, whereby the walls are firmly joyned together, do contribute much to the strength and stability of any building; in allusion whereto the Lord here demands of Iob, who laid the corner stone of the earth? intimating, that surely he did not contribute either counsell or assistance therein, but that the Lord alone did it, with whom therefore he might see that he was no way fit to contend. Some conceive that it was of old a custome, that when any glorious building was to be raised, some Prince or great man was wont to lay the corner stone, and that thereto these words do allude; which may seem the more probable, because of that which follows in the next verse.

Vers. 7. *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.*] To wit, as men are wont with shouting and singing to expresse their joy, when the foundations are first laid of any great and magnificent building. Some Expositours understand the first clause literally of the stars in the firmament, and accordingly they hold, first, that it is said they *sang together*, because being of different magnitudes, and having different motions and influences, they did yet as it were harmoniously joyn together in sounding forth the praises of God, as in a consort of different voices singing together, in that they did shew forth the infinite power and wisdom and goodnesse of their Creatour, according to that of David, Psal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, &c.* and secondly, that they are called *the morning stars*, either because those stars that shine in the morning are by a Synecdoche put for all the stars in generall, or because from the first morning of time in the Creation of the world, they sang forth the praises of God; whence some would have the similitude to be taken from the singing of Birds at the first break of day. And whereas against this it might be objected, that the stars were not created till the fourth day Gen. 1. 14. and therefore could not praise God when the foundations of the earth were lay'd: to this they answer; first, that no more is here intended, but that they praised God even at the creation, and 2ly, that the stars were created the first day together with the heavens & light, only their light was not then such as it was afterward made to be on the fourth day. But then again others hold, that both clauses do here expresse the same thing, to wit, that the angels (who were therefore created the first day together with the highest heavens, of which see the Note Gen. 1. 1.) did sing forth the praises of God, when they saw the foundations laid of this glorious fabrick of the world; for, say they, as they are the Angels that are called *the sons of God* in the second clause (wherein all Interpreters agree, see the Note chap. 1. 6. to which some adde, that the word (*all*) and *all the sons of God shouted for joy*, is purposely inserted to imply, that even those angels, that afterward fell away, did then at first praise God together with the rest,) so they are the angels also that are called in the first clause *the morning stars*, both because they were the first and best of all Gods creatures, and particularly because of their exceeding glory and brightnesse, as in

al-

allusion to the brightest of all the stars the morning star; for which cause also the Apostle calls the holy angels 2 Cor. 11. 14. *angels of light*. And indeed this I conceive to be far most probable, because I conceive it is clear that the stars were not created till the fourth day, whereas the Lord here speaks of the shouting and singing that was on the first day, when the foundations of the earth were laid: as is the more evident in the following verses, when he speaks still of the works of God in the first and third day of the Creation; and of the stars he speaks afterward vers. 31, 32.

Vers. 8. *Or who shut up the sea with doores, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?*] Some understand this of the first creating of the waters together with the earth; and then the womb out of which, as in a moment, they suddenly brake forth, must be the womb of Gods almighty power or eternall decree; and that which is said of Gods shutting up these waters, as with doores, is meant of Gods holding in the waters in their circumference about the earth, as they were in that first instant of their creation, when the earth round about lay overwhelmed therein as in a deep, *and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, Gen. 1. 2. But others again understand it of the breaking forth of the waters out of that Chaos or deep of earth and water, wherein they were at first created, *as if it had issued out of the womb*, to wit, when God said on the third day, Gen. 1. 9. *Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place*: and then the doores wherewith it was shut up are the sea shores, wherein it is held. And indeed because it is this gathering together of the waters, that can properly be called the sea, and because in the following verse he speaks of binding up the waters with a cloud, and the clouds were not created till the second day, I should think this last Exposition the best, unless rather we understand it of both joyntly together.

Vers. 9. *When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darknesse a swadling-band for it.*] Following the Metaphor in the foregoing verse, where the sea was compared to a new-born babe, here he speaks of swadling of it with a cloud and darknesse; and that to intimate the mighty power of God, who can turn and wind and bind up, at his pleasure, the huge Ocean sea, as easily as a nurse doth her sucking child. Now according to the different Exposition of the foregoing verse, if we understand it of the first creation of the waters, then the garment and swadling-band wherewith God bound up these waters must be that darknesse wherewith, as with a black cloud, that confused Chaos of earth and water was overspread, the light not being then as yet created, as it is expressed Gen. 1. 2. *and darknesse was upon the face of the Deep*: But if we understand it of the gathering together of those waters into one place, to make the sea, then the thick and black clouds wherewith God compassed the earth and the sea round about, are the garment and swadling-band wherein God hath bound it.

Vers. 10. *And brake up for it my decreed place, &c.*] To wit, those hollow places in the earth, wherein God laid the sea, as it were in a cradle, concerning which see the Note Gen. 1. 9. And for the following words, *and set bars and doores, &c.* see the Note chap. 26. 10.

Verf. 12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy daies? and caused the day-spring to know his place?*] That is, Didst thou ever in all thy time by thy command cause the Sun to arise, at any other time or at any other place, then according to its ordinary course? or rather, (because the Lord seems here to proceed to speak of the works of creation on the fourth day, when the Sun and other the lights of heaven were made,) Didst thou at first establish the vicissitude of day and night, and appoint at what severall times and in what severall points of the heaven the Sun should arise, and the day-light break forth, sometimes sooner and sometimes later, sometimes in one part of the heaven and sometimes in another, according to the severall seasons of summer and winter.

Verf. 13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, &c.*] That is, That from the place where it riseth it might in an instant, as in the twinkling of an eye, passe to the uttermost parts of the earth: and indeed because the morning light doth so speedily spread it self from one end of the heaven to the other, therefore doth David ascribe wings to the morning, Psal. 139. 9. *If, saith he, I take the wings of the morning, &c.* But how do the next words come in? *that the wicked might be shaken out of it?* what can the spreading of the morning light to the ends of the earth doe to the shaking of the wicked out of it, that is, to the destroying of the wicked? I answer, Some Expositours hold that this is here inserted, not to imply that the rising of the morning light is any cause of the destroying of wicked men; but only because as the Sun riseth daily, so the wicked are day by day destroyed and cut off by the just judgements of God, as men not worthy to behold the light of the Sun: and hence it is that though God cuts off wicked men by night as well as by day, yet having spoken of the rising of the morning light, that he might follow on the same Metaphor, he speaks only of cutting them off by day, as men unworthy to enjoy the light of the day, *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?* as if he had said, Art thou the cause that the morning light takes hold of the ends of the earth, and that the wicked are then cut off, as men not worthy to see the light? And this is the reason too, that though good men die daily, as well as wicked men, yet he speaks not of them, but of the wicked only, because to the godly death is only a passage to a better life; and they cannot properly be said to be shaken out of the earth, as wicked men may be, who are as it were with violence turned out of the world, and out of all the felicity they could hope to enjoy here, and thrust out into utter darknesse. But because the words in the following verse seem to speak of the effects of the morning light, I cannot think it so probable, that this should not also be understood so. Now there are two other Expositions given of the words, that make the morning light the cause that the wicked are shaken out of the earth. The first is, that by means of the morning light they are cut off and destroyed from the earth, either because thereby they are discovered and known, or because thereby they are apprehended, carried before the judgement seat, and so are cut off as malefactors, and so are shaken out of the earth, as a man would shake moths or dust from off a garment: which may be judged the more probable, if it were the custome of those times, as some say it was, early in the mor-

morning to sit upon the tryall and judgement of malefactours; whereon they say that of the prophet is grounded Jer. 21. 12. *Oh house of David, thus saith the Lord, Execute judgement in the morning, &c.* And the second is, That the morning light causeth wicked men, that hate the light, to hide themselves, and so they are as it were shaken from the face of the earth, being driven into their dens of darknesse.

Verf. 14. *It is turned as clay to the seal, &c.*] That is, The earth is turned as clay to the seal: and two wayes this may be understood: to wit, first, that whereas the earth in the dark night seems as a lump of clay, that hath neither form nor figure, so soon as the morning light ariseth, it puts on a new face, and appears like the potters clay, that is wrought into severall fashions, and adorned with severall figures and colours: and accordingly the following words, *and they stand as a garment*, must also be understood, to wit, that the plants, trees, and other things upon the earth are as a curious, neat, glorious garment of divers colours, wherewith it is clothed. Or secondly, of the mutability of the earth and all things therein, to wit, that as the clay, when it is soft, may be turned into divers shapes and figures; so it is with the earth, not only in regard of other things, but also in regard of men the inhabitants thereof, especially wicked men, one generation passeth away, and another comes in the room of them; *and they stand as a garment* in that regard, that is now on, then off, ever and anon altered and changed, now fresh and within a while thrid-bare, torn and worn out, as the Psalmist also expresseth it, Psal. 102. 26. *they shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.*

Verf. 15. *And from the wicked their light is withholden, &c.*] This may be meant, either of wicked mens flying into dark places, their guilty consciences driving them thereto, that they may not be discovered and punished; or else of their being cut off and destroyed, whereby they are deprived, not only of beholding the light of the Sun, but also of the light of life, and of all their prosperity here, even of all that was pleasant and delightfull to them. See the Note chap. 18. 5. As for the next clause, *and the high arm shall be broken*; thereby is meant also, either that when they hid themselves in dark corners, they should not then be able to doe the mischief that formerly they did (for in these words *the high arm*, he seems to allude to mens lifting up their arm on high, when they mean to strike;) or else that being destroyed, there shall then be an end of all their great power and tyranny over others. Now this may be added, either first to shew the instability of wicked men, as in relation to that which was said in the foregoing verse; or secondly, to prevent that objection, why God should give light to the wicked, as well as to the righteous; or thirdly, in reference to that which went before verse 12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy dayes? &c.* and so the meaning of this and the foregoing verses should be, as if God had said, When the wicked were to be punished, were you able to hasten the morning light that this might be done?

Verf. 16. *Hast thou enter'd into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?]* To wit, that thou shouldest know the exact depth of the

sea, or how the waters spring up there, or what variety of fishes and other creatures there are therein.

Verf. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doores of the shadow of death?*] Concerning the shadow of death see the Note chap. 3. 5. Some understand this of the depth of the sea, and make this to be only a different expression of what he had said before in the former verse: Others understand it of the abyſſe of the earth; as if he had said, Wert thou ever in the bottom of the sea, or beneath in the bowels of the earth? for this, they say, is termed *death*, and *the shadow of death*, because the dead are buried there, and to intimate, that it is as impossible that a living man should come thither, as that he should be at the same time both dead and alive. But the words may be also understood of the different wayes of mens dying, and the condition men are in after death: *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?* &c. that is, Are all the wayes to death known to thee, and in thy power? Hast thou been in hell? or dost thou know in what estate all that are dead are?

Verf. 18. *Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?* &c.] That is, Hast thou travelled all over the earth, and so hast observed every countrey as thou wentest along, and dost exactly know the full breadth of the earth? *Declare if thou knowest it all*, that is, all the earth; if thou hast seen and knowest it all, declare this which I now demand of thee: or, all that I have asked thee; as if he should have said, You boasted that if I questioned, you would answer me: now then answer all that I have asked thee, if thou knowest it all.

Verf. 19. *Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darknesse, where is the place thereof?*] This may be added, as in relation to the foregoing verse, as if it had been expressed thus, If thou knowest all the earth, as having travelled all over it from the Sun-rising to the Sun-setting, tell me then, I pray, where the place of residence is, where the light dwelleth, and so likewise concerning darknesse. And this some would have to be meant of those places, where it is day and night a long time together, whether he knew those places where the light and darknesse stayed so long: as indeed there are some places where it is day for six moneths together, and then night as long. But I rather conceive, that the Lord here enquires of Job, whether he knew exactly at what points of the heaven the Sun was to rise and set, at the severall seasons of the year; or rather, whether the light or darknesse went, when they went from their hemisphere: intimating, that he was never able to ascend up into the heavens, that he should exactly know the manner how and the reason why God had ordered the severall seasons of light and darknesse all the world over.

Verf. 20. *That thou shouldest take it to (or at) the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof.*] That is, that thou shouldest find them (whether light or darknesse) where they are; or, that thou shouldest appoint them their bounds or limits, whence they should rise, which way they should spread, and whether they should goe; or, that when thou seest them spread so far abroad in the air, and wander as it were so far from their home, thou shouldest take them and carry them back to their place, and so direct them in their way.

Verf. 21.

Verf. 21. *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy dayes is great?*] That is, either because thou wert born, when I first created the world, and so didst see how I then ordered all these things; or else, because having lived so long, thou hast by so long experience since found it out?

Verf. 22. *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow? &c.*] That is, Dost thou know from whence that abundance of snow and hail comes, which yearly I pour down upon the earth? Hast thou ever been in my store-houses, where these things are laid up? or are these things at thy disposing?

Verf. 24. *By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the East wind upon the earth?*] By the light here some understand the light of the Sun, as it is usually taken elsewhere: and the Question that is propounded concerning the way whereby this light is parted, must then be meant, either first of the lights dispersing it self through the air severall wayes, to wit, by what means it comes to passe, that the beams of the Sun do so dart forth themselves severall wayes, that the air may be enlightened in every place; or secondly, of its shining successively upon severall parts of the earth, to wit, how it is that the Sun runs a severall course in the heavens every day, and so it gives light more or lesse to severall parts of the earth, it is day in one place and night in another, it is summer in one place and winter in another, and at severall seasons the dayes and nights are shorter and longer; or thirdly, of the Suns different dispersing of its light, by reason of some black clouds in the skie, to wit, how it comes to passe, that the Sun shines bright in one place, whilst in another place it is dark and cloudy. But because this last Exposition seems somewhat forced, and because concerning this dividing of the Suns light God had spoken before verf. 12. and because he is now speaking of tempestuous meteors, as in the foregoing verses of snow and hail, and in the following verses of showres of rain, &c. therefore I rather think, that the light here spoken of is lightening, concerning which the Lord enquires of Job, either how it comes to passe, that the flashes of lightening do break forth severall wayes, or else, whence it is that there is thunder and lightening sometimes in one country, and sometimes in another. As for the last clause, *which scattereth the East wind upon the earth*, either it is meant of the light of the Sun, to wit, because the Sun draws up those vapours from the earth, which cause winds in the air; or, because together with the Sun when it riseth, the East wind doth usually rise: or else it is meant of lightening, which may be said to scatter the East wind upon the earth in a twofold sense; to wit, either because the lightening doth commonly bring tempestuous winds with it; (for the East wind is mentioned figuratively instead of all other violent winds) or on the contrary, because the lightening breaks forth with such violence, that it many times interrupts the course of the strongest winds, and scatters them abroad into the severall corners of the world.

Verf. 25. *Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters?*] Either this is meant of the severall hollow places in the earth, which God hath provided, as so many severall channels, for the current of the waters, some one way, and

some another, when abundance of rain hath made great inundations here below; or else rather of the severall wayes, whereby the overflowing of waters that is in the clouds doth pour down, as by so many severall pipes and water-spouts, sometimes in great Cataracts, whereby the earth is watered in severall places.

Verf. 26. *To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is, &c.*] These last words, *where no man is*, may be added both to imply, that man (and so Job in particular) can no way be the cause of watering those places, that are not inhabited by man; and likewise to intimate, that God takes care to provide food, not only for man, but also for the beasts in the desarts, where no man inhabits.

Verf. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?*] That is, Canst thou restrain the influences of the seven stars, and so keep back the spring, either wholly or for a time, which those stars do bring along with them? and indeed therefore he terms their influences *sweet*, because they bring in the spring with them, which is a season so sweet and pleasant, and that yields such delight and refreshing to all creatures, in that it opens the earth, that so all trees and plants and herbs and flowers may then bud and sprout forth: *Or loose the bands of Orion?* that is, or canst thou hinder the influences of Orion, which brings in the winter season? for these he calls *the bands of Orion*, either because therewith he leads in storms and tempests, as with so many cords and strings; or because therewith the earth is frozen and bound up, as with cords and bands: as if he had said, Canst thou cut or untie these cords, that so this Constellation should not bring such cold and tempestuous weather along with it? Concerning these Constellations mentioned here and in the following verse, see the Note before chap. 9. 9.

Verf. 32. *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?*] That is, Arcturus with the lesser stars about it, that seem to stand about it as children about their parents: canst thou direct this Northern Asterisme to know his season, to wit, the Autumn, and to run the course which God hath appointed it? As for the first clause, *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?* though some hold that by *Mazzaroth* is meant the planets, and others the twelve signs in the Zodiack, (as is expressed in the margin of our Bibles;) yet I rather conceive, with others, that thereby is meant those remote stars about the Southern Pole, called *the chambers of the South* chap. 9. 9. or else the dog-star, with others that rise here in the Summer; *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?* that is, canst thou make the dog-star and other fiery summer stars, or those stars that are hidden in the South, to shew themselves in their season? which is the more probable, because then we have here, as before chap. 9. 9. four Constellations mentioned, which arise in the four severall Quarters of the year; and therefore may be the more fitly named in stead of all the stars.

Verf. 33. *Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? &c.*] That is, In what order God hath disposed the severall orbs thereof, and what laws and decrees God hath established for their severall motions and influences, which thereupon they do constantly observe? *Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?* that is, Canst thou, that dwellest here below, order and settle what dominion and rule the heavens

vens shall have by their influences over all things here on the earth? Some indeed understand this last clause thus, Canst thou order it so, that thy self, or other men dwelling here in the earth, should have the command of the heavens above? and this they judge the more probable, because the Lord speaks in the following verses of mans commanding rain and lightening from above. But that I conceive is no sufficient warrant for this Exposition.

Verf. 34. *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?*] That is, the land where thou dwellest. And because showres of rain do usually follow the thunder, and so may seem, as it were, to come, when God by that mighty voice of his doth call for them, it is not altogether improbable which some conceive, to wit, that in allusion hereto the Lord might ask, whether Job could *lift up his voice*, as he doth when he thunders, thereby to call for showres of rain to water the earth.

Verf. 37. *Who can number the clouds in wisdom? &c.*] That is, who is so wise, as exactly to find out the number of the numberlesse clouds? *or who can stay the bottles of heaven?* that is, who can restrain the rain in the clouds from falling down upon the earth?

Verf. 38. *When the dust groweth into hardnesse, and the clods cleave fast together.*] Some take these words to be a description of the drought that will be in the earth, if the bottles of heaven were stayed, as was said in the foregoing verse, to wit, that the earth then grows hard, *and the clods cleave fast together*, and become hard like stones. But others take them to be a description of the earth, when it is already sufficiently watered with rain, (and so it were well that the bottles of heaven were stayed,) *when the dust groweth into hardnesse, &c.* that is, when the light dust is turned into lumps of earth, or (as some translate the words) *when the dust is turned into mire*, and the clods, ready before to crumble into dust, being moistened with rain do cleave fast together.

Verf. 39. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions?*] The drift of these three following verses is to shew, first, how impossible it were for man to provide food sufficient for all beasts and birds, as God doth; thereby to set forth the infinite greatnesse of God above man, and so to imply how unfit man is therefore to contend with God, and withall perhaps to intimate how unlikely it is, that God should deal cruelly with his own children, that is thus carefull to provide for these brute creatures: and secondly, how unlikely it is that man should search into Gods secret counsels, that cannot comprehend how God doth these things that he sees ordinarily done. He instanceth first in Gods providing food for the lion and his whelps, not so much because he is the king of beasts, as because the lions are of all creatures the most ravenous; the providence of God being most observable in this, that God should provide so abundantly for them, that so they might keep within their desert places, who otherwise would range about, and break into towns and cities, so that there would be no living for man upon the earth.

Verf. 40. *When they couch in their dens, &c.*] To wit, as preparing themselves to leap out on a sudden upon any beast that passeth by. Some restrain this to the

young lions, this being more especially observable, that when being young they dare not go farre from their dens, even then God by his providence doth bring, as it were, their prey into their mouths: But I think it is better to understand it of all lions, lurking in their covert places to watch for their prey.

Verf. 41. *Who provideth for the raven his food? &c.* Amongst all fowls he instanceth likewise in the raven, because they are most greedy and ravenous, and therefore it is the more strange how God provides for them and their young ones. *When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat:* This which is said of their wandring for lack of meat, may be understood of the old ravens, that wander up and down for meat, whilst their *young ones* do as it were *cry unto God*: but most Expositours understand it of their young ones, who being usually driven out of their nests by their dams, so soon as ever they are able to fly, do then wander up and down for lack of meat: and indeed the Providence of God is most observable, in that he directs these young things to find out the meat he provides for them. Most Expositours mention many other things to set forth the Providence of God in feeding the young ravens: as that the dams keep from them for some dayes after they are hatched, either because they are white, and so they own them not till their black feathers begin to grow out; or because they are so greedy to feed themselves, and that God in that time doth wonderfully feed their young ones, with worms that breed in the dung, with flies, or a dew that comes down from heaven. But because we cannot by experience find these things made good, I insist not thereon.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Verf. 1. **K** *Nowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rocks bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?* Though it may be, and is known, that these creatures goe eight moneths after they conceive with young before they bring forth, yet is it not strange that Job should be questioned concerning this; first, Because not knowing the just time when they conceive, they cannot so keep their account as to know the time, at least the just exact time, when they will bring forth, that so they might afford them any help or ease therein; which though it may be truly affirmed concerning any creatures, yet it must needs be more evident in these, in regard they live in rocky, inaccessible places, where no man lives to observe the time of their bringing forth, which the last clause doth more clearly expresse, *or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?* and secondly, Because hereby is implied, that if man cannot know the time when they bring forth, much lesse can it be thought that man hath appointed the season when, and the manner how they should bring forth; but that as God alone hath given them the instinct of nature, whereby they chuse to live in such rocky places, so it is he also alone that hath ordered the time of their bringing forth, and hath taught them how to help themselves therein. Now the reason why the Lord instanceth for this in the wild-goats and hinds, is, because, as writers constantly affirm, of all creatures these do bring forth their young with greatest difficulty;

ficulity; (whence it is mentioned as a mighty work of God, that by the noise of the thunder he hastens their bringing forth, Psal. 29. 9. *The voice of the Lord maketh the binds to calve;*) and that therefore when their time draweth nigh, they are wont to eat of an herb called *Seselis*, which makes their birth the more easie; which, if true, is indeed a wonderfull work of God.

Verf. 3. *They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, &c.*] That is, Knowing by the instinct of nature the time of their bringing forth, they compose themselves to such a posture, as may be most for their own ease, and least hurtfull to their young ones; for bowing their bodies, they strain themselves, and so by this naturall midwifery, without any help, they bring forth their young ones; whereas tame and house-bred cattel have sometimes help in this case. As for the last clause, *they cast out their sorrows*, though some understand it, of the mournfull cryes they utter by reason of their pains and sorrows, yet I rather take it to be meant of their straining out their pains together with their young ones.

Verf. 4. *Their young ones are in good liking, &c.*] That is, Though they come so hardly into the world, and have none to take care of them, but those unreasonable creatures their dams, yet presently, or within some short time after, they are in good plight: *they grow up with corn*; that is, say some Expositours, they grow up, as if they were fed with corn: but I rather think the meaning of these words is, that after they have been suckled but a while, they soon learn to feed on corn, and so grow up apace: and then their dams soon cast them off, not being like the children of men, that must be many years nursed up by their mothers; *they goe forth, and return not unto them*, and yet through Gods Providence they make a shift to live.

Verf. 5. *Who hath sent out the wild asse free? &c.*] That is, Who but I have made the wild asse of such a fierce and untameable nature, that he will by no means be brought into subjection, but will range abroad freely in the wilderness whereever he pleaseth? As for the expression here used, of *sending out the wild asse free*, and *loosing the bands of the wild asse*, either it is used only to imply, that God hath given him such a nature, that he will be free, there is no binding him with bands, as other creatures may be; or else, that no man could bring them into subjection, that afterwards he might let them loose again; or else in reference to those home-bred asses, that are so tame, and so readily serviceable to man in all kind of drudgery; as if he had said, Since these asses are in such bondage to men, how come those wild asses, that are so like the other in all other regards, to be sent out free? Some conceive the drift of this Question to be, that Job should take notice of this wonderfull work of Gods Providence, that these poor creatures should enjoy such freedome and liberty, the choicest of outward priviledges, whereas men for the most part live in subjection and bondage: But I rather conceive, that the aim thereof is, only to hint the observableness and unsearchableness of Gods Providence, in that he hath given to the wild asse a nature so different from that of others, that seem to be of the same kind, whereby it is that he keeps alwaies in the wilderness, not needing the help of man to provide for him, as the other have: whereby also an intimation may be given, that as it would be a folly

folly to enquire, why God hath made some creatures free from mans subjection, and others not; so likewise it would be, to seek a reason of other counsels of God, as why God should make some rich and others poor, why some are bound in the cords of affliction and others left free.

Verf. 7. *He scorneth the multitude of the city, &c.*] This is diversly understood by Expositours: as first, that he scorns the tumult and confusion of the city, preferring farre before that a solitary and retired life in the desert; secondly, that he regards not the company of men, as some beasts do, nor the provision which is made for those tame beasts that live amongst them; thirdly, that he scorneth to be in bondage and subjection, as men are; and fourthly, that he scorneth to be brought into subjection, though never so great a multitude of people should attempt to doe it. And indeed this last Exposition seems best to agree with those words, *the multitude of the city*; as likewise with the following clause, *neither regardeth he the crying of the driver*, that is, he will not be ruled, as some other beasts are, to go this way or that at the command and voice of the driver.

Verf. 8. *The range of the mountains is his pasture, &c.*] As if he had said, He will not be pent up within pales and hedges, nor be fed so scantily and courfly as the tame asses many times are, but rangeth abroad where he lists, and so feeds plentifully on whatever likes him best.

Verf. 9. *Will the Unicorn be willing to serve thee? or abide by thy crib?*] To wit, as the horse and ox will; for here the Unicorn is opposed to the horse or ox, as before the wild asse was opposed to the tame: as if he should have said, God having made the Unicorn of such a fierce and untameable nature, canst thou change their nature, to make them serve thee? No; even the horse and the ox would be too strong for thee, if God had not fitted them with a nature that makes them willing to serve man.

Verf. 10. *Canst thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?*] That is, Canst thou fasten him to the plough, and make him draw the plough in the furrows before thee? or, when thou ledest him fastened to the harrow, will he follow *after thee* to harrow the valleys? Some understand the last clause thus, *will he harrow the valleys after thee?* that is, after thou hast ploughed them? But the first Exposition is best.

Verf. 11. *Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? &c.*] To wit, with the work of thy husbandry? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? that is, wilt thou leave thy work in ploughing, carting, &c. to be done by him? or, wilt thou leave thy hay and corn, the fruit of thy labour, to be brought in by him?

Verf. 12. *Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy seed? &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, that he will so plough and husband thy ground, that at harvest there shall be a good return of thy seed brought home? But it may farre better be understood of inning his harvest, Wilt thou believe that he will at harvest bring home thy corn? which the following words, *and gather it into thy barn*, do plainly expresse.

Verf. 13. *Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the Peacocks? &c.*] Under this particular instance of the Peacock, as likewise of the stork and the ostrich, (as some

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translate the following clause, *the feathers of the stork and the ostrich*) all other birds are comprehended, whom God hath clothed with such beautifull and goodly feathers; a work farre above the skill and power of man. But if we read the last clause, as it is in our Bibles, *or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?* that which I conceive is noted as observable in this creature is, not only the goodlinesse of her feathers, but especially that *she should have wings and feathers*, whereas *she flies not in the air as birds do*, and for the huge vastnesse of her body may seem a beast rather then a bird.

Vers. 14. *Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust.*] For, whether it be because the exceeding weightinesse of the ostriches body might endanger the breaking of her eggs, or because through the scarcity of her feathers *she cannot afford them warmth enough to hatch them*, by the instinct of nature *she leaveth her eggs in the earth*, covering them only with the sand, which being heated by the Sun, doth by the speciall Providence of God hatch her eggs; and therefore these birds by the same Providence are never in any other but hot countries. Some understand the last clause of the ostriches sitting a while upon her eggs: but I rather think it is said *she warmeth them in the dust*, because *she leaves them there to be warmed*.

Vers. 16. *She is hardened against her young ones, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, *she regards not her young ones after they are hatched*. But that it should rather be understood of her carelesse leaving her eggs in the dust seems most probable, because the following clause seems also to have respect to that; *her labour is in vain, without fear*, that is, her labour in breeding, laying, and hiding her eggs, is in vain, because *she leaves them at last so carelesly*, not fearing what will become of them. I know this last clause is otherwise expounded by some, *her labour is in vain, without fear*, that is, by leaving her eggs so, *she looseth her labour in laying them*; which yet *she doth without fear*, not having any cause to fly from them for fear, (for what creature needs *she fear*, being of so mighty a stature and strength?) but merely out of a naturall regardlesnesse of them.

Vers. 17. *Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, &c.*] That is, he hath not given her that instinct of love and providence for her young ones, that he hath given to other creatures.

Vers. 18. *What time she lifteth up her self on high, &c.*] This phrase seems to imply the wonderfull height of this Bird, being usually, as is said, higher then a man on horse-back. However the meaning of these words is, that when *she raiseth up her self to get away from those that seek to surprize her*, *she scorneth the horse and his rider*, that is, *she easily outstrips them, and so fears them not*. For though *she cannot fly in the air*, her wings being little, and the bulk of her body so exceeding great; yet therewith *she hastens her flight, running and flying both together*, and so scorns that the speediest horseman should overtake her.

Vers. 19. *Hast thou given the horse strength? &c.*] Upon the mention that was made of the horse and his rider in the close of the foregoing verse, the Lord takes occasion to speak next of the courage and strength of the horse; and that to imply the infinite power of that God that made him, and how desperate a thing it

must needs be to contend with him, or to murmur against him. For the following clause, *Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?* though some understand it of the strength of his neck, wherewith (say they) rushing upon the enemy, he gives him such a shock, that he apprehends himself, as it were, to be thunder-stricken; yet I question not, but that it must be understood of his mighty neighings: for first, the thundring noise thereof may well be ascribed to his neck, not only because the force whereby he neighs comes through his neck, but likewise because the horse when he neighs doth usually advance and shake his neck with a great deal of terrour; and secondly, the word *clothed* implies, that his neighing was an exceeding ornament to this goodly creature, *Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?* as if he had said, Thou mayest trim and adorn his neck with trappings and ribbands, and the glittering bosses of a bridle, but canst thou cloth his neck with the thunder of his neighings, as I have done?

Verf. 20. *Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? &c.*] This is a manner of speech, whereby farre more is implied then is expressed; as if he had said, He is another manner of creature then to be scared with every noise, as the grasshopper will be: the least stirring that they hear will make them hushed and fly away and hide themselves, whereas the terriblest noises of an army do rather embolden the horse, then make him afraid. As for the next clause, *the glory of his nostrils is terrible*, under those words *the glory of his nostrils* may be comprehended, first, the broad, round and open glaring of his nostrils, which is indeed one of the chief beauties of a goodly horse; secondly, the blasts of breath, which, in his rage especially, he puffs out like smoke from his nostrils; and thirdly, his disdainfull snoring: for all these have some terrour in them.

Verf. 21. *He paweth in the valley.*] It is said *in the valley*, with respect to that old custome of pitching their battels in valleys, especially when their armies consisted chiefly in horse.

Verf. 22. *He mocketh at fear.*] By *fear* here may be meant every thing that is dreadfull, and apt to make a poor creature fear; and then the meaning must be, that he slights those things that have most terrour in them: or else the passion of fear; *He mocketh at fear*, that is, he scorns to fear, he knows not what belongs to it.

Verf. 23. *The quiver ratleth against him, &c.*] Most Expositours understand this of the riders quiver hanging upon the horses shoulder, as our horsemens pistols are wont to doe. But these words (*against him*) in our Translation seem rather to intend the ratling of the arrows shot by the enemy against them, which no whit daunts this courageous beast.

Verf. 24. *He swalloweth the ground with fiercenesse and rage, &c.*] This may be meant either of the swift galloping of the horse, to wit, that he posts away over the ground with that speed, as if he swallowed it up; and indeed the horses swiftnesse in running, though one of his chief excellencies, is no where mentioned, if not here: or else of his furious carriage of himself, to wit, that what with the pawing of his feet, and what with the gnashing of his teeth, the champing of his bridle, and foaming at the mouth, he seems as if he were mad to be fighting, as if he could

could tear the very ground he stands on with his teeth, and swallow it up. And so likewise the next clause, *neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet*, may be also understood two severall wayes: to wit, either that he is so eagerly desirous to have the battel begin, that when the trumpet doth sound to the battel, he can scarce believe it is so; or, that in point of fearing the warning that is thereby given of the dangers approaching, he is no more moved thereby, then if it were not the sound of a trumpet; it troubles him no more then if he heard one playing upon a pipe for his pleasure.

Verf. 25. *He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha, &c.*] That is, He rejoyceth at it; yea by his proud neighings he doth as it were answer the trumpets again in a kind of scorn and challenge.

Verf. 26. *Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the South? &c.*] This that is here said of the hawks stretching *her wings toward the South*, some understand thus, that when the South wind blows sweetly and gently, she useth to stretch forth her wings thereto, either thereby to refresh her self, or else that this may help forward the casting off her old feathers, and the growing out of new ones in the room of them; which she doth yearly (as other birds also doe, whence is that Psal. 103. 5. *thy youth is renewed like the eagles*;) or else, that she stretcheth forth her wings toward the Sun in the South, for the reasons before mentioned. But others understand it of her flying Southward, to wit, that when winter comes, she is wont then to fly into some hotter Southern country, or that having cast her feathers, she then returns to some warmer climate.

Verf. 27. *Doth the eagle mount up at thy command? &c.*] To wit, so farre higher then any other birds? Yet some understand this more particularly, of the eagles flying plain upright into the air; which, they say, no other bird can doe but she.

Verf. 29. *Her eyes behold afarre off.*] And hence in part it is, that the invasion of an enemy from a farre country is so often compared in the Scriptures to the eagles falling upon her prey, as Deut. 28. 49, and Hab. 1. 8. *their horsemen shall come from farre, they shall flee as the eagle that hasteth to eat.*

Verf. 30. *Her young ones also suck up blood, &c.*] Some say that eagles never drink water, but blood only: but whether it be so or no, in that their young ones are trained up to feed on creatures they have newly slain, &c. they may well be said to suck up blood.

C H A P. XL.

Verf. 1. **M**oreover, the Lord answered Iob.] That is, Having for a while made a stop and been silent, to see what Iob would say, (as the following words which he now adds do also clearly imply,) the Lord began again, and proceeded to answer to what Iob had formerly spoken.

Verf. 2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, instruct him? &c.*] As if he should have said, Judge now by this which thou hast heard, whether man be able

or fit to contend with the Almighty God, whether any such poor wretch, as will undertake to contend with me, be able to instruct me how to doe any thing more wisely or justly, then I have done it. If in none of these my works, whereof I have spoken, there is nothing you can blame, why shouldest thou think me blame-worthy for my dealing with thee? If thou canst not comprehend these my ordinary works, how canst thou think to judge of the secret counsels of my providence? *he that reproveth God let him answer it*, that is, let him answer to this which I now say, whether he that contendeth with God can instruct him; or, let him answer to that, or any one thing of that which I have before spoken; or, *let him answer it*, that is, let him answer for his reproving of God. And thus he covertly taxeth Job for his foolish boldnesse in daring to expostulate with God as he had done, and in desiring so earnestly that he might plead his cause with him, whereas now when God had begun to argue with him, he had nothing to say.

Verf. 3. *Then Iob answered the Lord.*] Though hitherto he durst not reply a word, as being appalled with Gods immediate parlee and the terrour of the whirlwind, and fully convinced of his folly, and that he had thereby provoked God to be angry with him; yet because the Lord in his last words seemed to upbraid him with his silence, he now addresseth himself to give an account thereof, even by an humble acknowledgement, that his mouth was stopped, and that he had nothing to say for himself.

Verf. 4. *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? &c.*] That is, I am every way base and worthlesse, and no way fit to contend with a God of such infinite power and wisdom and holinesse, as all thy works declare thee to be: yea a vile and wicked thing it was in me to speak of thee in so peremptory a manner as I have done: neither have I any thing to answer for my self, but I now renounce my challenge; *I will lay mine hand upon my mouth*: concerning which expression see the Note chap. 21. 5.

Verf. 5. *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, &c.*] That is, severall times. See the Note chap. 33. 14.

Verf. 6. *Then answered the Lord unto Iob out of the whirlwind.*] Though Job was fully already convinced, and had humbled himself before God, and promised amendment of that wherein he had been faulty; yet the Lord again in the whirlwind replies upon Job, and that to the same purpose as before, thereby yet farther to humble him, and to assure him of the infinite power, wisdom and justice of God, that so if there were any scruple remaining in his mind, it might be removed, and he might be brought wholly to resign himself to the good will of God. For besides that the best of Gods servants, by reason of the remainders of corruptions in them, have need to have these things often pressed upon them, for Job in particular this might seem the more needfull, because he had not yet begged pardon of God, nor had yet, at least plainly and expressely, acknowledged his fault, as afterwards he did, chap. 42. 3, &c. Concerning the whirlwind see the Note chap. 38. 1.

Verf. 7.

Verf. 7. *Gird up thy loins now like a man, &c.*] As if he should have said, What? dost thou flinch? That were a shame for thee, that didst erewhile with so much confidence desire thou mightst plead thy cause with me: *Gird up thy loins now like a man; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me:* concerning which words see the Note before, chap. 38. 3.

Verf. 8. *Wilt thou also disannull my judgement? &c.*] To wit, by condemning that which I have done to thee, as unjust; for so the following clause seems to explain this, *wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?* Yet this question may imply somewhat more, namely, whether Job would undertake, as a superiour judge, to make void the sentence which God had passed, or to order an alteration in that which God had done; because when men condemn Gods proceedings, they take upon them, as if they could rectify that which God had done amisse. As for this word *also*, either it may be referred to the person of Job, as if he had said, It were no wonder that wicked ungodly men should thus exalt themselves against me; but *wilt thou also disannull my judgement?* or else to the evil which he chargeth upon him, *wilt thou also disannull my judgement?* as if he had said, Is it not enough for thee to defend thy self, but thou wilt also condemn me?

Verf. 9. *Hast thou an arm like God? &c.*] That is, Is thy strength equall to mine? Now this is added to imply, that seeing it was not so, he was no way fit therefore to contend with God, nor to blame what he did in the government of the world, whose acts of government he could in no degree imitate, and who must needs be infinite in justice, as he was in power, and can no way fail therein, as being the great Judge of all the world.

Verf. 10. *Deck thy self now with majesty and excellency, &c.*] To wit, as earthly Princes use to doe, when they sit in the throne of judgement; or, according to that majesty and glory wherewith I am adorned, as it is said Psal. 104. 1. *O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty, &c.* So that the drift of these words is to imply, either that though he could set out himself with all the majesty, wherewith any earthly prince is arrayed, yet he could not doe those great works mentioned in the following verses, which God daily doth in the government of the world; or else, that he poor wretch was no way capable of that majesty and glory which was in God. And indeed considering the poor condition wherein Job now lay covered over with dust and scabs, there was much sharpnesse in this Ironical expression, *Deck thy self now with majestie and excellencie, and aray thy self with glory and beauty.*

Verf. 11. *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, &c.*] The drift of these words is to imply, how unable Job was in his wrath to destroy the wicked here and there all the world over, as God did; and so the following words likewise, *and behold every one that is proud, and abase him*, imply that, first, Job could not take notice of all that proudly exalted themselves against God, whereas they were all continually in Gods eye: or secondly, that he could not destroy them with a look, as God did, according to that Hab. 3. 6. *He beheld and drove asunder the nations,* and. Psal. 104. 32. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth.*

Verf. 12. *And tread down the wicked in their place.*] That is, every wicked man in his place all the world over. Some would have the drift of the words to be this, that Job could not destroy them *in their place*, that is, where their power was greatest, as God could. But the first Exposition agreeth best with the foregoing words.

Verf. 13. *Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret.*] That is, Cut them off, and throw them into the grave together, how many or of what condition soever they be, where they may be laid low out of sight, and their very memories may perish for ever. This, I conceive, is the true meaning of these words; and that phrase of binding their faces, may allude to the usuall custome of tying some linnen cloth about the faces of dead men. I know the words may well bear divers other Expositions; as first, the bringing down of wicked men to a low and poor condition, where they may be as men cast out of sight, and may not appear to do any hurt; or secondly, the casting them into prison, and so the phrase of binding their faces may allude to the custome of covering the faces of those that were condemned, concerning which see the Note Esth. 7. 8. or thirdly, the forcing of them to hide themselves in the caves of the earth, according to that Isa. 2. 10. *Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, &c.* But the first Exposition may justly be preferred before all the rest.

Verf. 14. *Then will I also confesse unto thee, that thine own right hand can save thee.*] That is, that thou art God as I am, almighty and independent, of thy self able to doe what thou pleasest; and consequently, that thou being equall to me, art strong enough to maintain thine own cause, and that therefore it is no wonder that thou shouldest dare to contend with me.

Verf. 15. *Behold now Behemoth, which I made with thee, &c.*] Almost all Expositours agree, that it is the Elephant that is here called *Behemoth*: and they say, that because the Hebrews had no peculiar name for this beast, therefore they called it *Behemoth*, which is, by interpretation, *Beasts*, and that with respect to the exceeding greatnesse of his body, as it were to imply that he was the beast of beasts, or that in him there were many beasts met in one, and that he was full as big as two or three other beasts. As for those words, *which I made with thee*, either they are added to imply, that God made the Elephant as well as he made man, and perhaps also that he made him on the same day when he made man, to wit, on the sixth day of the creation, *Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee*, that is, thy fellow-creature, the work of my hands as thou art; or else, to imply, that he was created to live on the earth, (which may be added as in opposition to the Leviathan mentioned in the next chapter, that lives in the sea) and that not amongst the wild beasts, but amongst those that are tame and gentle, that love to live with man, and that are for the use and service of man. And to the same purpose also may the next clause be added, *he eateth grasse as an ox*, to wit, that he liveth not by preying upon other creatures, as wild beasts do, (which may seem strange in a creature so terrible, as that seems to be) but feeds on pasture, as other house-beasts do: though withall I conceive the singular Providence of God is thereby likewise hinted to us, in that he hath appointed grasse to be the food of this beast.

which

which had they lived by preying upon flesh, as the wild beasts do, in regard of the mighty bulk of their bodies, one might well think they would devour all before them, and that the flesh of man and beasts would scarcely suffice them. Now this concerning the Elephant is here mentioned, to intimate the infinite wisdom and strength of God that made him, and who orders him as he pleaseth, which man otherwise could not doe; thereby to discover the folly of Job in contending with God, and what cause he had therefore to beg pardon for it.

Verf. 16. *Loe now his strength is in his loyns, and his force is in the navell of his belly.*] As if he should have said, His strength is not in his horns or claws, as it is with those beasts that live upon prey, but in those parts, whereby he is enabled to bear huge burdens for the use of man, namely *in his loyns, and in the navell of his belly*; wherein the Elephant is of such exceeding strength, that it is almost incredible to think what mighty burdens they will carry, as may appear by that instance 1 Maccab. 6. 37. where it is said, that the Elephants which Antiochus had in his army, had each of them towers of wood upon their backs, in every one whereof there were two and thirty fighting men. The greatest difficulty in these words is, why the strength of this beast is said partly to be *in the navell of his belly*: for which some say, that hereby is implied, that even those parts are firm and strong in this beast, which in others are tender and weak; and others say that the meaning of the words is only this, that the body of this beast is every way of mighty strength, both above and beneath; which they say is evident, in that he is able to endure such mighty girding about his belly, as must needs be used for the fastening of such exceeding burdens upon his back. But the ground of this expression may also be, because by the arteries that are fastened to the navell the vitall parts within the body are as it were held and bound up together: to which that speech of Solomons may also have reference, *It shall be health to thy navell*, Prov. 3. 8.

Verf. 17. *He moveth his tail like a cedar, &c.*] Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *He setteth up his tail like a cedar*: And some understand thereby his yard, others that which we properly call his tail; affirming that it is compared to a cedar, both because of the greatnesse of it, and also because when it is set up, it stands straight upright like a huge tall cedar, and is likewise plain and smooth, the Elephants tail not being shaggy and hairy as other creatures are. But because all writers affirm, and by experience it is known, that neither the tail nor the yard of this creature is great, but very little rather, considering the vast bulk of its body; I should rather think it is meant of the strength or stiffnesse of his tail, which a man can stirre or bend no more then a cedar; or of his generative part, which may the rather be thought, because of the following clause, *the sinews of his stones are wrapt together*, to wit, within his body close up to his reins, as we shall see the roots of trees folded together in the earth: for as the tail before was compared to a cedar, so these are compared to the roots thereof; and the testicles of this beast do not appear outwardly, as they do in other creatures.

Verf. 18. *His bones are as strong pieces of brasse; his bones are like bars of iron.*]

That

That is, as strong : and some do herein also comprehend the Elephants teet h.

Verf. 19. *He is the chief of the wayes of God, &c.*] That is , the chief of all the works of God amongst the beasts, to wit, for bignesse, strength, and strange sagacity to conceive and learn what is taught him : *he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him*; that is, though in regard of his matchlesse strength man could never have grappled with him nor subdued him, had not God made him of such a gentle and tractable disposition, (as appears by his unresistable violence when he is enraged) yet God can many wayes easily destroy him.

Verf. 20. *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, &c.*] That is , unlesse he be tamed by men, he rangeth abroad on the mountains , and there feedeth himself ; (and this may be mentioned to note the wonder of Gods providence , that such huge creatures should there find food sufficient) *where all the beasts of the field play*, to wit, as no way fearing the Elephant, though of so terrible an aspect, in regard he preys not upon flesh, as other beasts do.

Verf. 21. *He lyeth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed and fens.*] That is, By reason of his naturall heat, and being bred in hot countries, he loves to abide and rest himself in shadowy and watery places : and no more can be meant by these words *he lyeth*, if it be true, which is commonly said , that having no joynts in his legs, the Elephant never lyeth down on the ground.

Verf. 23. *Behold, he drinketh up a river and hasteth not.*] Because the Elephant drinketh so exceeding much, and fetcheth such long draughts , by reason partly of their great heat and thirst , and partly of the huge capacity of their bellies , hence is this expression, *he drinketh up a river and hasteth not*, that is, he drinketh as if he would drink up a whole river , and doth not for fear of any creature hasten his draught , as the dogs are said to drink by snatches in Nilus for fear of the Crocodile, and as many other creatures are wont , through the frightfulness of their disposition, to break their draught and stare about them. *He trusteth that he can draw up Iordan into his mouth* ; that is, in the vast imagination of his fancy he thinks he can suck up all Jordan into his mouth : and this river is particularly named, because it was famously known in Idumea where Job lived , near to the borders whereof it ran , and perhaps because there were many Elephants in those times in the countries through which this river went.

Verf. 24. *He taketh it with his eyes ; his nose pierceth through snares.*] Another Translation of these words we have in the margin of our Bibles, *Will any take him in his sight ? or bore his nose with a gin ?* and the meaning of the words so translated is plain, to wit, that the Elephant , when he is wild , cannot be taken openly by force, (there must be some wiles used to take him) nor were it possible for men to put a hook into his nose , therewith to lead him away , when they had taken him : which may well be spoken with reference to the nature of Elephants , if that be true which is commonly said , that though they may easily be tamed and made gentle, yet they will never endure to have a halter or bridle put upon their heads, a bit into their mouths, or a ring into their noses , as some other beasts will. But reading the words, as they are in our Translation , *He taketh it with his eyes ; his nose pierceth through snares* ; either the meaning is, that he seeth the snare when

when men goe about to ensnare him, (*He taketh it or discovers it with his eyes,*) and thereupon with his trunk he easily makes his way through the snares that are set for him; or else, that *he taketh it with his eyes*, that is, He no sooner sees the river, but presently by reason of his thirst he thinks to drink it all up: *his nose pierceth through snares*, that is, he thrusts his snout so deep into the water, (which is a sign of strength in beasts) that with his nose he makes way through stubs and sharp stones, and other things, that lye as snares to hurt his snout in the bottome of the river: which may be thought the more probable, considering that it is commonly said of the Elephant, that he is wont with his snout to stir the mud in the bottome of rivers before he will drink.

CHAP. XLI.

Verf. 1. **C**anst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?] That is, Canst thou by angling take him, and so draw him out of the sea with a line and a hook? because the fish is wont to swallow down the anglers hook and line together, which the angler perceiving jerks up the line, and so the hook is struck into the fish, sometimes into the root or palate of his tongue; hence is the second clause in this verse, *or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?* The drift of that which is said here concerning the *Leviathan*, is the same as before in that which was said concerning *Behemoth*, concerning which see the Note chap. 40. 15. The great question is what this *Leviathan* is, whether the Crocodile, as some say, or the sea-dragon, as others, or the Whale, which is noted Gen. 1. 21. as the greatest of all living Creatures. The most Expositours understand it of the *whale or whirl-pool*; not those whales which are usuall in the Baltick or Mediterranean sea, (with which the description here given us of the *Leviathan* doth not agree in every particular;) but those monsters which have been sometimes seen in the great Ocean. And indeed that it must be meant of some sea-monster is evident; for as before he spake of the greatest of the Creatures that live on the earth, so now he speaks of the greatest that live in the sea: and whereever the Scripture mentions the *Leviathan*, it speaks of him, as of a sea-monster; as Psal. 104. 26. *There goe the ships, there is that Leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein;* and where the king of Egypt is compared to this *Leviathan*, as Psal. 74. 13, 14. Ezek. 29. 3, 4. and in other places.

Verf. 2. *Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?*] Some hold that here the same question with that in the foregoing verse is again propounded in other tearms, namely, whether he could in angling strike his nose or his jaw through with a fish-hook; for that, they say, is called a thorn in the second clause, either because they used thorns sometimes in stead of fish-hooks, or because their fish-hooks were sharp as a thorn. Others will have the question here propounded to be, whether he could with an awle or thorn bore through his nose or jaws, and so ring him, as men ring hogs or bears, or lead him up and down by the nose, as bears will be led, or at least bring him into subje-

tion. But I make no question but that, as in the foregoing verse he spake ironically of his angling for the Leviathan, as if he were some little fish, so here he speaks of carrying him home when he had caught him, *Canst thou put an hook into his nose?* &c. that is, when thou hast taken him, canst thou hang him upon a fishers hook, a rush or thorn-twig, struck through his nose, or jaws, or gills, and so carry him home?

Verf. 3. *Will he make many supplications unto thee?* &c.] That is, Will he with humble and flattering words entreat thee to give over pursuing him, or to spare his life? either there is an allusion to men overmaster'd by their mighty oppressors, who are thereupon forced to fawn upon them and beg their favour; or to men overcome in battel, who are then wont with all the art and humility they can, to beg for their lives; or else to spanniels, that will lye down before a man, and fawn upon him, as if they would beg for favour.

Verf. 4. *Wilt thou make a covenant with him?* &c.] To wit, as men are wont to covenant with those they have taken in war, that they shall pay them such a ransom or tribute, or that they shall be their vassals and servants; or as men are wont to covenant with those they hire to be their servants: for to either of these the following words may also have reference, *wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?* The drift of both is to imply, that there was no taming or subduing the Leviathan, or that he could never be brought to serve men for hay and corn, as other creatures did.

Verf. 5. *Wilt thou play with him, as with a bird? wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?*] That is, wilt thou tye him in a string for thy little girls to make sport with, or for thy maidens, that they may have them for thy children to play with? The drift of the words is to imply, how impossible it was to use the whale thus in regard of his vastnesse and terrour.

Verf. 6. *Shall the companions make a banquet of him?* &c.] Wilt thou (as fishermen are wont to doe, when they have taken some extraordinary fish) make a feast with him, by way of rejoycing or vaunting at the greatnesse of thy draught? and so eat him, thou & thy companions together? that is, thy friends, whom thou invitest, or thy fellow-fishermen, joyned in company with thee? for fishermen are wont to joyn in partnership together, especially for the taking of greater fishes. And so likewise the following clause, *shall they part him among the merchants?* may also be understood of their distributing him at their eating him amongst the merchants, whom out of respect they invite to so rare a feast; or else, of their selling him in parcels to those that use to buy their fishes of them; or of the severall commodities, which such a fish would yield for the merchants, as whale-bone, oyl, &c. But however the scope of all this is to imply, that the Leviathan was not by the strength of man to be taken.

Verf. 7. *Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons, or his head with fish-spears?*] Because these words seem plainly to allude to the ordinary manner of taking whales in these dayes, we may well hence conclude, that the Leviathan here spoken of is some more stupendious sea-monster, or at least some other kind of whale that is in the great Ocean, of farre greater bulk and strength and terrour then ours are,

are, and therefore (as these words import) not to be taken with barbed irons and fish-spears, as ours may be.

Verf. 8. *Lay thine hand upon him, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, since there is no possibility to subdue him by force, lay your hand gently upon him, and stroke him, and see if by that means thou canst take him or tame him: *remember the battel, doe no more*; that is, remember how dreadfull it would be to contend with him, and therefore see only what you can doe by handling him gently. Again others take it thus, *Lay thine hand upon him, &c.* that is, offer him any violence, and he will soon so use thee, that remembring the battel, you will have no mind to meddle farther with him. But I rather understand the words thus, *Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battel, doe no more*. Doe no more but put forth your hand to touch him a little, and think what would become of you, if he should seize upon you, & the very thought of the danger would in a manner strike you dead, at least you would soon be afraid to meddle any farther with him.

Verf. 9. *Behold, the hope of him is in vain.*] That is, the hope of taking him.

Verf. 11. *Who hath prevented me that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, that if no man were able to grapple with the Leviathan, much lesse would they be able to contend with God, (which is indeed the generall drift of all that is here spoken concerning this sea-monster,) *None is so fierce that dare stir him up; who then is able to stand before me?* hereupon he adds this, *Who hath prevented me? &c.* The drift whereof is, either first, to prove that it must needs be more impossible to contend with God, then with any creature, because all the creatures are the work of his hands, and the strength that is in any of the creatures must needs be but a very little portion of that infinite power that is in God, even as a drop of water. This we see is expressed in the last clause of this verse, *whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine*; and the first clause prefixed before this is to shew how unquestionable clear this is, and what a grosse folly it were to ascribe the work of creation to any but him. *Who hath prevented me that I should repay him?* It is spoken either first, as in a way of disdain, as if he had said, *Who hath made any of the creatures for me, or been helpfull to me in the making of them, that I may acknowledge his kindnesse, and requite him for it, as I am abundantly able to doe, having all under heaven at my disposing?* or else rather secondly, to prove that there was no contending with God, because he was almighty, and that all the creatures, and so all men whatsoever, were under his absolute power, that he might doe with them whatever he pleased; *Who hath prevented me that I should repay him? &c.* as if he should have said, *There is no man so before-hand with me, by doing any thing for me, that I should thereby be engaged to him, and become so obnoxious to him, that I must doe nothing, but what he will have me doe, or that I must be charged with injustice in that I doe; and that because all the creatures are mine, the work of mine own hands, and therefore I cannot be bound unto any man, nor can any man justly complain of me, since I may surely doe what I will with mine own.* The Apostle Paul seems to allude to this place, Rom. 11. 35.

Verf. 12. *I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.*] Some referre this to the man spoken of in the foregoing verse, *who hath prevented me that I should repay him?* &c. as if the Lord had said ironically, If there be such a man, that hath thus prevented me, and so is able to contend with me, I would not conceal his praise, &c. But methinks it is clear, that the Lord doth here return to speak of the Leviathan again.

Verf. 13. *Who can discover the face of his garment?* &c.] By discovering the face of his garment may be meant, first, the plucking off his skin; as if it had been said, who dares take him into his hands, and flea him, as men are wont to flea an eele? or secondly, the taking away the sea from him, or at least the leading him out of the sea, which covers him as a garment; and it doth very emphatically set forth the hugeness of this Creature, that the whole Ocean is said to be as a garment to cover him. In this expression there seems to be an allusion to the handling of a horse, as if it had been expressed thus, Canst thou goe to him, as to a horse in a stable, take off his cloth, bridle him, and then lead him out of the sea, as out of a stable, that there he might be viewed or ridden? And to this agree the following words, *Or who can come to him with his double bridle?* to wit, to bridle him, and lead him out of the sea. Some read this last clause thus, *Or who can come to him within his double bridle?* that is, within his lips or jaws, which being drawn open, by reason they are so exceeding great, have huge folds and wrinkles in them, which seem like a double bridle; and then the meaning must be, that when he gapes, no man will dare to come within his mouth, to wit, to view the inward parts of his mouth, to take away the prey he hath gotten from thence, or to see if there he can wound him.

Verf. 14. *Who can open the doores of his face?* &c.] This also is meant of his upper and nether lips or jaws, which for their greatnesse are like the double doors of some city gate, and so terrible therefore, that being shut, no man dares lay his hand upon them to force them open: which is farther set forth by the terrour of his teeth, *his teeth are terrible round about.* And because it is commonly said, that the whales in our seas have no teeth, nor no scales, of which mention is made, verf. 15, 16, 17, it may hence be concluded, that the Leviathan here spoken of is some other sea-monster, at least some other kind of whale, then those that are usually taken in our Northern seas.

Verf. 18. *By his neefings a light doth shine,* &c.] That is, when with his nostrils he snores, and with great violence spouts out water aloft in the air, this water, by reason of its whitenesse and frothinesse and thinnesse, being spread into severall drops, appears as farre off, especially in the night, like so many flashes of lightening, or like the light of some sparkling fire, or the breaking out of the Sun-light in the morning. To which also agrees the following clause, *and his eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning*, that is, they are red and fiery, and yield a bright shining light, like that of the morning. It is evident by the glittering and shining of cats eyes, when we see them in the dark, what a sparkling light there may be in the eyes of some creatures; and
because

because the Leviathans eyes are also of a huge compasse, therefore they are said to appear like the breaking forth of the Sun-beams at the first dawning of the morning.

Verf. 19. *Out of his mouth goe burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.*] This may be meant, first, as the words in the foregoing verse, of the glittering of the water he spouts out of his mouth, appearing as farre off like sparkling fire; or secondly, of his breath, which being like thick and hot smoke, appears to the beholders, as if there were some great fire from whence it proceeded, as is expressed in the following verse, *Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron*; or thirdly, of the exceeding heat of his breath, which by reason of the fiery constitution of his body may be sulphureous, and so appear as fire, or at least exceeding hot, as if there were sparkles or flames of fire went along in it, or as if it were hot enough to set any thing on fire, (for all these are hyperbolicall expressions) according to that which followeth verf. 21. *his breath kindleth coals.* And indeed that inward heat, which must concoct meat for such a mountainous body, had need to be like that of those huge fires in kitchens, where meat is dressed for great families.

Verf. 22. *In his neck remaineth strength, &c.*] That is, In that part of his body which is next his head, which is the neck in other creatures, he is exceeding strong, and able to bear down all before him: *and sorrow is turned into joy before him*; that is, that which is very terrible in it self; and would exceedingly fright others, and cause sorrow and mourning in others, as when he meets with other huge sea-monsters, or ships armed for fight, or any other enemy, it is a joy to him, as hoping then to get some good prey, or delighting in his pride to try his strength upon them.

Verf. 24. *His heart is as firm as a stone, yea as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.*] That is, He is as fearlesse and mercylelesse, as if his heart were of stone, yea the hardest of stones: for the nether millstone is named, not so much because that still stands firm and is never moved, as because the millstone is made of a very hard stone, and the nether millstone, because it must bear the other, is usually the harder of the two. Some understand it as an hyperbolicall expression of the hardnesse of the flesh of his heart, to wit, that it is firm and hard, more like a stone then flesh. But the former Exposition I like much better.

Verf. 25. *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid, &c.*] That is, When he listeth up himself, and so is seen above the waters, as a mountain in the sea, the stoutest that are, whether you understand it of fishes, beasts or men, will be afraid: and it may more especially be meant of mariners and souldiers in ships, men that are of all the most bold and fearlesse; and to men I am sure the following clause must be restrained, *by reason of breakings they purify themselves*, that is, by reason of the Leviathans violent breaking of the sea, as he turns this way or that, which makes it perilously rough and boisterous; or by reason of the mighty waves dashing and breaking one upon another, or upon any thing that is in their way, occasioned by the rouling of his vast body in the sea; or by reason of his usuall breaking
and

and dashing of ships in pieces, they apprehend themselves in present danger of death, and so thereupon doe what they can to expiate their sins, that, if it may be, they may be delivered from that danger, as by confessing their sins, by praying to God for mercy and favour, by offering sacrifices, or at least binding their souls in a vow for sacrifices or other things. Some understand it of their vomiting, by reason of the seas tumbling their ship, as if it had been translated, *they purge themselves*, or of a worse purging through fear; but our translation, *they purify themselves*, will hardly bear such an Exposition.

Verf. 26. *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold, the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.*] Or, *the breast-plate*. This last is mentioned amongst the rest, to imply, that as no weapon can hurt him, so no arms can defend the man that shall dare to contend with him; that his teeth will pierce through an iron breast-plate, as easily as through a mans skin; or that, be a man never so well armed, he will soon for all that devour and swallow him up.

Verf. 30. *Sharp stones are under him, &c.*] That is, Usually he lyes upon the sharpest-pointed stones and rocks, and yet they never hurt him. As for the next clause, *he spreadeth sharp-pointed things upon the mire*, though some take them to be a high hyperbole, to wit, that by his weight he grinds the stones into dust, and so spreadeth it upon the mire; yet I rather conceive that by spreading sharp-pointed things upon the mire is only meant, that by his weight he often breaks the craggy and sharp ends and pieces of the rocks he lyes upon, which by that means are scattered here and there upon the mire in the bottome of the sea: or else the scattering of stones slung at him, and the pieces of swords and spears and darts, which being broken upon his scales do fall and sink down to the bottome of the sea.

Verf. 31. *He maketh the deep to boyl like a pot, &c.*] The meaning is, that partly by the moving of his huge body, and partly by his blowing out the waters from his mouth, he causeth the sea to swell, and tumble and bubble and foam, as a pot of seething water will do, when it boyls on the fire. And in the following clause he compares it particularly to the boyling of a pot of oyntment, *he maketh the sea like a pot of oyntment*; either because that useth to be done with a violent fire, and by reason of its thicknesse doth rise and swell the more; or else rather to expresse how muddy the sea is made thereby, and what a froth and scum there will be on the top of the waters.

Verf. 32. *He maketh a path to shine after him: one would think the deep to be hoary.*] That is, As he swims along he leaves a kind of furrow behind him, which appears as the path where he went, where the water is shining and frothy, as if there were a hoary frost upon the waters.

Verf. 33. *Vpon the earth there is not his like, &c.*] No, not the Behemoth before spoken of.

Verf. 34. *He beholdeth all high things, &c.*] Some understand this of the height of his body, to wit, that when he raiseth up himself, he can behold the very tops of the masts of ships, and the highest hills and mountains on the lands. But there are two other Expositions of the words, that seem far more probable: first, that they

that they were intended to set forth his fearlesse, to wit, that he is not afraid to behold the mightiest and most terrible of all Gods creatures, but rather beholds them with fiercenesse and fury, according to that expression chap. 40. 17. *behold everyone that is proud, and abase him*; and secondly, that they imply with what scorn and contempt he looks upon the mightiest of the creatures, either by sea or land; *he beholdeth all high things*, that is, he despiseth them, he looks downward upon them, slighting them as far inferiour to him, according to that Cant. 1. 6. *Look not upon me*, that is, despise me not, *because I am black*; *he is a king over all the children of pride*, that is, the greatest, the mightiest, the proudest of all the creatures by sea or land, that pride themselves in their great strength.

CHAP. XLII.

Verf. 2. **I** Know that thou canst doe every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.] That is, that it is not possible to withhold thee from doing any thing thou hast thought or purposed to doe: which is more fully expressed in the Translation set in the margin of our Bibles, *and that no thought of thine can be hindered*: yet we must know withall, that Jobs aim in these words, *I know thou canst doe every thing*, &c. was not only to professe that he knew God was able to doe whatever he pleased, but also that he had authority and power to doe what he would, that being the soveraign Lord over all, and infinitely wise and good and just, he might doe whatever he pleased; and so withall to imply, that it was no way fit that any man should murmure against that which God doth, & that it was mere madnesse for any man to think to contend with him. Though therefore Job had spoken as much before concerning the omnipotency of God, yet there was more intended in these words then that: for whereas before by his reiterated complaints of Gods dealing so severely with him, and by his eager desiring that he might plead his cause with God for the clearing of himself, he had seemed to question Gods justice, (and haply transported with the bitterness of his sufferings, his mind inclined to think, that God had laid his hand too heavily upon him, though withall he durst not but think that God was most just;) now he recants all this, by acknowledging that God in regard of his Sovereignty could doe with his creatures whatever he pleased. Some understand the second clause of Gods omniscience, to wit, that no thought of mans heart can be concealed from God; and some restrain it to Gods knowing Jobs heart concerning that which he had now spoken, as if Job had said, *I know thou canst doe all things, and thou knowest that I speak what I think*, when I say so. But I rather think that both clauses are meant of Gods power and right to doe in all things whatever he would; wherein Jobs aim might be to imply, that God knew how, and was many wayes able, to bring glory to his name and good to his children, even out of their afflictions; at least that however it was both foolish and sinfull for any man to contend with God about any thing he did.

Verf. 3. *Who is he that hideth counsell without knowledge* [&c.] Some understand this also as spoken with reference to Gods omniscience, as if Job had said,

Who can be so brutish, as to think to hide any thought or counsell of his heart from God? But they are plainly a repetition of the words which God had spoken to Job chap. 38. 2. (concerning which see the Note there) Job applying them to himself with a holy kind of indignation; thereby the more sharply to tax his own folly in questioning Gods dealings; *Who is he that hideth counsell without knowledge?* as if he had said, Just cause hadst thou to upbraid me with those words, as thou didst erewhile, *who is he that hideth counsell without knowledge?* or, what a wretch was I to hide counsell without knowledge! or, I am that very man, who have darkned counsell without knowledge. *Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, things too wonderfull for me, which I knew not.* He saith that he had uttered that he understood not, because through rashnesse, unadvisednesse and ignorance, he had talked foolishly, he wist not what; and that he had uttered things too wonderfull for him, which he knew not, because they were the secret counsels of God, concerning which he had discoursed so weakly, which are indeed too high and wonderfull for man to comprehend. Some would referre this particularly to that which followeth in the next verse, as if he had said, *Therefore have I uttered that I understood not, &c.* to wit, when I said (as it follows vers. 4.) *Hear, and I will speak, &c.* But doubtlesse it is meant of all that he had spoken foolishly concerning Gods dealing with him, that not understanding Gods ends in correcting him, yet he had murmured, as if God had dealt too severely with him, considering how holily he had lived, & had so boldly challenged liberty that he might plead his cause with God, not understanding sufficiently either Gods infinite Majesty, or his own weaknesse, or how unsearchable Gods wayes and counsels are. So that his drift in these words is to condemn himself in that for which God had blamed him: though withall there is an intimation too, that he had offended not wittingly, but through ignorance and infirmity. As for that illative particle, (Therefore) either it impliyes that because he was the man that had darkned counsell without knowledge, therefore he now confessed that he had uttered that he understood not; or, that because he had uttered he wist not what, for this God had justly taxed him for darkning counsell by words without knowledge.

Verf. 4. *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak, &c.* Some, as is already noted upon the foregoing verse, think that Job here mentions the words wherein he had spoken so foolishly. But I rather conceive that Job here professeth, that he would not hereafter speak as he had done, but as he should be taught by God. First therefore, he desires leave to speak in an humble manner, *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak;* reject not one that is conscious to himself of his own weaknesse and folly: and then he adds, *I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me;* as if he should have said, I desire thou wouldst hear me speak; but at shall not be in a way of contending with thee, as I did before, or as I desired before, but only by way of seeking to be taught by thee. So that the last clause, *I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me,* may be spoken, either as in reference to the same words spoken twice by the Lord chap. 38. 3. and 40. 7. as if he had said, Lord, thou wert pleased to say to me, *I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me;* but with shame enough

enough I may acknowledge my folly in giving thee occasion to upbraid me so, and must now desire that of thee, namely, that I may seek information of thee, and so thou wouldest instruct me: or else as in reference to his own words chap. 13. 22. wherein he had challenged God, as it were, that God should answer what he could object; for now, as recanting that, he professeth that when at any time he should desire to speak to God, it should not be by way of contending with God, but only by way of desiring instruction from God, *I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*

Verf. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee.* The knowledge he had now gotten of the power and sovereignty of God he prefers before that he had before, which he had gotten by the instruction of his forefathers and teachers; and that, as the words seem to imply, upon these grounds: either first, because now he had been taught immediately by God, even as if God had presented himself before him to be seen by him; or secondly, because he had now with his eyes seen the signs of Gods presence; or thirdly, because the enlightening of his knowledge by Gods immediate speaking to him, was as far beyond that he had before, as the seeing of a thing with the eye is beyond the hearing of it with the ear, it was more clear and certain and convincing; or fourthly, because now he had been humbled by Gods afflicting hand, which had opened his eyes, and made him see that of God which he saw not before. All these may be comprehended in this expression, *but now mine eye seeth thee*; though I conceive it is primarily meant of his beholding the visible signs of Gods presence, and the effectually working thereof upon him.

Verf. 6. *Wherefore I abhorre my self, and repent in dust and ashes.* Either this last clause hath reference to his present sitting in the ashes, of which mention was made chap. 2. 8. (and thereof see the Note there) as if he had said, Sitting here in dust and ashes, I do humbly repent of all I have spoken so foolishly; or it may imply a promise that he would repent in dust and ashes, according to the custome of those times; or else it may be meant of the low dejection of his spirit, to wit, that he did repent with as much self-confusion and sense of his own vilenesse, as if he were covered over with dust and ashes. From ch. 3. 3. to the end of this verse all hath been expressed in meeter in the originall, the rest is again in prose.

Verf. 7. *After the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz, &c.* Having brought Job to humble himself, and to repent, and beg mercy for his offence, the Lord addresseth himself next to give sentence out of the whirlwind against his three friends, (who haply began to be exalted in their spirits, as apprehending by the Lords checking Job for his folly, that he took their part against him) and directing his speech to Eliphaz by name, as being haply the ancientest and most honourable of the three, but especially because he brake out first against Job, and had handled him most bitterly, *My wrath, saith he, is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.* Wherein is observable, first, That though Job had spoken much amisse, as is before noted, yet he is said here to have spoken right; to wit, comparatively, he had spoken far more rightly then his friends had done; and that because they

had condemned Job for a wicked man and an hypocrite; merely because of his heavy afflictions; and though they spake the truth concerning Gods punishing wicked men, and blessing the righteous, yet it was out of an opinion, that God did constantly deal thus with the wicked and righteous here in this world, which was a grosse error: and Job on the other side had rightly maintained his own innocency against them, and that God did usually both prosper the wicked and afflict the righteous; and had striven against his impatience, though he were sometimes overborn by the bitterness of his sufferings, and the violence of Satans temptations: secondly, That God vouchsafed not to talk long with these men, as he had with Job, but to shew his anger, takes them up very short, and so sends them away: and thirdly, That he never mentions Job without an expression of his favour to him, to shew what a high esteem he had of the man whom they despised; for four severall times he calls him his *servant Job*. As for Elihu, because he had not so condemned Job, but only reproved him for his rash impatient expressions, therefore God reproved not him at all.

Verf. 8. *Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, &c.* That is, each of you seven bullocks and seven rams: and so many, and that of the greatest sort of sacrifices were required, (whereas by Moses Law there was but one bullock appointed for the sin-offering of a Priest) to make them know thereby how great their sin was, and how highly God was offended with them. For though it is probable that they aimed sincerely at Gods glory in all their pleadings with Job, yet God would have them see how much he detested all such rash judging of godly men; and there being so many prudent and pious men that offend herein, he would have this left as a memoriall, to testify how much he mislikes this in any men whatsoever. As for the following words, *and go to my servant Job, and offer up for your selves a burnt-offering*, the meaning thereof is this, that when they had gone and provided these cattel here injoynd them, they should then goe and carry them to Job, that so he might offer them as sacrifices to God on their behalf. Whether Job were a Priest, as Melchisedech was, or only the first-born and chief of his family, (who in those times were wont as Priests to offer sacrifices,) or whether God did now only in an extraordinary way appoint him to doe this service, we cannot certainly conclude: but however, herein was Job a type of Christ our Mediatour; and hereby God notably doth both honour Job, and try the faith, obedience, humility and sincerity of his three friends, in making them imploy Job, as Gods speciall favourite, to offer up their sacrifices, to pray for them, and so to make reconciliation between God and them, whom they had condemned as a wicked hypocrite, hated of God, and therefore so severely punished. So that to this, and that which God here added, *my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept*, that place seems to have reference Ezek. 14. 14. *Though I have three men, Daniel and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls.*

Verf. 10. *And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends, &c.* By this, the Lord turned the captivity of Job, is meant either (as some say) that God restored to him all that had been taken from him, as when men carried away into captivity are brought back again; or, ly, that God delivered him out of all the mis-

miseries, wherein before he had been as it were held captive; or thirdly, that God did now free him from being any longer under the power of Satan, into whose hands God had delivered him, chap. 2. 6. And it is said that this God did, when he prayed for his friends, to intimate, how well it pleased God, that he could so heartily intercede for those that had used him so ill: wherein he was also a type of Christ, who prayed for them that crucified him, Luk. 23. 34. As for that which follows, *Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before*, to wit, as is afterward expressed, vers. 12. *fourteen thousand sheep*, whereas he had but seven thousand before, *six thousand camels*, whereas he had but three thousand before, and so in the rest chap. 1. 3. it cannot be thought that this was done in an instant, but in proceſſe of time; though withall it is probable, that the extraordinary blessing of God upon him was much manifested in the speedy encrease of his estate.

Vers. 11. *Then came there unto him all his brethren, &c.* That is, his kindred, neighbours, and acquaintance. These had before estranged themselves from him; either because of his poverty, or because they looked upon him as an hypocrite, hated of God, as his three friends did, as Job often complained, chap. 6. 11, and 19. 13, 14, &c. but now they came again flocking to him from all parts. Some conceive that this was not till God had doubled, or at least greatly increased his estate: for which I see no just ground. Rather it may be most probably thought, that when the fame was spread abroad, how God had appeared in a vision to Job and his friends, and had taken his part against them, and had miraculously recovered him of all his bodily distempers, and some way perhaps blessed him in his estate, then they came thus to visit him; and so *did eat bread with him in his house*, that is, feasted with him in his own house: which may be added also to imply Jobs meeknesse, who would not now reject them, because they in his adversity had despised and forsaken him. And then for the following words, *and they bemoaned him, and comforted him, &c.* to wit, in regard of his late heavy sufferings; we may well conceive, that hereby or herewith they did as it were excuse their former neglect of him, or perhaps blame themselves for it. *As for their presents every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold*, this is not mentioned, as if they were given to relieve his poverty, and as a new stock to begin on; but only to shew, that by way of congratulating Gods mercy to him, and by way of honour and reverence afforded him, they came with their presents to him, as to great men in those times they were wont to doe. For though Jobs losse was very great in his cattel, yet there being no mention made of the losse of any other part of his estate, I see no reason why we should take it for granted, that he was brought to such a beggarly condition, as it is commonly thought.

Vers. 13. *And he had seven sons, and three daughters.* Just as many as he had before chap. 1. 2. But yet some say, that because his other children were not lost, but were alive with God in heaven, therefore even in his children his number was doubled too; & that there was no need that his new stock of children should be twice as many as before, as his cattel were. And to this others adde also, that he would not have had twice as great an estate to leave to his children, as he had before, if

his children had been twice as many as they were before. But however hereby is implied, both the perfect recovery of his health, and likewise that his wife was, together with his other friends, reconciled to him: unlesse we should say with some, that these children he had by another wife; which is not so probable, both because there is no mention of the death of his former wife; and also because it is most probable that presently upon his recovery God comforted him in this particular, as well as in other things; thereby also giving him hope of children.

Verf. 14. *And he called the name of the first, Temima, &c.*] Their names are thus punctually expressed, to manifest the truth of the history.

Verf. 15. *And their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.*] Which shews that they were married, not to strangers of another nation, but, for Iobs greater comfort, to some of his own country.

Verf. 16. *After this lived Iob an hundred and fourty years.*] This also implies the perfect recovery of his health, and makes it most probable, that he lived before the age of Moses, of which see the Note chap. 1. 1. yet how old he was before he was afflicted is no where expressed: for that which some say, that he was seventy years old before he was afflicted, building upon this, that his years after his calamities, as well as his cattel, were twice as many as they were before, which is an hundred and fourty, is a mere conceit.

Verf. 17. *So Iob died being old and full of daies.*] See the Note Gen. 25. 8. Thus God made good to Iob, what Eliphaz promised him if he would repent, chap. 5. 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.*



A N N O T A

ANNOTATIONS

Upon the book of P S A L M S.

P S A L M I.

Verf. 1.



Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly, &c.] This book is often cited by Christ, and his Apostles, by the name of *the Psalms*, Luk. 24. 44. *All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets; and in the Psalms; and the book of Psalms*, as Luk. 20. 42. *David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said to my Lord, &c.* yea and in expresse tearms, as written by the inspiration of the holy Ghost, as Matth. 22. 43. *How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?* and Acts 1. 16. *The holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, &c.* Many Expositours hold that all the Psalms were made by David; but I cannot see that they make good what they say: for though it is very probable, that the most of them were composed by him, and provided purposely to be sung in the Tabernacle and the Temple, and that because it is evident that some, even of those Psalms before which Davids name is not prefixed, were yet made by David, as we see in the second Psalm, which is expressly said to be Davids, Act. 4. 25. and in the 105 Psalm, of which it is said, 1 Chron. 16. 7. that *David delivered it into the hand of Asaph and his brethren*, and yet neither of these have any title prefixed before them (and the like may be said of others) and therefore I conceive it is that he tearms himself, *the sweet Psalmist of Israel*, 2 Sam. 23. 1. and the Apostle Peter saith that he was a *Prophet*, Act. 2. 30; yet I conceive it is unquestionable, that some of the Psalms were composed by other holy men of God, that wrote also by the inspiration of Gods spirit; first, because the prefixing this title *A Psalm of David* to some, implies clearly that all are not his; secondly, because the 90. Psalm is in the title expressly tearmed *A Prayer of Moses*; thirdly, because some of the Psalms sung in the Temple were made by Asaph, as is plain 2 Chron. 29. 30. *Hezekiah the king and the Princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer*; and fourthly, because it is manifest by that which we find in divers Psalms, that some of them were made after the Jews were returned from the Babylonian captivity, as the 126. and the 137. yea some of them, as is very probable, in the dayes of the Maccabees, when Antiochus did so much mischief to the Jews, as Psal. 44. As for this first Psalm, it seems purposely set in the first place, as a Preface to all the rest, because it commends unto men the diligent study of Gods word, and consequently, amongst the rest, of this book of Psalmes, and a holy life answerable thereunto. For the drift of it is, to shew the blisse of the godly and the unhappy condition of the wicked; and that chiefly, I conceive,

to remove the scandall of the frequent afflictions of the godly, and the great prosperity of wicked men. The first words of the Psalm are expressed in such a manner, as if the Psalmist had been seriously considering of the condition of Gods righteous servants, and did thereupon at last break forth into this Resolution, *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly, &c.* The summe whereof is this, that they are truly blessed and happy, not that seek after the riches and honours and pleasures of the world, but that keep themselves so, that they have not any commerce or communion in any thing with any of the wicked, that is, that withdraw themselves from all society with such men, and partake not with them in their evil wayes. For to expresse this are these three severall Phrases used, *that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly; nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornfull*: wherein by these three tearms, *the ungodly, sinners, and the scornfull*, is not meant, that some are ungodly, some sinners and some scornfull; but only thereby he seeks to expresse the whole impiety of wicked men; (and therefore after ward vers. 4. they are all three comprehended under that one word *ungodly*; *The ungodly are not so, &c.*) and by not walking in the counsell, nor standing in the way, nor sitting in the seat of such men, is meant, not having any fellowship with such men in their evil courses. Yet almost all Expositours observe a gradation in these words. For first, by not walking in the counsell of the ungodly, they say is meant, either not joyning with them in their wicked consultations; or not taking or following their advice, according to that which is said of Ahabiah 2 Chron. 22. 4. 5. *that the house of Ahab were his counsellors, and that he walked also after their counsell*; or not doing as they doe, according to that Job 21. 16. *the counsell of the wicked is far from me*. Secondly, by not standing in the way of sinners is meant, not continuing in their evil practices, which is more then the other. And thirdly, by not sitting in the seat of the scornfull is meant, not setting up a mans rest securely and presumptuously in the society and practises of those that do scorn God and good men, and all wayes of goodnesse, but especially those good men that shall undertake to reclaim them from their evil wayes. And thus there is herein an intimation given, by what degrees men become extremely wicked, and that the good man, though he may fall and sin, yet he will not at least run into these extremities.

Verf. 2. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord.* That is, in the word of God: for the Scripture in generall may be called *the law of the Lord*; so Christ speaks of the Psalmes, Job. 10. 34. *Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods?* and indeed the drift of this Psalm may seem to be more particularly to stir up men to the reading of the Psalmes.

Verf. 3. *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, &c.* That is, by the severall streams of a river; for so husbandmen are wont sometimes to cut out severall channels for the water of rivers to run in, the better to water the ground where they have fruit-trees growing. And because the Psalmist speaks here of a tree whose leaf shall not wither, it must be understood of such trees as are green all the year long: such as is the palme-tree, according to that Psal. 92. 12. *the righteous shall flourish like the palme-tree*, and the olive-tree, Psal. 52. 8. *I am like a green olive*

olive tree in the house of God, and divers other trees besides. Now whereas the Psalmist saith here of the godly man, that *he shall be like a tree, planted by the rivers of water, &c.* the meaning is, that in generall he shall constantly continue in a flourishing and prosperous condition; and yet withall I conceive it is principally meant of the prosperity of such a man in regard of his spirituall estate. For though the same phrase of speech is sometimes used to set forth the glory of a mans outward condition, as we see Ezek. 31. 3, &c. *The Assyrian was a Cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, &c. the waters made him great, &c.* yet here I say it seems principally meant of his spirituall blisse. He is compared first, to a tree planted, to imply that his goodnesse is not by nature, but by grace. Secondly, to a tree planted by the rivers of water, with respect to his ingrafting into Christ, who is the fountain of the gardens, that is, his Churches, Cant. 4. 15; to his regeneration, and the continuall supply of grace and comfort from the spirit of Christ, wherewith his soul is continually refreshed and quickned; and likewise to his daily meditation on Gods word, (whereof he had spoken in the foregoing verse,) which is to him the means of his spirituall good. Thirdly, to a tree which bringeth forth his fruit in due season, with respect to the holiness of his life, the fruits of Gods spirit, and that especially manifested in the duties of his particular calling and condition; which is also said to be *in season*, either because he layes hold upon every opportunity to doe good, or because his works are such as God requires, and not like the works of hypocrites, which are like untimely fruit, that never come to their full ripeness. Fourthly, it is said that *his leaf shall not wither*, with reference to his constant perseverance in grace, and the unchangeable constancy of his happiness; that it is not like the flourishing of the wicked, which is only for a season; but constant and permanent, even in the winter of adversity, and after this life is continued to eternitie. As for the last clause, *And whatsoever he doth shall prosper*, the meaning is, either that whatsoever he doth, to wit, by the assistance of Gods spirit, shall be accepted of God, and tend to his own salvation; or that all that he doth, and consequently all that shall befall him, shall tend to his advantage, Rom. 8. 28.

Verf. 4. *The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaffe, which the wind driveth away.* He compares them not to a tree in a barren soil, as by way of opposition to that which is before said of the godly; one would have expected; but the more emphatically to set forth the wretchednesse of their condition, he compares them to chaffe &c. concerning which see the Note, Job 21. 18.

Verf. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgement, &c.* That is, Because they are so unlike the righteous, or because they are like the chaffe, therefore they shall not be able to look God in the face, as being confounded in themselves through the guilt of their own consciences; or they shall not be able to justify themselves, but shall be soon cast and condemned; or they shall not be able to endure the wrath of the Almighty, but shall sink under it, and shall be cast out of his presence, namely in the judgement, that is, at the day of the last judgement. For that all this may be comprehended under these words, *shall not stand in the judgement*, is evidently to be seen, where the same expression is used:

used: as Psal. 5. 5. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight;* and Luk. 21. 36. *pray alwayes, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to passe, and to stand before the son of man;* and Rom. 14. 4. *who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth;* and Rev. 6. 17. where we read that at the day of judgement the wicked shall say, *The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?* I know the words here may also be understood of the times when God judgeth the wicked here in this life, to wit, that when God begins to call wicked men to an account here, they are not able to stand before him: but doubtlesse it is at least principally meant of the last judgement, which is therefore called here by way of emphasis *the judgement*; as appears more clearly in the following clause, *the ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*: for the meaning of this is, that at the day of judgement God shall separate the goats from the sheep, the wicked from the righteous; and so when the righteous shall be owned by Christ, and taken into glory, (though they be scattered here, they shall be gathered into one congregation hereafter) the wicked shall not be suffered to be amongst them, but shall hear that fearfull sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, &c.* Matth. 25. 32, &c.

Verf. 6. *For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, &c.* That is, He approves, takes speciall notice of, and delights in their wayes, and consequently he takes care of them, to direct, blesse and prosper them. For that all these the Scripture doth usually comprehend under this rearm of knowing, is evident in many places: as in Job 9. 21. *I would not know mine own soul,* (concerning which see the Note there;) and so also Psal. 31. 7. *thou hast known my soul in adversity*, that is, thou hast been tender and watchfull over me; and Amos 3. 2. *you only have I known of all the families of the earth*: and on the other side by not knowing is meant, not approving nor regarding, &c. as Psal. 101. 4. *I will not know a wicked person*; and Matth. 7. 23. *then will I professe unto them, I never knew you.* So that the meaning of these words, *the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*, is, that the Lord knowing the wayes of the righteous to be according to his will, doth accordingly approve of their wayes and courses, and doth direct and blesse and prosper their wayes, even till he hath brought them to heaven; whence it is that the way of the righteous is called *the way everlasting*, Psal. 139. 24: and then on the contrary he adds, *but the way of the ungodly shall perish*; that is, The Lord approves not the wayes they take; and therefore all their practises and endeavours shall perish and come to nothing, yea they and their wayes shall perish together.

P S A L M II.

Verf. 1. **W**HY do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? That this Psalm was composed by David we have a clear testimony in that passage of the Churches prayer Act. 4. 24, 25. *Thou, Lord, by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage? &c.* and that it was in the Apostles times accounted the second Psalm (which yet some have denied, making the first Psalm only a preface to the Psalms, or this and that to be but one Psalm)

Psalms is evident Act. 13. 33. *it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* Now if concerning the subject matter of this Psalm that question should be propounded, which the Ethiopian Eunuch propounded to Philip in a like case, Act. 8. 34. *Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?* the answer I conceive must be, that he speaketh here joyntly both of himself and of his seed, the Lord Christ, who is often called the son of David, and in relation to whom that promise was made to David concerning the everlastingnesse of his kingdome 2 Sam. 7. 12. 13. *I will set up thy seed after thee -- and I will establish the throne of his kingdome for ever:* yet withall I doubt not, but that his primary intention was, to write this as a prophecy concerning Christ, and that what he speaks in relation to himself and his government was only, as there was in them a type and shadow of Christ and his kingdome; and that hence it comes to passe, that many passages in the Psalm can very hardly be understood of any other but of Christ; though others may be easily and fully applyed both to the one and to the other, as having respect to that everlasting kingdome promised to him and to his seed, which began to be made good to him in his own person, but was especially to be accomplished in Christ. And accordingly we must understand this first clause of the Psalm. So soon as David was anointed king, not only the greatest part of the Jews rose up against him, siding with the house of Saul and Abner, who sought to make Ishbosheth king, 2 Sam. 2. 12, 13, 14. but even forreign nations also bandied against him, as the Jebusites 2 Sam. 5. 6. the Philistines also vers. 17. the Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, and Syrians, chap. 8. 1, &c. Now David looking upon this as a shadow of the great opposition that should be made both by Jews and Gentiles against Christ, first in his own person, to which the Apostles apply this Act. 4. 25, 26, 27. and afterwards to all succeeding ages, in the Gospel, kingdome and Church of Christ; and being assured that as all their rage against him would be in vain, so much more all their furious bandying against that everlasting kingdome, which God had promised his seed, would be to no purpose; to expresse this he breaks out thus, *Why do the heathen rage* (or *tumultuously assemble together*) *and the people imagine a vain thing?* the propounding of it by way of an Interrogation strongly implying, first, the undoubted certainty of the thing, in that the thing it self is not questioned, but only the cause of it; secondly, the exceeding wickednesse of their rage, which made him thus abruptly break forth in the very beginning of this Psalm, as by way of admiration and indignation, *Why do the heathen rage?* &c. thirdly, the causelesnesse of their rage; and fourthly, the folly of it, because they were so violent in that which they would never be able to effect: and indeed this manner of speech, *Why do the heathen rage?* &c. seems to be used, as bewailing the sillinesse of their making such a busse to no purpose at all.

Vers. 2. *The kings of the earth set themselves, &c.* That is, to take counsell, and to imploy all their wit and power against the Lord and his anointed, as it follows in the next clause, *and the rulers take counsell together against the Lord and against his anointed.* He calls them *the kings of the earth* by way of contempt, to intimate what a vain thing it was for them to fight against the God of heaven, as they did, in that

they opposed him, whom God had anointed to be king over his people: which as it must be chiefly understood of Christ, as we see the disciples did, against whom all the endeavours of his enemies must needs be in vain, because God had anointed him to be the king of his Church; so also it may be meant of David, this being that whereby David assured himself, that all the opposition that was made against his kingdome should be in vain, to wit, because he had not out of an ambitious spirit sought the kingdome, but God of his own good pleasure had chosen him when he thought nothing of it, and appointed him to be anointed king of Israel. What is farther to be known concerning the anointing both of David and Christ, see in the Note upon 1 Sam. 16. 1.

Verf. 3. *Let us break their bands asunder, &c.*] That is, Let us cast off their government, and disclaim all subjection and obedience to their laws: and by *their bands and their cords* is meant the laws and government of the Lord God and his Anointed, to wit, David and his seed, and that is principally Christ, yea and consequently of all those that shall by authority from Christ seek to bring men into subjection to Christ, and to keep them to the obedience of his laws and government; so that these words do imply, first, that they that rebelled and rose up against the kingdome of David, & much more they that withstood the kingdome of Christ, did thereby oppose and fight against the Lord God, who had appointed David to be king of Israel, and Christ to be king of his Church, though they might haply pretend no such thing: secondly, that they who opposed the doctrine and discipline, the Ministers and governours in the Church of Christ, did thereby (whatever they may pretend to the contrary) oppose the Lord and his Christ: and thirdly, that because the Gospel and discipline of Christ will not give men liberty to live licentiously in wayes of sin, therefore they count no bondage greater then to be subject hereunto, and consequently in their pride they storm against it; great men especially, that think it a diminution of their greatnesse to be subject to any power whatsoever, and pretending falsely that the servants of Christ seek to bring them into bondage, they doe all they can to cast off the yoke of Christs government, according to that Luk. 19. 14. *we will not have this man to reign over us.*

Verf. 4. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.*] This which is said of the Lords laughing and having them in derision may imply, first, that the Lord shall discover their subtlest and best-managed designs to have been foolish and ridiculous; secondly, that he shall make them to be derided and scorned by others, according to that 2 King. 19. 21. *The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn;* thirdly, how securely God may slight all their endeavours against him and his people, and that because God can so easily frustrate all their most cunning and violent attempts; fourthly, that when God forbears them for a time, and lets them goe on, it is not because he wants power to crosse and crush them, but because he scorns their rage, as being able in an instant to bring all their endeavours to nothing, which we find again thus expressed Psal. 37. 13. *The wicked plotteth against the just, &c. The Lord*

Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming; and fifthly, that God rejoyceth in their ruine, according to that of Solomon, Prov. 1. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.* And then the ground of all these is implied in that title which is here given to God, *He that sitteth in the heavens*, (where the Lord of heaven is opposed to the kings of the earth, and his sitting quietly in the heavens to their tumultuous assembling and consulting together,) for hereby is clearly intimated, first, that the Lord is farre above the reach of their malice and power; secondly, that he seeth all their plots and conspiracies against him and his anointed, which likewise is inferred from the Lords dwelling in the heavens Psal. 11. 4. *the Lords throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men*; and thirdly, that he is of omnipotent power, and sitting in his throne above hath all things below under his power and command, and so can doe with his enemies what he lists, as the Psalmist expresseth it Psal. 115. 3. *Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased.*

Verf. 5. *Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, &c.* Some referre this word (Then) to the time, when by the coming of Christ into the world, and by the preaching of the Gospel, his kingdome should be manifested; others to that which was said before, concerning the enemies bandying against the Lord and against his anointed, and concerning the Lords laughing them to scorn. And indeed I conceive that the words must be understood generally thus, (and that with relation both to David and Christ) that when the enemy had used their utmost endeavours against the Lords anointed, and the Lord had suffered them a while to run on, as deriding the vanity of all their endeavours, at last, when they were ripe for destruction, and God should find it to be a convenient and fit time to take vengeance on them, then he should call them to an account, *Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, &c.* Nor can I conceive, that this which is said of Gods speaking to them in his wrath, was meant of that fearfull sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed*, which God should pronounce against them at the day of judgement: rather I conceive this expression implyes, first, that the vengeance that should be poured forth upon them should be by the command of God; which also shews how easily God could destroy them, it was but a word of his mouth, and it would be presently done: and secondly, that by the punishments he would inflict upon them, his wrath against them should be plainly manifested; he would not alwayes speak to them in a way of mercy by the preaching of the Gospel, but at last he would speak to them in a way of wrath, and make them see their former madnesse. Because David was but of mean parentage, his enemies hoped they should easily crush him; but when they were vanquished, and David was settled in the throne of Israel, then their folly was manifested to all men. And so because of the obscurity of Christs outward condition, his enemies thought they should soon ruine him; but by the ruine of his enemies God soon declared how vain their attempts were, to the overwhelming of them with horroure and confusion, which is expressed in the next clause, *and vex (or, trouble) them in his sore displeasures* which implyes, not only the outward troubles, which God should bring upon them, that had been the great troublers of his Church, out of which they should

not know how to extricate themselves, but also the inward fears and terrours that should also surprize them.

Verf. 6. *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Sion.*] This may be meant of David; of whom it might be said that God had set him as his king, upon his holy hill of Sion, because God had chosen him in a peculiar manner as his king, to rule over his people, (concerning which see the Notes 1 Sam. 16. 1.) and Sion David chose to be the Metropolis or chief seat of his kingdome, whence it is often called the city of David, as here it is called Gods holy hill, because the Temple was built there, where God was pleased as it were to dwell amongst his people, of which also see the Note 1 King. 8. 1. But principally it is meant of Christ, to wit, that God the father doth here affirm, that immediately by himself he had appointed and established Christ to be for ever the king of his Church, of which see also the Note before cited 1 Sam. 16. 1. For because that city of David was a type of the Church, in relation thereto the Church of Christ is often called Jerusalem, and Sion; as Gal. 4. 26. *Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all;* and Heb. 12. 22. *you are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem:* and it may well indeed be called Gods holy hill of Sion, not so much because Christ there performed the work of our Redemption, and from thence the Gospel first went forth, as in regard of its spirituall resemblance thereto, to wit, first in regard of its stability, being built upon a rock, *against which the gates of hell shall not prevail*, Matth. 16. 18. and sure therefore to be Psal. 125. 5. *as mount Sion, which cannot be removed;* secondly, in regard of its eminency, Isa. 2. 2, 3. which makes the members thereof to be *as a city that is set upon a hill which cannot be hid;* thirdly, because the inhabitants thereof are nearer to heaven then others are, they see those things which others cannot see, they mind heavenly things, and look down with contempt upon whatever is great in the world; fourthly, because it is hard and difficult to be such as the members of the Church ought to be, it will make us toil and breath to attain hereto, as men doe that climb up some high hill; and fifthly, in regard that God in Christ dwells in the Church, which is as a holy temple unto the Lord, and there only is God truly worshipped. However doubtlesse God the father is here brought in, as affirming this concerning his Son, *yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Sion*, to shew first, why the heathen and others were charged before with setting themselves, and taking counsell against the Lord, to wit, because they did it against him, whom the Lord had established to be his king in Sion; secondly, how deservedly God should pour forth his wrath and indignation upon them, that stuck not to bandy so against his king; thirdly, how vain all their attempts must be, that are against him of whom the Lord had said, that he should reign in Sion. For the emphasis of this expression is in the word (*I*) *yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Sion;* as if he had said, and who can crosse what I the Lord will have done?

Verf. 7. *I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son, &c.*] This is one of those places from whence some Expositours conclude, that this Psalm can be understood of none but Christ, and that because though angels and men are sometimes called the sons of God, yet it were very harsh to say of any

any man that he was begotten of God, as here it is said, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* But first, because I doe not see, but that a man may be said figuratively to be begotten of God, as well as to be born of God, as it is said of all the regenerate, 1 John 3. 9. *whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin*; ſecondly, because the very ſame expreſſion in effect is uſed concerning the regenerate, Jam. 1. 18, *of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*; and thirdly, because many of thoſe that reſtrain it to Chriſt, yet underſtand it in a figurative ſenſe of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, I ſee no cogent Reason, why we may not in ſome reſpect underſtand it of David, as a type of Chriſt, in the firſt place; but then principally, and more clearly and perfectly of Chriſt. They that apply theſe words firſt to David, they conceive that in the firſt words, *I will declare the decree*, David profeſſeth, that to take away all pretence of ignorance from thoſe that would not ſubmit to his government, he would make known Gods decree concerning him, to wit, that he had appointed and anointed him to be the king of Iſrael, and had decreed that the kingdome ſhould be ſettled upon him and his ſeed for ever. And to this ſome adde, that David might the more properly ſay this of himſelf, because he was a prophet, and did declare and make known the will of God unto men, Pfal. 40. 9, 10. *I have preached righteousneſſe in the great Congregation*, &c. and particularly that decree of God concerning his kingdome, Pfal. 78. 70, 71. *He choſe David alſo his ſervant, and took him from the ſheep-folds*, &c. And then for the next claule, *The Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, they referre that to the day of his being anointed king, in regard he was then declared to be the Son of God in a peculiar manner; not only because of the regall dignity in generall, according to that which is ſaid of Magiſtrates Pfal. 82. 6. *I have ſaid, ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the moſt high*, and in regard he became then, as it were, a new man, being of a ſhepherd made a king, and by the effuſion of an extraordinary meaſure of the gifts and graces of Gods ſpirit upon him, as is noted 1 Sam. 16. 13. he was thenceforth another manner of man then he had been before; but alſo because God had in a ſpeciall manner covenanted with him, that he would be his father, as in reference to his being a type of Chriſt, and the ſtock out of which the Meſſias was to ſpring. But then underſtanding it of Chriſt, the ſeed of David, (as doubtleſſe the tearms were purpoſely ſuch as could very hardly be applied to David, that we might principally underſtand it of Chriſt,) then in the firſt words, *I will declare the decree*, we muſt know that Chriſt is brought in, reſolving to make known to the world, that God had conferred the kingdome upon him, and that he did not of himſelf uſurp this power. So that hereby is ſignified both that Chriſt partly in his own perſon, and partly by his Apoſtles and Miniſters, (Ephes. 2. 17. *Chriſt came and preached peace unto you*, &c.) ſhould proclaim in the Goſpel what God had determined concerning him, ſo to render all his enemies inexcusable; and alſo that by preaching the Goſpel his ſubjects were to be gathered, and his kingdome to be eſtabliſhed. And as for the following claule, *The Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, that may be underſtood either firſt, of the eternall generation of Chriſt,

as he was the only-begotten son of God; and so by those words (*this day*) must be meant the day of eternity, where there is no time past nor to come, no beginning nor ending, (as neither is there of the fathers begetting his son) but always one present *this day*. And indeed that this eternall generation of the Son must be at least implied and included is evident, first, because if this be spoken to Christ, it implies that he had a being before he was man, whence it is also said Phil. 2. 7. *that he took upon him the form of a servant*: and secondly, because the Apostle Heb. 1. 5. seems to prove Christ to be the son of God in a farre more peculiar manner then the Angels are, by warrant of this place, *Vnto which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?* Or secondly, of the day of the Son of Gods Incarnation and coming into the world; which to make good they say that this place is cited by the Apostle A^ct. 13. 33. partly to prove what he had said before vers. 23. *Of this mans seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour Iesus*. Or thirdly, of the whole time of his manifestation in the world, when he was sent forth as a prophet to teach them, and was declared evidently to be the son of God, (*We beheld his glory, saith Saint John chap. 1. 14. the glory as of the only-begotten son of God*) partly by his miracles Joh. 5. 36. and partly by that voice that was heard from heaven, Matth. 3. 17. and 17. 5. *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased*. Or fourthly, of the day of Christs Resurrection: and indeed this seems to me to be at least chiefly intended, both because it seems to be spoken of some solemn time of Christs manifestation to be the son of God, and *he was declared to be the son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. 1. 4. and especially because the Apostle doth clearly affirm, that this was accomplished in Christs Resurrection, A^ct. 13. 33. *he hath raised up Iesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*. Nor needs it seem strange, that it should be said that on that day Christ was begotten, in regard that though he began not then to be, yet then he began most clearly to appear to be the son of God; whereas from the beginning he had been hid in the bosome of the father, and in the law he had been only darkly shadowed forth, then he was clearly manifested: and therefore some understand that desire of Christs, that he might be glorified, John 17. 1, 5. of his desire that he might be raised from the dead. However we see that Christ is called in regard of his resurrection *the first-begotten of the dead*, Rev. 1. 5. and the day of our Resurrection is called *the Regeneration*, Matth. 19. 28.

Vers. 8. *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*] This also can very hardly be applyed to David; no otherwise, then by holding that by *the uttermost parts of the earth* is meant *the uttermost parts of the land*, to wit, the land of Canaan: and so that place also must necessarily be understood, Psal. 72. 8. *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth*, if we understand it of Solomon, as the title of the Psalm, *A Psalm for Solomon*, seems to direct. But now in Christ we may look for the full accomplishment of this, as being a promise made to him, that so farre his enemies should be from ruining his kingdome, that all the inhabitants of the earth should be his, and in subjection to him; partly in that some
of

of all nations should by the Gospel be brought in voluntarily to submit to his government, partly that all the rest shall be under his power and disposing: and how the Church may be said to be the Lords or Christs inheritance, see in the Note Deut. 40. 20. As for those words prefixed before the promise, *Ask of me, &c.* the drift of them is, either first, to imply his fathers singular love to him, in regard whereof he might have whatever he would ask of him; or secondly, to intimate his just right to what was promised, in regard he was the son of God; as if he had said, Being my son, thou mayest of right demand the heathen to be thine inheritance: and indeed, however the kingdom was given to Christ as he was man, yet as he was the only-begotten son of God, it was his by right of inheritance, and therefore Christ is called *the heir of all things*, Heb. 1. 2. or thirdly, to imply the priesthood of Christ, to wit, that upon his mediation, merits and intercession (wherein may be included that prayer of his for his elect people, Joh. 17. 5, &c.) all nations should be put in subjection under him. And indeed Christs kingdom is ascribed to his mediation, Phil. 2. 8, 9. *He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c.* Yea, and whereas Christ alledgeth this place to prove, that he did not take upon him the priestly office of himself, Heb. 5. 5. *Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee;* it may seem that it is alledged in reference to these following words, *Ask of me, and I shall give thee, &c.* for there is nothing else in the place, that hath any relation to the priesthood of Christ.

Verf. 9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, &c.* That is, if they will not obey thee, but shall bandy together against thee, thou shalt not only break all their plots and combinations, but shalt also easily and irrecoverably destroy them for ever by thine almighty, eternall and unresistable power, even as when men dash in pieces a potters vessel. The like expression is frequently used in other places, to signify the irrecoverable destruction of a people, as Jer. 19. 11. *I will break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potters vessel, that cannot be made whole again;* and so also Isa. 30. 14. Some conceive that by the *rod of iron* here mentioned is meant, the word of Christ, which is the sceptre of his kingdom, according to those expressions elsewhere; *He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*, Esa. 11. 4. and Rev. 19. 15. *Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.* And indeed the wicked may well be said to be destroyed by the word of God, because the destruction that falls upon them is the sure effect of those threatnings, wherein this destruction was denounced against them. But yet here I conceive it is meant of the unresistable power of Christ; namely, that Christ shall destroy his obstinate enemies, not only at the day of judgement, but also often here in this world: a notable instance whereof we have in the Jews, who are so dashed in pieces, that they are scattered abroad all the world over. Yet some shadow there was also of this in the great victories of David over the nations that rose up against him, 2 Sam. 8. and 1 Chron. 18 and 19.

Verf. 10.

Verf. 10. *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: &c.*] He expressly addresseth his speech to kings and judges, because first Gods advancing them was an engagement to them above others to serve the Lord; secondly, such have usually great power to draw men in to Christ, or to keep men off from submitting to him; thirdly, one end why God hath given them their authority is, that they may improve it for the drawing in of men unto Christ; and fourthly, being puffed up with their greatnesse, and the high conceit they have of their own wisdom, and being withall still jealous, that their subjects by embracing the Gospel will prove seditious, they above others are hardliest wone to stoop to the government of Christ. Yet withall under these the people also are comprehended, as appears by that generall clause verf. 12. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him:* if kings be bound to submit, much more those of inferiour rank. As for the expressions here used, *Be wise*, and *be instructed*, they imply, that however they might count the Gospel foolishnesse, and pride themselves in their wisdom, yet it would be their wisdom to embrace and believe the instruction of the Gospel, and most grosse folly it would be to oppose the Lords anointed. And then this word (*now*) is added, *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings*, as in reference to the word *then*, verf. 5. *Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, &c.* as if he should have said, *Now* submit, whilst you may be accepted, before that time comes, when he will surely destroy all that have opposed him. How both this and that which followeth may in some sense be applyed to David, we may easily conceive.

Verf. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling.*] Rejoycing and trembling are here joyned together, as are fear and joy Matth. 28. 8. *And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy:* and it may be meant, either of their carnall rejoycing in their greatnesse and prosperity, as if he had said, Whilst you rejoyce in your eminency above others, forget not to fear and tremble before the Lord your God; or else rather of their spirituall rejoycing in Christ, and the wonderfull grace of God tender'd to them in him, namely, that they should take heed that they did not turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, or Christian joy into carnall licentiousnesse, but that their joy should be still temper'd with a holy fear of doing any thing that should provoke the Lord to displeasure against them.

Verf. 12. *Kisse the Son, &c.*] To wit, both by way of acknowledgement of his sovereignty, if you referre it to David, and by way of submission to his regall power; and likewise also by way of divine adoration, if we understand it of Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, coequall with the father. For that kissing signified both these, we may see in the Notes upon 1 Sam. 10. 1. 1 Kings 19. 18. and Job 31. 27. As for the following words, *lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, &c.* they must be referred to the Lord, mentioned in the foregoing verse; if ye understand the former words of David: but those being understood of Christ these may farre more probably be referred to him, *Kisse the Son, lest he (that is, the Son) be angry, &c.* and by perishing from the way is meant, either their being cut off by the judgements of God here in this world, suddenly and unexpectedly, whilst they promised themselves nothing but safety, or their being

being cut off whilst they were pursuing their projects; and disabled from bringing them to effect.

Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.] That is, in the Lord Jehovah, or rather in his Son Christ. And this clause is added, both to set forth the grievousness of the miseries that would befall them against whom his wrath should break forth, by affirming how happy they were that by trusting in Christ were secured from that danger; and also to imply, that though there was nothing spoken yet but of Christs severe wrath against his enemies, yet to his people he should be the authour of all perfect happiness.

P S A L M III.

The Title. **A** Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom.] It is not improbable that this Psalm was composed by David in the very time of his withdrawing himself from the rage of Absalom, if we consider first, that the time was long, secondly, how carefull David was to redeem all times of any freedom for any spirituall services, and thirdly, that he was thereto enabled by the speciall inspiration of Gods spirit. Yet the words may well bear it, that it was composed afterward, to expresse how he was affected in that time of his distresse, thereby to sound forth the praises of God.

Vers. 1. *Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! &c.*] It is said 2 Sam. 15. 12. that this conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom: and chap. 17. 24. that Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him; which was according to Hushai's counsell vers. 11, *I counsell that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude.* And hence it is that David here complaining to God, upon whom he casts his grief and care, mentions this three severall times, that his enemies were so many; expressing himself by way of admiration, to shew how strange it was, that so many should so suddenly without any cause fall off from him, whom God had anointed to be their king, to set up an ambitious youngster, as his son Absalom was, to reign over them.

Vers. 2. *Many there be which say of my soul, &c.*] That is, of me: See the Note Gen. 27. 4. *There is no help for him in God;* that is, no hope or possibility of help. And thus they animated one another against him, and did thereby exceedingly wound his soul: either first, out of an Atheisticall contempt of God, boasting that now they had such a strong party, that God should not be able to help him; and indeed we see with what confidence Ahithophel spake, 2 Sam. 17. 2. *I will come upon him while he is weary, &c. and all the people that are with him shall flee, and I will smite the king only:* or secondly, because they judged thus from that sore calamity that God had brought upon him, in the insurrection of his own son against him: or thirdly, because they judged that God had forsaken him for his sin in the matter of Uriah (which probably might be the reason that moved Ahithophel, though so great a Politician, to joyn with Absalom) for so we see Shimei concluded, 2 Sam. 16. 8.

Selab.] Divers opinions Expositours have concerning the meaning of this word, which is three severall times inserted in this, and often in other Psalms; but very little clear evidence of reason there is in any thing they alledge as the ground of their opinions. That which hath most shew of likelyhood is, either first, that it is set as a muscally pause, to shew that in that place the singers were for some time to make a stop in their singing: which may seem the more probable, because we find this word no where in Scripture, but in this book of the Psalms, and in the song of Habakkuk; and in both alwaies at the end of a verse, unlesse it be in these few places, to wit, Psal. 55. 19. and 57. 3. and Habak. 3. 3, 9. or secondly, that it was a Note to mind the singers, that in that place they were to lift up their voices; which is grounded upon this, that the word seems to be derived from an Hebrew word that signifieth *to elevate or lift up*. These two, I say, are the most probable opinions. Only withall we must know, that the end of either of these was to signifie the observableness of the foregoing passage, as here how considerable this sad condition of David was, that his enemies should say, there was no help for him in God. They that hold it was a muscally pause, say it was to give a hint, that men should seriously ponder of that which was then said: and they that hold it was for the lifting up of the voice, or (as some think) to shew that the foregoing passage was to be sung twice, do likewise conceive, that hereby was signified how admirable and observable that was for all that heard it.

Verf. 3. *But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head.*] He tearms God his glory, first, because God had given him, and he knew would still give him, cause of glorying in his favour and help: secondly, because he had honoured him, and so would still, by giving him victory over his enemies; and this he opposeth to the shame that lay now upon him, when he was glad to fly for the saving of his life: and thirdly, because it was the Lord that had advanced him to that glorious condition of being king over his people, and therefore he doubted not but that he would maintain and protect him therein. And then again he tearms him *the lifter up of his head*, first, because God did comfort and support his dejected spirit, and keep him from sinking under his afflictions: secondly, because through Gods grace to him, he was enabled to bear up his head with confidence and comfort, according to that Luk. 21. 28. *And when these things begin to come to passe, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh*: thirdly, because God had often, and he knew still would, deliver him out of troubles, and raise him from any dishonour and reproach that should be cast upon him; as it is said that the king of Babylon did lift up the head of Jehoiachin, when he freed him out of prison, 2 King. 25. 27: and fourthly, because he had exalted him to be king, and therein he doubted not but he would continue him, according to that Psal. 110. 7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.*

Verf. 4. *I cryed unto the Lord with my voice, &c.*] Why was it not enough to say, *I cryed unto the Lord*, but that these words must be added, *with my voice*? I answer, first, because he would covertly imply, that in stead of spending his breath, as in
their

their afflictions many do, in vain and uselesse complaints, and murmurings against God; he rather chose to call upon God for help: secondly, because he would hereby oppose the lifting up of his voice in prayer to their clamours and insultations, as if he had said, Their outcries shall not put me to silence; whilst they lifted up their voice in such outcries against me, *God hath forsaken him, there is no help for him in God*, this stopped not my mouth, but *I cryed to the Lord with my voice*: and thirdly, to shew, that by reason of the strength of his affections, he not only prayed within himself, but also out of the fervency of his spirit, poured forth his desires in vocall prayer. As for the following words, *and he heard me out of his holy hill*, it may be meant both of Gods hearing him out of heaven, which is sometimes in the Scripture called Gods *holy hill*, as Psal. 15. 1. *who shall dwell in thy holy hill?* and also of the hill of Sion, and that because the Ark was there, the sign of Gods spirituall presence amongst them; and probable it is that David by this expression intended to intimate, that though he was now driven from Gods holy hill, and had sent back the Ark thither, as is related 2 Sam. 15. 25. yet he doubted not but thence God would hear his prayer.

Vers. 7. *Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God, &c.*] Though David had the Cherethites and Pelethites and Gittites with him, 2 Sam. 15. 18. and many others, that fell not off to Absalom, yet his trust was in God, and not in them. As for the following words, *for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone*, they may imply the shame and dishonour that God had cast upon them: (concerning which see the Note Job 16. 10.) But I rather think the meaning to be, that Gods hand had been heavy upon them, as when a man strikes one so on the cheek that he beats out his teeth; which is added in the next clause, *thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly*: Yet some conceive that ungodly men are compared here to wild beasts, whose teeth being broken, they are disabled to doe hurt as formerly.

Vers. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, &c.*] That is, It is only in his power to save, and it appertaineth to him to save those that by Covenant are his people: which is more fully expressed in the next clause, *thy blessing is upon thy people*.

P S A L M IV.

The Title, **T***O the chief Musician on Neginoth.*] That is, on *stringed instruments*: for so the word Neginoth is translated, Habak. 3. 19. It seems the Psalms which David composed he distributed amongst the severall companies of the Levites, that were the holy singers in the Tabernacle and Temple, some to one company, some to another; and accordingly this was delivered to the Master of that Quire that played on stringed instruments.

Vers. 1. *Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness, &c.*] That is, Thou that art the witness, judge, maintainer and revenger of mine innocency, and the righteousness of my cause. And doubtlesse this is meant of the cause of his Regall dignity, whereto God had anointed him. So that though the time and occasion of composing this Psalm be not expressed, yet we may well think it was composed

fed when some opposition was made against him concerning the kingdom, to wit, either by Absalom, or rather (because the words vers. 2. *How long will ye turn my glory into shame?* seem to imply a longer opposition) by Saul, or his family and their abettors after Sauls death.

[*Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distresse, &c.*] The meaning is, that God had often enlarged his heart with joy and comforts when he was as a man imprisoned through grief and sorrow; or rather, that God had often freed him out of great streights and troubles. As for the following words, *have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer*, see the Notes upon 1 Kings 8. 30.

Vers. 2. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? &c.*] This is added, as the fruit of his foregoing prayer, to wit, that he doubted not of Gods protection; to which end he turns his speech here to his enemies, *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?* By the common consent of almost all Expositours, the Hebrew words, here translated *sons of men*, do signifie men of eminency and renown above others, at least such as thought so of themselves, (and therefore are these words translated *men of high degree*, Psal. 62. 10. and so also Psal. 49. 2.) and by his *glory* here is meant either his innocency, which his enemies sought to traduce, or rather the honour that God had put upon him in making him his anointed king, which he saith they sought to turn into shame; first, because they charged him, that he ambitiously and treasonably sought to wrest the Crown from his lawfull Sovereign, and from his seed, and so by their slanders sought to make the people to look upon him as a rebell, rather then the Lords anointed; and secondly, because they despised and derided him, and in his low estate insulted over him, Ye shall see what his Anointing will come to: Is it likely that Gods Anointed should hide himself in rocks and dens, or fly to the Philistines for shelter? &c. as Shimei triumphed over him, when he fled from Absalom, 2 Sam. 16. 8. and thirdly, because they sought with shame to cast him down from that dignity, whereto God had advanced him, and so utterly to ruine him. Why this is expressed by way of Interrogation, we may see in the reasons given for the like expression Psal. 2. 1. It is as if he had said, *O ye that exalt your selves so much in your greatnesse, how is it that after so many manifestations of Gods favour to me, and of his chusing of me to be your king, you are still so bold or foolish, as to seek to turn my glory into shame?* And accordingly also we must understand the following clause, *how long will ye love vanitie, and seek after leasing?* to wit, that therein he chargeth them first, with taking great delight and pleasing themselves in those plots against him, which would prove vain devices and lying imaginations, and such as they would never be able to bring to effect; see the Note Job 15. 35. secondly, that though they pleased themselves with many colourable pretences for their opposing of him, yet they would all prove vanity and lies; see the Note Job 15. 31. and thirdly, that it was merely for preferment and reward, for honours and riches, that they opposed him the Lords anointed; wherein they exposed themselves to Gods displeasure, for worthlesse transitory things that were mere vanity, and wherein they should never find that happinesse they expected.

Vers. 3.

Verf. 3. *But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.* Doubtlesse this David speaks concerning himself; as if he should have said, Whereas the Lord rejected Saul for his impiety, he hath chosen me, whom he hath endued with true piety, that I might advance godlinesse and religion in the land: and indeed this expression, of Gods setting him apart for himself, seems to have relation to that of Samuel to Saul, 1 Sam. 13. 14. *The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart*, and that which God said to Samuel 1 Sam. 16. 1. *I will send thee to Iesse the Bethlehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.* Yet withall we see it is expressed indefinitely, that *the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself*, that is, that the Lord will own every truly pious man, as one of those whom he hath chosen and set apart from the world, that they might be his peculiar people; and that purposely to imply, that if the Lord did thus own all his holy Saints and servants, much more would he own him who endeavoured after true piety and godlinesse in his whole conversation, and whom he had set apart to that peculiar service of ruling over his people. So that the drift of the words is clearly, to put his enemies in mind, that he did not ambitiously seek to advance himself, but that the Lord had chosen him to be king; so that they opposed the Lord in opposing him; and however low he might be brought for a time, yet the Lord would raise him up again, and would not fail to protect his own servant.

Verf. 4. *Stand in awe, and sin not, &c.* This clause in the Septuagint is, *Be angry and sin not*: and because the Apostle hath the very same words Eph. 4. 26, it is thought that he alledgeth them as from this Psalm. Nor yet need we be troubled that the Apostle should not cite them according to the Hebrew Originall; which is well translated in our Bibles, *Stand in awe, and sin not*; for first, because the Septuagint translation was best known to Gods people in those times, he might cite it, as a passage taken out of that translation, holding forth a necessary duty, though not rendring the genuine sense of the words in the Psalm, and so not as a testimony of the Prophet David: secondly, the word in the Originall, here translated *Stand in awe*, doth generally signifie any moving of the heart; and though it were therefore here principally intended concerning their being moved inwardly with the fear of God, yet it might well be applyed by the Apostle to mens being moved with anger: and thirdly, when men stand in awe of God, this must needs be accompanied with a holy anger against themselves for the offences they have committed against God; and in that regard, that which the Prophet David saith here, might be, without wresting the place, cited to the purpose for which the Apostle there alledgeth it. As for the drift of David in these words, some conceive that here he turns his speech to those that sided with him, *Stand in awe and sin not*; as if he had said, Though you be grieved and troubled to see me, the Lords anointed, to be so persecuted and troubled as I am, and that I should be in so low a condition, whilst mine enemies prosper and triumph over me; yet as standing in awe of the Majestie of God, take heed that you sinne not either by

murmuring; or taking any unjust course to help your selves; *commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still*; that is, think seriously with your selves of all things that may quiet your hearts, and so quarrell not against God, but wait patiently and quietly upon him. But the continued series of the words doth rather shew, that David still continueth his speech to his enemies; *Stand in awe and sin not*: as if he had said, Though you fear not me, yet fear God, who hath chosen me to rule over his people, and sinne not by opposing the will of God: *commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still*; that is, without passion think well what you doe, and take heed that neither by word nor deed you set your selves against God.

Verf. 5. *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, &c.*] Some take this, as that in the former verse, to be spoken to those that sided with David; and accordingly they conceive, that in these words three particulars may be pressed upon them: to wit, first, that they should confesse that God was righteous in all the troubles they underwent, which is to offer God a sacrifice of righteousness, in stead of murmuring against him; secondly, that they should live righteously; and thirdly, that they should rest and rely upon God: for they say the next clause, *and put your trust in the Lord*, is added by way of explaining what those *sacrifices of righteousness* were which he advised them to offer, to wit, a holy affiance and confidence in God: or else this last clause may be added by way of encouragement, that if they would live holily, and quietly submit to Gods will, they need not fear their enemies, but might with confidence rest upon God. But taking this, as the verses before, to be spoken by David to his enemies, then in these words, *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness*, either he adviseth them to doe that which was good and righteous in Gods sight, so intimating (as in reference to those words in the foregoing verse, *sin not*) that it was not enough to avoid the doing of evil, unlesse they did that which was good and righteous, which he speaks of as a sacrifice most acceptable to the Lord; or else, that acknowledging their sin in opposing him the Lords anointed, they should seek to make their peace with God by offering sacrifices to him, and that in a right manner, and without hypocrisie or dissimulation, which he intimates by terming them *sacrifices of righteousness*, of which see the Note Deut. 33. 19. Some conceive, that David spake this as in reference to the sacrifices that Absalom and those of his conspiracy offered at Hebron, 2 Sam. 15. 12, to imply, how vain a thing it was for them that walked in waies of unrighteousness, to think to please God with sacrifices. But I rather think his aim was more generall. Because David was banished as it were from the place of Gods publick worship, the Tabernacle and Ark, whilst his enemies had daily free access thereto, they were ready to boast of this, and to look upon him, as a rotten member cut off from the communion of Gods people, and to insult over him in this regard; and now when he had called upon them not to sin, they might thereupon vaunt of their piety, in that they carefully offered the sacrifices enjoyned them by Gods law; and therefore it was that David did put them here in mind, that the unclean sacrifices of wicked men were an abomination to the Lord, and that God would never regard their sacrifices, unlesse they were offered in a way of right-

righteousnesse, and unlesse they did trust in the Lord, so offering to the Lord the inward worship of the heart, as well as their outward sacrifices. For to this purpose I conceive that last clause is added, *and put your trust in the Lord.* Yet some do understand these words in a sense somewhat different from this: as first, that when they had sought to pacifie God by sacrifices rightly offered, they should then trust in the Lord, that he would pardon them; or secondly, that they should endeavour to live righteously, yet trusting in God for aid to doe so, and not in themselves, and relying on him also for their reward.

Verf. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? &c.* That is, Who will bring us to enjoy any good? We have the like phrase in many places, as Psal. 60. 3. *Thou hast shewed thy people hard things,* and often elsewhere. Now this some think David spake of those that sided with him, to wit, that wearied with the long continuance of their persecutions and troubles, (and perhaps discouraged with Davids letting Saul goe when he had him twice in his power) they began in a manner to doubt or despair whether ever they should see good day any more; *Who will shew us any good?* that is, How can we expect any good end of these troubles? &c. To which David opposeth in the following words his confidence, that through Gods favour the issue should be good, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* Again others understand it of the people, that they for the generality longed and wished for peace, but used not the means to seek Gods favour, as they ought to doe; but as for him, so he might enjoy Gods favour, that was all he desired. But the best Exposition, I conceive, is this; *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good?* that is, The many, the common sort of worldly men, place their happinesse in earthly things, the good of this world, and so are ever greedy after any thing that may be called good in that regard, riches or honour or pleasure, never minding whether God be pleased with them or no; for good they would have, though poor souls, they know not where to find it. But, saith David, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us,* that is, make us glad with the clear manifestation of thy love to us; and we desire no more. See the Notes upon Numb. 6. 25, 26.

Verf. 7. *Thou hast put gladnesse in my heart, more then when their corn and their wine encreased.* That is, When thou hast caused the light of thy countenance to shine upon me, this hath yielded me more true gladnesse of heart, then ever these worldlings had, when they had the most plentiful harvest and vintage; which use to be indeed times of great joy. See the Note Judg. 9, 27.

P S A L M V.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon Nebiloth. That is, upon wind-Instruments. As the former Psalm was delivered to the Master of that Quire that played on stringed-Instruments, so this to the Master of that Quire that played on wind-Instruments. This word *Nebiloth* is no where in the Bible, but only in this place; and therefore it must needs be the harder to say what is meant thereby. Some translate it *inheritances*, from an Hebrew root that

that signifyeth ~~to possess~~. (and so both the Septuagint and the Vulgar Latine render it;) and accordingly they say that hereby is shown, that this Psalm treats of the troubles of Gods people, who are the Lords inheritance, or that it concerns the enemies of Gods people, who sought to drive them out of the land of Canaan, the inheritance of the Lord; concerning which see the Notes 1 Sam. 26. 19. And divers other interpretations are given of it. But the most probable, I conceive, is that first named, that hereby is meant wind-Instruments, the word *Nehiloth* being derived from an Hebrew word that signifieth to pierce through or to wound, because they are hollow, or because of the holes that are in pipes, which have the appearance of so many wounds.

Verf. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, &c.*] That is, speedily and out of hand: for so this expression is elsewhere used, as Psal. 143. 8. *Cause me to hear thy loving-kindnesse in the morning.* I doubt not but David speaks here as in reference to his constant course of praying early in the morning, so giving to God the first-fruits of each day: but yet that which is here chiefly intended is, that God would hear him betimes and without delay; that as his earnest desires carried him carefully to pour out his requests before God betimes in the morning, so God would betimes also come in to his help: *In the morning* (saith he) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* to wit, as waiting for a gracious answer of my prayers, according to that Mich. 7. 7. *I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation;* and Psal. 145. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, or, look unto thee.* Whence it was that Peter and John Act. 3. 4. bad the cripple, as in expectation of what they would doe for him, to look on them.

Verf. 4. *For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickednesse; neither shall evil dwell with thee.*] That is, Thou wilt not own wicked men to be of the number of thy people here, nor wilt thou suffer them to live with thee in thy kingdome of glory hereafter. Yea this phrase may farther comprehend, that God will not protect wicked men, that he will not endure them, nor have any thing to doe with them. However doubtlesse David alledgeth this as a sure argument, that God would hear his prayers, and destroy his enemies, namely because God was alwaies an enemy to such wicked wretches.

Verf. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing, &c.*] He means this of his enemies, that did slander him, such as he complained of to Saul 1 Sam. 24. 9. *Wherefore hearest thou mens words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?* as likewise of those that flattered him with their lips, being bitter and implacable enemies in their hearts; as when Saul profered him his daughter in marriage, &c. And so also that in the next clause, *the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitfull man,* may be spoken in reference to Sauls slaying the Priests, and all other bloody and deceitfull practises of his enemies against him.

Verf. 7. *But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy, and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy Temple.*] By Gods house and Temple here is meant the Tabernacle, whereon the Ark of God dwelt between the Cherubims, (see the Notes on 1 Sam. 1. 9.) in the Courts whereof the people used to worship towards Gods holy place; and by his coming into Gods house in the multitude

tude of his mercy may be meant, either first, that he would goe thither trusting in Gods infinite mercies; or secondly, that his work there should be, with a thankfull heart to extoll Gods many mercies; or thirdly, that through the riches of Gods mercy to him in defending him, and delivering him out of his troubles, he should come to Gods house to worship him there. It seems therefore that Davids aim in these words was, to imply first, that though for the present he was driven from the house of God, yet he doubted not but God would bring him thither again; and secondly, that his purpose then was to praise him there for all his mercies, and to worship him there daily with all reverence and godly fear: for this the second clause doth import, *and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple*; to wit, not only that he would behave himself in worshipping him with all possible reverence, but also that he would doe it with a truly pious heart; his joy when God had delivered him should not make him the lesse, but the more carefull not to offend God. And thus also by opposing this promised piety to the wickednesse of his enemies, whereof he had spoken in the foregoing verses, he doth hereby encourage himself, that God would surely hear his prayer.

Verf. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, &c.*] Some by *thy righteousness* here understand that way of righteousness which God hath prescribed in his word, wherein David being conscious to himself of his own weaknesse, desires to be guided by the spirit of God, that he might not turn aside out of that way: and that, saith he, *because of mine enemies*, that is, lest they should draw me into any way of wickednesse; or that they may not find any thing in me, for which to upbraid me, or to insult and triumph over me, and for which they might seem justly to persecute me. But then others understand hereby the righteousness of God, *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness*, that is, for, or according to thy righteousness, thy faithfulness and justice; as if he had said, As thou art a righteous God, faithfull in making good thy promises, and so art wont to prosper the righteous and destroy the wicked, conduct me safely, and prosper me in all my wayes, *because of mine enemies*, that continually lye in wait for my life. And thus accordingly we must understand the next clause also, *make thy way straight before my face*; that is, cause me to walk right on in the wayes of thy commandements without turning aside; or, carry me safely through those many perplexities and difficulties that lye in my way, and bring me to the end which thou hast promised.

Verf. 9. *Their throat is an open sepulchre.*] This David saith of his enemies, either only generally, to imply how insatiably bloody they were after the destruction of himself and other the faithfull servants of God, even like *an open sepulchre*, that still is ready to devour all the dead that are laid into it; or else more particularly, to imply first, that with their speech they sought to destroy him, as by their lies and slanders, by tempting him to sin against God, by flattering him, and so endeavouring to draw him into a snare; or secondly, with relation to their cruell threatnings, that they breathed forth nothing but slaughter and destruction against him, according to that Prov. 1. 12. *Let us swallow them up alive as*

the grave, and whole as those that goe down into the pit; or thirdly, to imply the loathfomenesse of their blasphemies against God, his truth and people, and other the wicked language they uttered, which coming from the rottenesse and corruption of their hearts, might the rather be compared to the stench of an open sepulchre. And then besides, in regard of their seeking to entrap him unawares, he might compare them to an open grave, whereinto a man in the dark may suddenly fall, not seeing any danger. The Apostle Rom. 3. 13. alledgeth these words, though spoken of Davids enemies in particular, to prove the common corruption of all mankind, not Gentiles only, but Jews also, and that because naturally there is the same fountain of corruption in all mankind: and as under the person of David both Christ and all his members are described, even all the regenerate; so under the persons of Davids enemies all the wicked of the world are described. However clear it is, that what David here saith concerning his enemies, is, to imply his danger thereby, and so to move God to protect him, and destroy his enemies.

Vers. 10. Destroy thou them, O God, &c.] Or, make them guilty, that is, by punishing them make known their guilt: let them fall by their own counsels, or, from their counsels; that is, let their counsels come to nought. As for the following clause, Expositours judge diversly of the casting out there mentioned, cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; to wit, that David prayeth, that they might be cast either out of the Church, or out of the kingdome, or out of the world, according to that Job 18. 18. He shall be driven from light into darknesse, and chased out of the world, or that being shut out of heaven, they might be cast into hell. But I should rather think that the meaning is more generall, to wit, that David prayeth that God would not prosper them in their attempts, but cast them away, and utterly destroy them.

Vers. 11. But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoyce, &c.] Either David desires that they might rejoyce upon Gods manifestation of his love to them in their own persons; or else rather, that the Lords dealing with him might be to them an occasion of great joy, to wit, when thereby they should see how carefull God is to defend and blesse his righteous servants, and to destroy their enemies. And the same is intended in the last clause of this verse, let them also that love thy name, be joyfull in thee, that is, those that love thee: yet withall by the Name of God may be meant his word, or whatever else it be whereby God is made known. Yea, as the Name of those men hate is hatefull to them, and the Name of those they love is delightfull to them; so they that love God, they love his very Name.

P S A L M VI.

The Title. To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith. 3 For the first part of the Title, see the Note upon the Title Psal. 4. and concerning *Sheminith*, see the Note 1 Chron. 15. 21. This is the first of those that are commonly called the seven Penitentiall Psalms; the other six are the 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and the 143.

Vers. 1.

Verf. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, &c.*] That is, Correct me not in thine anger; for so this word *rebuke* is often taken in the Scripture, as Rev. 3. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*; and by this which he desires, that God would not correct him in his anger, nor in his *fore displeasure*, is meant, either that God would correct him gently and moderately, and so that which he prayeth against may be, that severity which God useth sometimes in correcting his own children; or else that God would not lay his hand upon him in wrath, by way of satisfying his justice, but in fatherly mercy to correct him as his child, and not utterly to destroy him as an enemy, according to that Jer. 10. 24. *Correct me, but with judgement, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.*

Verf. 2. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.*] That is, my most inward parts: see the Note, Job 30. 17. Very probable it is which some gather from these words, to wit, that Davids aim in this Psalm was to set forth how he was affected in some sore fit of sicknesse, or to teach Gods servants how they ought to be affected in that condition. Yet these words, *I am weak*, may be meant of his being brought low by any deadly distresse or danger; and deliverance from any such distresse may be termed healing, as Deuter. 32. 39. *I wound, and I heal*; and so also the healing of the sick soul with comfort or grace, as Psal. 41. 4. *Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.*

Verf. 3. *My soul is also sore vexed, &c.*] To wit, with fear of thine indignation, with grief for my sins and thy displeasure, and the insultation of mine enemies over me: *but thou, O Lord, how long?* that is, how long wilt thou afflict me? or how long wilt thou defer to help me? but, as one whose words were swallowed up with grief, he only saith, *How long?*

Verf. 4. *Return, O Lord, &c.*] That is, Whereas thou hast withdrawn thy self for a time from me, return, and be with me again, to help and comfort me, as formerly: *deliver my soul*, that is, deliver me, or save my life. Nor needs it seem strange that David should so earnestly beg for life; first, because death is naturally dreadfull to all men: secondly, because the blisse of the Saints departed was not so clearly revealed under the Old Testament, as it is now: thirdly, because the blisse of this life was by Gods appointment to them a pledge of their future life and happinesse: and fourthly, because he might fear that the cause of Religion, which he sought to establish aright, might suffer much after his departure.

Verf. 5. *For in death there is no remembrance of thee, &c.*] That is, When men are dead, they cannot record and praise thy name before men, as I desire to doe.

Verf. 6. *All the night make I my bed to swim, &c.*] He mentions the night, either because sick men are usually worst in the night; or because he had then most freedome to think of his sins, or his enemies that longed for his death, and might with most privacy pour forth his tears before God.

Verf. 7. *Mine eye is consumed because of grief, &c.*] For weeping, yea grief alone, may darken and marre the eyes. See Job 17. 7.

Verf. 8. *Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.*] Being delivered from his sickness, or the deadly danger he was in, or at least being assured of deliverance, in these words either David resolves to cast off those his enemies, that had been formerly familiar with him, and in the mean season desired his death; or else he engageth himself, as by way of thankfulness for this mercy, that he would not henceforth have any communion with any wicked men; or else rather by these words he insults over his enemies, telling them they might be gone with shame, that had stood gaping after his death, or sought it, and that because the Lord had now heard his prayer and tears.

Verf. 10. *Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed, &c.*] To wit, as being disappointed of what they hoped for: *let them return and be ashamed suddenly;* that is, let them turn their backs and be gone with shame (according to that Psal. 56. 9. *When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back*) and that suddenly, that is, God on a sudden delivering me out of their hands.

P S A L M VII.

The Title. *Shiggaion of David, &c.*] There are divers conjectures in Expositours, but they are mere conjectures, concerning this word *Shiggaion*: as that it was the name of some Musick Instrument, to which this Psalm was to be sung; or the name of some kind of Verse wherein it was composed; or of some tune, or some known song, to the tune whereof it was to be sung. That which seems most probably said is, that *Shiggaion* is derived of an Hebrew word that signifyeth to erre, and so may be translated an *aberration*, or, a *song of wandering*: to wit, either because it was sung in parts, or by severall voices, some singing one clause, and then others another; or because upon the Instrument whereon they played when this Psalm was sung, they ran with their fingers from one string to another; or because it was made of sundry variable or wandering verses; or because therein are expressed those cares of David, which made him in danger to erre or goe astray. Yea because the Hebrew word Prov. 5. 19. doth signifie to be delighted or to wander in love, therefore some translate *Shiggaion of David, Davids variable or delightfull song, or the solace of David.* As for the following words, *which he sang unto the Lord concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite*, it is most probable that this Cush was some great Courtier of Saul, and of his tribe and family, who had accused David to Saul, upon occasion whereof David composed this Psalm. I know that the most Expositours hold, that it is Shimei or Saul himself that is here called *Cush*, by interpretation the *Ethiopian* or *blackmore*; and that, say they, to note his black, malicious and hellish disposition, or that there was no more hope of changing his nature and qualities, then of washing a blackmore white. But besides that the reasons alledged for giving either of them this name *Cush*, have no great solidity in them, and that there could be no cause at all why he might not have expressed them by name, in the Psalm David seems plainly to speak of some slander that endangered his life, which could not be meant of Saul, nor of the revilings of Shimei.

Verf. 2.

Verf. 2. *Lest he tear my soul like a lion, &c.*] In the foregoing verse he had said, *Save me from all them that persecute me*; this therefore which he adds here in the singular number, *Lest he tear my soul like a lion*, must either be understood indefinitely of every one of those that did persecute him, *Lest he tear my soul, &c.* that is, lest he that persecutes me do tear me in pieces, or destroy my life (for soul is often taken for the person or the life of a man, see the Notes Psal. 3. 2. and 1 Sam. 25. 29.) or else of Saul in particular his great enemy, whom others served in their persecuting of David. And by comparing him to a lion, he implies his power and cruelty, thereby the rather to move God to deliver him: and if this were done after Saul had made such a slaughter of the Priests 2 Sam. 22. 18. David had the juster ground to compare him to a lion tearing his prey.

Verf. 3. *If I have done this, &c.*] That is, this which Cush hath laid to my charge, and which is thereupon commonly spread abroad concerning me, to wit, that he adds in the following verse, that when things were all at peace in the kingdome, and that Saul had given his daughter in marriage to David, and preferred him as his favourite in all things, then David sought to take away Sauls life, that he might step into the throne; *If*, saith he, *I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me*, that is, to Saul; which the following clause doth also confirm, wherein he seems to have particular reference to his saving of Saul, when he had him at an advantage, and he restrained his captains from offering him any violence, 1 Sam. chap. 24. and 26. *Yea*, saith he, *I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy*.

Verf. 5. *Let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.*] By this *honour* may be meant his soul, as in Gen. 49. 6. (concerning which see the Note there) which may be said to be laid in the dust, when his life, that proceeded from the union of his soul and body, was taken away, and he laid in the dust; and so both clauses, *let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust*, may both intend the same thing: or, secondly, by his *honour* may be meant that honourable condition whereto God had advanced him, or which God had promised him, to wit, of being king over his people; which might be said to be laid in the dust, either by his death, or by his being brought to a low and poor condition: or, thirdly, by his *honour* may be meant that honourable fame and repute and credit wherein he had lived, and which might remain of him after his death; which in case of his guilt he desires might be laid in the dust, to wit, by the perishing of his memory, or being buried under obloquy and reproach.

Verf. 6. *Lift up thy self because of the rage of mine enemies, &c.*] That is, Because of their rage arise to my help; and so it is the same in effect with the foregoing clause, *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger*: or, *Lift up thy self*, that is, exalt and glorifie thy self as a conquerour, by saving me from their rage. As for the following clause, *and awake for me to the judgement that thou hast commanded*, there are two severall Expositions, neither of them improbable, which are given of it. The first is, that David doth therein desire the Lord to awake for him, to settle him in the kingdome which he had promised him: for because his office was therein to doe justice and judgement, and to settle all things in the kingdome,

which had been out of frame under Sauls reign, and because God had commanded Samuel for this purpose to anoint David, and because God had decreed and said that David should be king, and had at the same time pronounced this judgement against Saul, that he had rejected him, 1 Sam. 16. 1. and what God hath decreed shall be, in regard of its certainty, is frequently in the Scriptures said to be commanded of God, as Psal. 33. 9. *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*, and Psal. 147. 15. *He sendeth forth his commandment upon the earth, his word runneth very swiftly*; therefore doth he expresse this in these tearms, *awake for me to the judgement that thou hast commanded*. And then the second is, which I best approve, that David doth herein desire that God would raise up himself to punish his enemies, and to deliver him that was injured and oppressed: which he tearms *the judgement* which God had commanded, either because God had commanded the sons of men thus to execute judgement, and therefore he doubted not that God would himself doe what he had enjoyned others to doe; or because it was that which he knew God had ordered and decreed.

Verf. 7. *So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about, &c.*] Two things may also probably be intended herein. The first is, that if God would make good his promise, and settle him in the throne, so far as in him lay, the people that were now grown to a kind of profane neglect of Gods worship under the government of Saul, as appeared by the neglect of the Ark all the time of his reign, should be brought to assemble themselves duly together, to perform the duties of his worship and service: and hereby he makes it manifest, that he desired not the kingdome for his own interests, but for the advancement of Gods glory. And the second is, that if God would appear in his defence against his enemies, the experience of Gods justice and faithfulness herein would bring in the people by multitudes to compass him about, (and it may be meant of the Israelites alone, or of other nations joyntly with them, to whom the fame of what God had done for David herein should come) to wit, to praise God, to pray to God for judgement in the like case, yea and in generall to worship God with fear and reverence: for indeed the judgements of God manifested in the world do notably stir up devotion in men. And to this purpose also is that which follows, *for their sakes therefore return thou on high*, that is, exalt thy self, and shew thy self gloriously in this cause of mine; or rather, ascend again into thy throne of judgement, and judge the cause between me and mine enemies: for in these words there seems to be an allusion to the thrones and seats of judgement amongst men, which used to be *on high* above the people, as we see in Solomons throne, 1 Kings 10. 19. or else to the height of the heaven, of which it is said, *The Lords throne is in heaven*, Psal. 11. 4, and because whilst God had forbore punishing his persecutours, it had been as if God had given over judging the world, therefore he desires that God would return to his throne of judgement.

Verf. 8. *The Lord shall judge the people, &c.*] As if he should have said, And therefore from the flanders of men I appeal to God; and know that he will judge righteously: whereupon he addes, *Judge me, O Lord, according to my right*.

righteousnesse, &c. concerning which see the Note, 2 Sam. 22. 21.

Verf. 9. *Oh, let the wickednesse of the wicked come to an end, &c.*] As one that had been long under this affliction, he desires the Lord that at last, some way or other, there might be an end put to the malicious practises of his enemies against him and others, and so thereby that he would establish the just: for (saith he) *the righteous God tryeth the hearts and reins*; that is, the Lord exactly knoweth the secretest thoughts and desires of mens hearts, and consequently he knoweth the integrity of mine heart, and that there never came any such thing into my thought, as they lay to my charge. Because in the entrails of a man the reins lye of all the rest the most retired and hidden, therefore they are added to the heart.

Verf. 11. *God is angry with the wicked every day.*] Hereby is meant, not so much that there is no day wherein God doth not manifest his anger against some wicked men, by pouring forth his wrath upon them; as that he is every day angry with the wicked, even when he forbears them; whence it is that even then they are said to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. 2. 5.

Verf. 12. *If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, &c.*] That is, If the wicked man repents not, and gives not over his persecuting the righteous, God will whet his sword, &c. and by whetting his sword, and having his bow bent, and his arrows prepared in a readinesse, called *the instruments of death* verf. 13. he implyeth how sore and sudden Gods judgements upon him should be; he was ready to shoot, and the wounds given by his sword should be deep and deadly: *he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutours*; he makes and intends them, and decrees them purposely to be shot against the persecutours. And this, being prophetically spoken, some say was accomplished when Saul was sore wounded by the Philistine archers, and afterwards thrust himself through with his own sword, 1 Sam. 31. 3, 4.

Verf. 14. *Behold, he travelleth with iniquity, &c.*] That is, He strives to effect his wicked and mischievous purposes against the righteous, being even pained as a woman in travell to accomplish his intentions, but all in vain. See the Note Job 15. 35.

Verf. 16. *His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.*] These expressions, *His mischief shall return* and *shall come down*, seem to imply, that what mischief the wicked seek to doe to the righteous, God takes it as intended against himself, according to that Zach. 2. 8. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*; and accordingly that it is of God that their mischief, like so many arrows shot against heaven, is turned back upon their own heads: as it was with Saul, who having often plotted how to bring David to fall by the hands of the Philistines, was at last himself overcome by them, by means whereof he slew himself, and they finding his body, cut off his head, and carried it up and down their country in a way of triumph.

P S A L M VIII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon Gittith.] See the Note upon the Title Psal. 4. For these words, *upon Gittith*, which are also the Title of the 81 and the 84 Psalm, the conjectures of Expositours are various. First, some conceive that this Psalm was to be sung with those muscical Instruments, which were used by the Levites of Gathrimmon, who were called Gittites, as Obed-Edom is called 2 Sam. 6. 10; or because David composed this Psalm to be sung when the Ark was removed to or from the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. Secondly, others think, because *Gath* in Hebrew signifieth a wine-press, that the muscical Instrument wherewith this Psalm was to be sung, had the form of a wine-press; or that it was composed to be sung at the vintage amongst the wine-presses, perhaps at the feast of Tabernacles, which was about that time; or that it was to be sung in the tune of those lightsome songs, which they usually sung at their vintages. And thirdly, others say that it was composed upon occasion of some great deliverance or mercy afforded to David, that had some relation to Gath a city of the Philistines; or that *Gittith* was the name of some muscical Instrument, as the Gittern is with us; or the name of some song or tune, used or invented at Gath of the Philistines. And indeed of all these conjectures this last seems to me the most probable.

Verf. 1. *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth! &c.*] That is, thy fame and glory! what excellent things are by thy works manifested and known of thee throughout the world! For by the Name of God in the Scripture is often meant the fame of all his glorious attributes, his power and mercy, &c. as in Mal. 1. 11. *From the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same my Name shall be great among the Gentiles.* And because David in the following part of the Psalm speaks of the great goodnesse of God to man, and that, as some think, in relation to Christ, it is likely that even here he hath principally respect unto that: and he expresseth it by way of admiration, *how excellent is thy Name!* to imply, that he was not able to set it forth in words, as it ought to be. As for the following words, *who hast set thy glory above the heavens*, therein a reason is given why Gods Name must needs be exceedingly excellent in all the earth, to wit, because he had set his glory *above the heavens*: whereby is meant, either that God had manifested so much of his glorious excellencies above in the heavens, which he had taken as the royall seat and throne of his Majesty, by the influences and power whereof the things below are preserved, cherished and governed, that the whole earth stirred up thereby must needs sound forth his praises; or else that Gods glory is so great, that the whole world is not able to contain it: to which purpose the like phrase is often used, as Psal. 108. 4. *Thy mercy is great above the heavens;* and Psal. 113. 4. *The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens;* and in many other places. Others do also understand this glory of God *above the heavens* of the Angels praising God, and of the glory of Christ sitting at the right hand of his father; but David speaks here, as I conceive, of the glory of God, which is manifested to all the inhabitants of the earth.

Verf. 2.

Verl. 2. *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, &c.*] This I conceive is to be understood, as the words do plainly hold forth, of little children and sucking infants, namely, that they do wonderfully set forth the glory of God. For David intending now in the sequele of the Psalm to shew more particularly, how God hath manifested his glorious excellencies, especially his goodnesse and mercy, in man above all his other creatures, he begins here with this, that even in their tenderest years, whilst they are but babes and sucklings, God is exceedingly glorified in them. And whereas this is said to be done *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings*, either no more is intended thereby but this, that by the testimony of babes God doth declare his many glorious excellencies, (even as for the same cause, Psal. 19. 1. the heavens are said to declare the glory of God, to wit, because in them there is so much to be observed, that doth shew forth the glory of God,) as that they should so strangely make their way out of their mothers wombs; that such poor helpless things should be so wonderfully sustained and preserved, being in themselves exposed to all kind of miseries; and that especially by the instinct of nature, which God hath planted in the hearts of parents, whereby even those that are most gracelesse, are yet tender over them, and willing for their good to undergoe any trouble in their noysomnesse and continuall rawling; and many other wonderfull providences besides that may be observed in children: or else this expression may have particular relation to those things that concern the mouths of babes and sucklings; as that they should so presently, by a secret instinct of nature, hunt and wind about for the breasts, those bottles wherein God hath wonderfully provided milk out of bloud for their nourishment, and which he hath made soft, thereby fitting them for their tender mouths; as likewise that they should know how to draw and suck forth the milk there prepared for them, the passages through which the milk issues forth being so ordered, that neither the streightnesse thereof should make it too hard for them to draw it forth, nor the too great widenesse thereof should endanger the stifling of them by its coming forth too fast; and likewise that being grown up a little, they should so soon frame their tongues and mouths to speak the words they hear others speak: for indeed in regard of these many wonders the tongues of stammering children, yea the mouths of sucking infants, do most rhetorically speak forth the praises of God before they can speak. As for that phrase of ordaining strength, *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained* (or *founded*) *strength*, either the meaning is, that God had firmly determined and ordered it to be inviolably and unalterably so, that the glory and praise of Gods strength should be manifested *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings*; and indeed, because whatever discovers the strength of God, tends to his glory and praise, therefore Gods glory and strength are often joyned together in the Psalms, as Psal. 29. 1. *give unto the Lord glory and strength*, and so often elsewhere; and these very words are render'd by the Septuagint, as they are also cited by our Saviour, Matth. 21. 16. *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise*: Or else, God is said to have ordained strength by the praise that redounds to God out of the mouths of young infants, in relation to those following words, be-

cause of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger; namely, to imply that there is strength enough in the mouths of poor feeble infants, to stop the mouths, or to confound all the proud Atheists in the world, that deny the power of Gods all-ruling providence: for these are they that are here called Gods enemies, to wit, because their wisdom, yea their whole lives are nothing else but a continuall enmity against God; and *the avenger*, either because not believing the providence of God, they mind only the revenging of themselves upon their enemies; or because such Atheisticall wretches do hate God, and seek as it were to dethrone God, and being fighters against God, are usually also bloudy persecutors of his servants, and are ever thirsting to be revenged on them; for any deadly and much incensed enemy is usually called *an avenger* in the Scripture, as we may see Psal. 44. 16. This I take is the proper meaning of this place. Yet there is another Exposition that hath much probability in it; to wit, that God doth usually chuse to glorifie himself by weak and simple and despised people, (whom he tearms here *babes and sucklings*, as Christ also tearms them, Matth. 11. 25. *thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes*) rather than by the great learned and wise men of the world: and that the Lord doth this, that *he might still the enemy and the avenger*; that is, that he might confound all the wicked enemies of God and his people; as when he caused the Gospel to prevail in the world by such simple and such mean men: and when he reveals the wisdom of God to such rather than others, this is sufficient to confound the great and wise men of the world, according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 1. 27. *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, &c.* And this, they say, David might alledge, to answer why he should undertake to set forth the praise of God, which in the foregoing verse he had implied was inexpressible, to wit, because God is wont to glorify himself by babes and sucklings: Which makes some also incline to think, that David composed this Psalm in his younger years, when he kept his fathers sheep, and so admires that God should imploy such a babe as he was in setting forth his praise: and to make this the more probable, they observe that vers. 3. he sets forth the glory of the heavens, as they glitter in the night season, (when he used to watch his flocks) making mention of the moon and stars, not of the Sun, and vers. 7. speaking how all the creatures are put under mans subjection, he reckons the sheep first. But however, for our Saviours applying of these words, Matth. 21. 16. to the Acclamation that was made to Christ, by children and others of the common sort of people, that cryed Hosanna to him as he rode into Jerusalem; I conceive the drift thereof was to imply, that if Gods all-ruling Providence was magnified, as David said, by the mouths of *babes and sucklings*, it need not then seem strange, that God should by his Providence stir up those children & despised people to give that Testimony to him, the promised Messiah, even to the confusion of the Scribes & Pharisees, that were the enemies and persecutors of Christ, his Gospel and disciples. Yet there are some, I know, that hold that David did prophetically in these words foretell, how by the acclamation and Testimony of such despised ones Christs glory and kingdome should be promoted; to which purpose they shew that in those

those words, *thou hast ordained strength*, by *strength* may be meant a strong and firm kingdome, as elsewhere it is, namely Psal. 86. 16. *give thy strength unto thy servants*; and again, Psal. 110. 2. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion*.

Verf. 3. *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.*] That is, which received their being at thy command, and were by thy appointment disposed of and ordered according to their severall places and motions and influences. As for the first clause, by *the work of thy fingers* there is meant, I conceive, *the work of thy hands*, as the heavens are called Psal. 102. 25: yet the most Expositours encline to think, that by *tearing* the heavens the work of Gods fingers or his finger-work may be implied, both with what facility, and with what curiosity God made the heavens; that which is made with the fingers requiring art rather than strength, as we see in arras, tapestry, and all embroidered works, whereto the heavens are here compared.

Verf. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindfull of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?*] As if he had said, Because the heavens, the moon and stars are such glorious creatures above that which is in man, or rather, because by the glory of these heavenly bodies we may clearly see how infinitely glorious the Lord is that made them, and that hath taken them to be his dwelling-place, therefore *when I consider thy heavens*, &c. then think I, *What is man? that thou art mindfull of him?* &c. that is, what is mortall man, dust and ashes, or, what are the poor sinfull children of men, that thou shouldest so highly regard him, and be so tenderly carefull of him? And this is meant especially of man, as considered in the state of redemption through Christ, by whom God visited man in great mercy, (according to that Luk. 1. 98. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people*;) and recovered for him all those priviledges of his first Creation, which he had lost by the fall of Adam. And hence it is that the Apostle, Heb. 2. 6. applyeth these words to Christ particularly, (though all the faithfull, as members of Christ, must needs be comprehended) because it is by Christ that man recovers what the first Adam had lost. Nor need we stumble at it that these words should be applied to Christ, wherein the Prophet doth so vilifie man; for indeed in regard of Christs humane nature he was as other men, and it was an act of wondrous free grace, that in him man should be exalted to such a high degree of honour. See the Notes Job 7. 17. and 10. 12.

Verf. 5. *For thou hast made him a little lower then the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour.*] This David speaks as in relation to that glorious estate, wherein man was at first created; when in regard of his earthly body, and that in case of sin subject to dissolution, he was indeed made in a condition *lower then the angels*; and yet withall, because his soul was of a spirituall substance, and endued with reason and understanding like unto the angels, and that he was made after Gods own image for wisdom, holiness and righteousness, fitted for the hope of a blessed and eternall life, and that all things were made to be serviceable to him, and all earthly things were put under his Dominion, it might

well be said, that though he was created in a condition *lower then the angels*, yet it was but *a little lower then the angels*, and that he was *crowned with glory and honour*, as being made so like unto God, and all things put in subjection unto him as their Lord and King. Indeed man soon fell from this glorious condition; but yet David speaks of it, as of the present blisse which through Gods goodnesse man did enjoy, *for thou hast made him a little lower then the angels, &c.* partly because there are some remainders of this glorious condition still left in man; but especially because in Christ man hath recovered that dignity, which our first parents lost; and that not only in regard of the exaltation of mans nature in the person of Christ, but also in regard of the renovation of Gods image by Christ in all his members (which is begun here in all believers, who are made by him partakers of the divine nature, and at last perfected in the glory of heaven) and the right which they have in all things through Christ, who is *the heir of the world*, Rom. 4. 13. And this is thought to be the reason why the Apostle doth particularly apply this to Christ. Yet some do rather hold, that the Apostle doth only there elegantly shew, how that which David spake of man in generall, might in another sense be most fitly applyed to Christ: *Thou madest him a little lower then the angels, or a little while inferiour to the angels*; to wit, all the time of his humiliation, but especially in the time of his agony and his dying upon the Crosse; the bitterness whereof that he might be enabled to undergoe, *there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him*, Lu. 22. 43: & then *thou crownedst him with glory & honour*; which was, when he rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, & sat down there at the right hand of the Majesty of God, *far above all principality & power, &c.* Eph. 1. 21.

[Vers. 6. *Thou hast put all things under his feet.*] This must be understood, as that which went before, partly with relation to that glorious condition wherein man was at first created, and partly with relation to what remainders thereof man still enjoyeth, and partly to that which man hath recovered and doth enjoy in and by Christ. And withall it seems principally meant of those sublunary things, which are as it were wholly at mans disposing: for though all the creatures, even the sun, moon and stars, were made for mans use, and so he may be said to be created Lord over all things; yet this phrase of being *put under his feet* seems to imply a subjection of those things, over which man hath power of life and death, and to doe with them for his use what he pleaseth. But yet, because Christ hath absolute power over all the creatures, therefore the Apostle, applying these words to Christ, Heb. 2. 8, takes them in their utmost extent, proving from thence the subjection even of the Angels to Christ, as also 1 Cor. 15. 27. where he proves from thence that all his enemies, yea even death it self, must be at last vanquished by Christ.

[Vers. 7. *All sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field.*] That is, wild beasts that live abroad in the fields; which is added, because this advanceth much the dominion of man, that they also should be subject to him, and Gods goodnesse to man in giving him so large a dominion. See also the Note vers. 1.

[Vers. 8. *The fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.*] To wit, those sea-monsters, and other creatures that live in the waters, that cannot so properly be called fish.

[Vers. 9. *O Lord, our Lord, &c.*] See the Note vers. 1.

P S A L M IX.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon *Muth-labben*.] It is here again very uncertain what is meant by this word *Muth-labben*: namely, whether it were the name of some Instrument, or some Tune, or some song, or some part in musick; as some indeed think that hereby was meant that which we call the Counter-tenor. Some translate the words, *upon the death of his son*, and so conceive the Psalm was composed upon the death of Absalom, which Davids extreme heaviness then makes improbable. Others render it *upon the death of Laben*, and so hold that *Laben* was the name of some great Commander, that was slain when David got some glorious victory over his enemies; or that it was Nabal, or Nebal, that is here by a transposition of the letters called *Laben*. And then again others translate it, *Upon him that was between*, that is, that stood between the two camps, when he came forth and defied the whole army of Israel, meaning Goliath. But it is evident that this Psalm was composed after the Ark was placed in Sion, vers. 11, and 14. and whether therefore it were composed in remembrance of a victory obtained so long before, is altogether uncertain.

Vers. 1. *I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, &c.*] That is, first, sincerely, wholly ascribing the glory of our deliverances to thee, without the least self-respect: and 2ly, with as much affection as possibly I can, not praising thee with my lips, when my heart is far from thee; *I will shew forth all thy marvellous works*. But how could he doe this, the wonderfull works of God being infinite in number? I answer: Either this must be restrained to the miraculous deliverances which God had wrought for him and his people; or the meaning must be, that he would speak of the severall sorts of his marvellous works; or else, he shews hereby, not what he should be able to doe, but what he did desire, and would endeavour to doe.

Vers. 2. *I will be glad and rejoyce in thee, &c.*] To wit, as acknowledging thee the only authour of all my joy: *I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most high!* that is, who dost every way transcendently excell those that are highest and greatest here in this world. And this title David gives God in this place, because in his marvellous works for him and his people he had shewn himself such.

Vers. 5. *Thou hast rebuked the heathen, &c.*] See the Note upon Psal. 6. 1. This implies that his enemies were many, & as it were from severall nations combined together against him: *thou hast put out their name for ever and ever*; to wit, either by destroying them utterly, that so they may be no more named amongst the living; and by degrees their very memory perish together with them; or by bringing them to such a reproachfull ruine, that they lose thereby all that glory and renown they had formerly gotten.

Vers. 6. *O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetuall end, &c.*] If we read this, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetuall end; and their cities hast thou destroyed; &c.* the meaning seems then to be clearly this: O Lord, thou hast put an end to the destructions, which the enemy began to make amongst thy people; and thou hast destroyed their cities, whereas they thought to have destroyed ours. But reading it as it is in our Bibles, it may be un-

derstood, either to be spoken ironically, *O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetuall end; and thou hast destroyed cities, &c.* as if he had said, *O thou enemy, thou hast finished the ruine thou didst intend to bring upon us, by destroying our cities; to which then that must be opposed which follows in the next verse, But the Lord shall endure for ever, &c.* Or else it must be understood as spoken by way of insultation over the proud enemy, as if he had said, *Whereas thou, O proud enemy, didst resolve never to give over destroying, till thou hadst brought all to ruine; destructions thou seest are come to a perpetuall end, thou shalt no more for ever destroy as thou beganst to doe: thou hast indeed destroyed cities, &c. but* (vers. 8.) *the Lord shall endure for ever; he hath prepared his throne for judgement, that is, it belongs to him to judge the world as a righteous judge, and though therefore he doth it not at all times, he will certainly doe it.*

Vers. 9. *The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed.*] That is, Such they shall esteem him, and such he will be unto them.

Vers. 10. *Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*] That is, those that endeavour to approve themselves to thee, that they may enjoy thy favour; or those that by faith do pray unto thee: and indeed this last is chiefly here meant.

Vers. 11. *Declare among the people his doings.*] That is, Not only amongst the Israelites, but also amongst the nations far and near.

Vers. 12. *When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them, &c.*] That is, the people mentioned in the foregoing verse; or the humble, mentioned in the following clause, *he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.* And this phrase, *when he maketh inquisition for blood*, implyeth, first, that though shedders of blood may escape for a time, yet they shall sooner or later be called to an account; secondly, that no excuses or pretences shall clear or secure those that are indeed guilty of blood; and thirdly, that God makes precious account of the blood of those, of whom the world makes no reckoning at all.

Vers. 13. *Consider my trouble, O thou that liftest me up from the gates of death.*] That is, say some Expositours, from the counsels and plots of mine enemies; making the ground of this expression to be, the custome of all nations, in making the gates of their cities the place where they sat in counsell concerning the affairs of the Common-wealth. See the Note Gen. 22. 17. But rather I conceive that by being lifted up from the gates of death is meant, his being delivered from desperate dangers, wherein he seemed to be nigh unto death, from the jaws of death, from the mouth and brink of the grave; which indeed those words *thou that liftest me up* seem much to favour. See the Note Job 38. 17. Yet by *the gates of death* may be meant the power and dominion of death, which agreeth with that expression of the Apostles of death reigning, Rom. 5. 14.

Vers. 14. *That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Sion, &c.*] That is, in the solemn assemblies of the inhabitants of Sion; for they used to be in the gates of Jerusalem. And why the inhabitants are called *the daughter of Sion*, see in the Note upon 2 Kings 19. 21: and the elegancy is observable of opposing here *the gates of Sion* to *the gates of death* mentioned in the foregoing verse; God

God lifted up David from the gates of death, that he might praise him in the gates of Sion.

Verf. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgement which he executeth, &c.*] This may be meant generally of all the judgements which God executeth on wicked men, because they do all shew forth the power and holiness and justice of God; but rather here that judgement seems to be particularly intended, which is expressed in the following words, *the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands*; because nothing doth more notably discover the wisdom, power, justice and providence of God, then when he causeth wicked men to be entangled by their own cursed practises. In the close of this verse these words, *Higgaion, Selah*, are added. Concerning *Selah*, see the Note Psal. 3. 2. As for that word *Higgaion*, it signifyeth *meditation*; and therefore it may seem added to imply, that the foregoing clause was worthy mens most serious thoughts: yet some take it to be some term of musick.

Verf. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, &c.*] By hell in the Scripture is sometimes meant the grave, as Psal. 16. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*: but if nothing else were intended here, there were nothing then threatned to these wicked wretches, but what is common to the godly together with them. It must therefore be understood here, I conceive, of the place of the damned, or of the grave and that joyntly together: *The wicked shall be turned into hell*; as if he had said, There is no cause why men should be so afraid as they are of these proud wicked wretches; at length God will cut them down, and lay them in the grave, and throw their souls into hell, and then there will be an end of their oppressions. As for this word (*turned*), *The wicked shall be turned into hell*, some conceive it is used in reference to their returning to the earth, from whence they were taken; others conceive that because of their hell-bred qualities, because they are of their father the devil, Joh. 8. 44. and when they are cast into hell they goe to their place, as it is said of Judas Act. 1. 26. thence is this expression of their being turned into hell. But I rather think that this word (*turned*) doth imply either first, that whereas they had set themselves as it were to fight against God, he should foil them, and put them to flight, and turn them back into hell: or secondly, that their end should be far different from what they expected; for whereas they carried themselves, as if they had made a covenant with death and with hell, and as if they meant to exalt themselves above the clouds, in the conclusion they should be brought down to the grave, and their souls thrown into hell.

Verf. 19. *Let the heathen be judged in thy sight.*] That is, by thee; as men arraigned before thy tribunall.

P S A L M X.

Verf. 1. **W**Hystandest thou afar off, O Lord? &c.] See the Note upon Exod. 32, 11. The Greek and Vulgar Latine Translation make this a part of the foregoing Psalm; and so they doe likewise with the 104 and 105 Psalms: but then to make up the number of 150 Psalms, they divide other Psalms into two.

Verf. 2. *The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor, &c.*] This David might intend concerning himself, as being brought very low by the continuall persecution of Saul and his faction; yet he expresseth it generally, because it is usually so with others likewise: but however, that they are poor and afflicted whom the wicked man persecutes, is mentioned as a great aggravation of his cruelty. *Let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined;* that is, let them be ensnared by their own plots. Yet some understand it of their being discovered and apprehended, and punished by the Magistrate for their plots against the righteous.

Verf. 3. *For the wicked boasteth of his hearts desire, &c.*] That is, he glorieth in the sinfull desires of his heart, as justifying them, and applauding and encouraging himself therein: or, he glorieth of his successe in his wicked deeds, wherein he hath accomplished the desires of his heart. As for the following words, *and blesteth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth*, either they may be meant of the wicked mans blessing himself in his covetous practises, to wit, that he justifieth, applaudeth and encourageth himself therein, as assuring himself that they shall bring no evil upon him; and so some read this clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *the covetous blesteth himself, &c.* or they may be meant of his justifying and applauding other covetous wretches like himself.

Verf. 4. *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God.*] That is, Through his pride, which he discovereth in his countenance, he never minds whether his waies be pleasing to God or no; he never seeks Gods favour, but resolves to doe what he lists himself.

Verf. 5. *His waies are alwaies grievous, &c.*] That is, a matter of grief, troublesome or mischievous to others. *Thy judgements are far above out of his sight.* Some by the judgements of God do understand the laws of God, as if he had said, He never minds thy commandments; but doubtlesse the meaning is, that he never regards nor thinks of the judgements which God is wont to execute upon wicked men: *as for all his enemies he puffeth at them*, that is, he slights them, as if he were able to blow them away with a puff.

Verf. 7. *His mouth is full of cursing, &c.*] By *cursing* here some understand all kind of evil speaking, to wit, when wicked men curse and revile and falsly accuse the godly. But others understand it of the false oaths whereby wicked men are wont to deceive the innocent; *his mouth is full of cursing*, that is, he is frequently wont with curses and imprecations annexed to swear this and that, when yet his heart and tongue agree not together: which may seem the more probable, because

cause with *curſing* here *deceit and fraud* are joyned: as likewise because of the following clause, *under his tongue are mischief and vanity, or iniquity*; for this expreſſion implyeth, that under ſmooth and plauſible language he hides mischief and vanity.

Verſ. 8. *He ſitteth in the lurking places of the villages, &c.*] Some underſtand this literally of thieves and robbers; but it is rather ſpoken by way of ſimilitude, to wit, that wicked men do lye in wait for any advantages to oppreſſe and ſlay the godly, and do uſe all cunning and diſſembling courſes to accompliſh their deſires, even as robbers are wont to lye lurking in thickets and caves about villages to watch for paſſengers that goe by, and then unawares break out upon them, and rob and murder them: and ſuch likewise is that laſt expreſſion of this verſe, *his eyes are privily ſet againſt the poor*; that is, he cloſely watcheth to mischief the poor, even as ſuch robbers that ſtand peeping out of their lurking places to watch for thoſe that goe by, or as thoſe that aim to ſhoot a man, doe it with fixing their eyes half-ſhut upon him.

Verſ. 9. *He doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net.*] That is, When he hath enſnared him by his fraudulent and diſſembling dealings, then, poor wretch, with all violence he ſeiſeth upon him.

Verſ. 10. *He croucheth and humbleth himſelf, &c.*] To wit, as a lion, that lyes cloſe to the ground, that he may the better hide himſelf, and with the more ſpeed and ſtrength may ſuddenly leap out upon his prey: *that the poor may fall by his ſtrong ones*; that is, that he may tear the poor in pieces by the ſtrength of his teeth or paws. Now we muſt know, that it is the ſhow which the wicked man often makes of an humble, lowly mind, and his craft in concealing and diſſembling his miſchievous purpoſes, that is here compared to the crouching of a lion: and by *his ſtrong ones* may be meant thoſe ſtrong and mighty men, that are ſubſervient to the wicked man in his oppreſſions.

Verſ. 15. *Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man, &c.*] That is, Break in pieces their power: ſee the Notes upon Deut. 33. 20. 1 Sam. 2. 31. As for the following clause, *Seek out his wickedneſſe till thou find none*, that which he deſires of God therein, I conceive, is this; that whereas the wicked man was ready to flatter himſelf, that God would never require his wickedneſſe of him, as he had ſaid before verſ. 13. the Lord would make him ſee the contrary, and would to that end *ſeek out his wickedneſſe*, that is, call him to an account, lay all his ſins to his charge, and judge and puniſh him for them, *till he found none*, that is, till there be no wickedneſſe of his left unpuniſhed, or till by deſtroying ſuch wretches there be no more foot-ſteps to be ſeen of any ſuch wickedneſſe, according to that Ezek. 23. 48. where the Lord having ſhown how he would deſtroy his rebellious people, he adds, *Thus will I cauſe lewdneſſe to ceaſe out of the land*. Others, I know, underſtand this laſt clause of wicked men, thus; *ſeek out his wickedneſſe till thou find none*, that is, Deſtroy thou the wicked man till there be none left, or that others may be warned by his example, and ſo there may be no more any ſuch Atheiſticall wretches to be found upon the earth. Others take it thus; Discover thou, Lord, the evil purpoſes of the wicked man, and then they ſhall not be able to effect

what they have mischievously intended. But the first Exposition is farre the best.

Verf. 16. *The Lord is King for ever and ever, &c.*] This is here alledged, as that whereon he grounded his hope and desire that God would destroy the wicked, namely, because being the great King of the world, to him it belonged to execute judgement; and being King *for ever*, though he did deferre to help his oppressed people for a time, yet there was no perill in that, since it would be alwaies in his power to doe it. Now for the following clause, *the heathen are perished out of his land*, either it is meant of the wicked Israelites, who are here called *the heathen*, to shew that they were no better then heathens in Gods account, whence it is that the prophet useth that expression, Amos 9. 7. *Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians to me, O children of Israel, saith the Lord?* and then it must be taken as a commination, that God would certainly destroy them out of his land, though it be expressed as if it were done already, to shew the certainty of it, and by way of triumphing in their approaching ruine: Or else rather it is meant of the Canaanites, whom God cast out before the Israelites; and then it is added, that thence he might imply, that as God had cast out and destroyed those nations for their wickednesse, so he would likewise doe with those wicked Israelites, that now defiled the land by their wickednesse no lesse then the other had done.

Verf. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart.*] Some read this last clause, *Thou wilt confirm their hearts*; and then the meaning is, that God would support and bear up the spirits of his servants in hope that he would not for ever forsake and cast off his people, and so would enable them still to call upon him.

P S A L M XI.

Verf. 1. **I***N the Lord put I my trust, how say you to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?*] It is most probable that this Psalm was composed by David either when he was in great streights, or in remembrance of the great streights he had been in, by reason of Sauls persecution. So that these words may be taken as spoken to his friends, whose hearts fainting because of the long continuance of their troubles, they might advise him to lay aside all hope and expectation of the kingdome, and to provide for the saving of his life, and the lives of his followers, by fleeing speedily out of the land to some place of safe refuge. *In the Lord*, saith David, *put I my trust*, who hath promised me the crown and kingdome of Israel; *how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?* that is, how is it then that ye will perswade me, that like a timorous coward I should flee away out of the kingdome to some place of safety, as the poor fearfull bird is wont to fly up to the mountains to escape away from the fowler? Or secondly, they may be taken as spoken to the people of the land, either because they also might advise him for the kingdoms peace to fly out of the land, and so to get him out of Sauls reach; or because they would afford him no place of refuge, but were still ready to betray him into the hands of Saul, by means whereof he was forced

forced to fly as a bird from one place to another, and must needs be dangerously tempted to flee from the people of God to secure himself. Or, thirdly, which seems to me most probable, they may be taken as spoken to his enemies: and that either with respect to their deriding him, because he hid himself in the caves and rocks of the mountains, and fled still from one hold to another, not daring to appear against Saul in the open field; and indeed it is noted that twelve severall times he fled from one place to another to secure himself: or because their continuall persecuting of him, not suffering him to be quiet in any place, but pursuing him up and down, *as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains*, as David said to Saul 1 Sam. 26. 20, was all one in effect, as if they had said, that he should fly out of the land to save his life, according to that which he said of his enemies in the same place, vers. 19. *They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Goe, serve other gods*; concerning which see the Note there. But however this expression, *How say ye to my soul, &c.* may imply, what a sore temptation he found this in his mind, or what a wounding it was to his soul, that he should be thus insulted over or driven to these extremities by his enemies, or thus solicited by his friends or others to abandon his countrey, and the hope that he had in the promise of God: yet the meaning may be only, *How say ye to me, flee as a bird, &c.* of which see the Note Psal. 3. 2.

Verf. 2. *For loe, the wicked bend their bow, — that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.*] That is, at me and my followers, that never meant Saul any hurt, but rather have deserved well both of him and the kingdome. Now this is added as a reason, according to that which is said of the foregoing verse, either first, why his friends or the people advised him to flee away for his life, to wit, because Saul and his followers would no where suffer him to live in safety; and so these words must be taken as the words of those that did thus advise him: or secondly, why he charged the people with saying that he should flee as a bird to the mountains, namely, because they would not afford him any succour or shelter, though they saw his enemies so eager and violent causlessly to take away his life: or thirdly, why it was no wonder though his enemies did so insult over him, because they were continually using all possible means, either by force or fraud, to take away his life: or rather fourthly, why David had charged his enemies with saying, *Flee as a bird to your mountain*, namely, because they were continually seeking to take away his life; when they stood alwaies as it were with their bows bent, ready to shoot at him and kill him, this was a fair warning, that as a bird he should flee to the mountains.

Verf. 3. *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous doe?*] Many severall waies these words are expounded by those that have commented thereon: but there are three that have most probability in them. First, by the foundations that were destroyed may be meant, the means that had been used by him and others, and as it were laid as the foundations, either of settling the peace of the kingdome, or of bringing the affairs of Religion and state of the kingdome to a better condition; and so the meaning must be, that if these were crossed and ruined, neither he nor any other the faithfull servants of God could help that: secondly,

by the foundations destroyed may be meant, either the breaking of covenants, wherein there ought to be stability, and which are as it were the foundations of all civil peace between men and men; or else generally the perverting and overturning of all truth and piety and justice, because these are indeed the foundations and supporters of all kingdomes and common-wealths; whence are those expressions Psal. 75. 2, 3. *I will judge uprightly: the earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved; I bear up the pillars of it* and that Psal. 82. 5. where speaking of the corruptions of judges, the Lord complains, that *all the foundations of the earth are out of course*; and again Prov. 29. 14. *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established in righteousness*: and then the meaning of these words is this, that if there were no justice nor truth nor piety in the land, nothing but violence and oppression, and so hereby the kingdome was ruined, the righteous were blameless herein. And thirdly, it may be spoken as in reference to his own ruine, *If the foundations be destroyed*, that is, If they leave me without any refuge, if all my forts and places of shelter be overthrown or taken from me, if there be no place left me where I may safely set my foot, or if I be utterly ruined, as a house whose foundations are overthrown, *what can the righteous do?* that is, I cannot help it, I have no way deserved it: and so this may be spoken by David by way of comforting himself in his own innocency, or by way of moving the Lord thereby to take his part against his enemies.

Verf. 4. *The Lord is in his holy Temple, &c.*] That is, in heaven, which is often called Gods Temple; the reasons whereof see in the Note upon 2 Sam. 22. 7. Some indeed understand it of the Tabernacle, where God dwelt amongst his people. And indeed the Tabernacle is also often called the Temple: see 1 Sam. 1. 9. but here the following clause explains this, *the Lords throne is in heaven*. However this doubtlesse David opposeth against all the enmity, threatnings and discouragements of men, *The Lord is in his holy Temple*; as if he should have said, Though there be no comfort nor hope to be found on earth, yet there is alwaies comfort and hope to be had from heaven; there the glorious and almighty God of heaven and earth dwelleth, who is the righteous judge of all men, who will alwaies be a refuge to the oppressed. And to the same purpose tend the following words, *His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men*: where the same thing is meant by his eyes beholding, and his eyelids trying the children of men, namely, that he knoweth all men exactly: see Psal. 7. 9. Yet some would have it, that there is an allusion in those words, *his eyelids try the children of men*, to those that do look with their eyes half shut, when they are intent to fix their eyes to discern any thing: and others hold the meaning thereof to be, that God, by winking as it were, and seeming not to take notice of the waies of men, doth thereby try them. But these Expositions are somewhat forced.

Verf. 5. *The Lord tryeth the righteous; &c.*] That is, He exactly knows who they are that are truly righteous: or, rather, *the Lord tryeth the righteous by afflictions*; for because afflictions do purge away the corruptions of the righteous, and discover their graces, therefore they are said to be tryed thereby.

by, as Psal. 66. 10, 11. *For thou, O God, hast proved us, thou hast tryed us, as silver is tryed; thou broughdest us into the net, thou laydest affliction upon our loyns: see also Job 7. 18.* And indeed that this is meant here of trying them by affliction, is the more probable by that which is opposed hereto in the following clause, *but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth*, that is, he hateth him from his very soul.

Verf. 6. *Vpon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, &c.*] That is, He shall pour down upon them many sudden, terrible, unresistable and inextricable judgements. For by tearing them *snares* is meant, that they should be surprized thereby when they thought themselves secure, and should not be able to free themselves from them: and by those tears, *fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest*, either he alludes to storms of wind and thunder and lightening, which also do often send forth a sulphureous savour; or else particularly to the punishment of Sodome and Gomorrha; it being usuall in the Scripture to set forth extraordinary vengeance by the example of that which befell them, as we see Zeph. 2. 9. *Surely Moab shall be as Sodome, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrha*, and so in many other places: and why it is said that he should rain these things upon them, see in the Note Job 20. 23. And then for the next clause, *this shall be the portion of their cup*, the meaning of it is, This shall be that vengeance which God will measure out unto them. It is a metaphoricall expression taken from that ancient custome, either of householders that used to set out to each of their family, or of the governour of feasts that used to allot to every one that sat at the table, their severall portion of meat and drink.

Verf. 7. *His countenance doth behold the upright.*] To wit, as a loving father that delights to behold his child, and is watchfull over him for his good and preservation.

P S A L M XII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon Sheminith.] See the Note upon 1 Chron. 15. 21.

Verf. 1. *Help, Lord, &c.*] This may be desired for himself, or for the godly in generall, that lived in those times of Sauls persecution, (for it is most probable that this Psalm was then composed;) only his or their distresse is the more passionately expressed, in that, as one ready to perish, he cryeth out for help, without naming the parties for whom he desires it: and as a reason of this his desire he alledgeth the generall corruption of the times, that there was scarce a godly or faithfull man to be found; because this sets forth their danger to be great, in regard there were so few from whom any help could be expected, and there were so many in every place that would be ready to wrong and betray them; and it might well be feared, lest in such an universall depravation of manners, even they also might be corrupted.

Verf. 2. *With flattering lips & with a double heart do they speak.*] That is, a heart that suggests one thing to be spoken with the tongue, & in the mean season intends the

contrary. For the first clause, *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour*, see the Note Job 31. 5.

Verf. 3. *The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things.*] By the tongue that speaketh proud things may be meant, such as without fear of God or man cared not whom they slandered, or what falsehoods they reported of them; or such as when they had intangled men with their flatteries, did then imperiously threaten them or insult over them; or such as boasted of themselves, or of their deceits and subtle practises, whereby they doubted not to ruine David, and others that feared God, as seems to be expressed in the following verse, *Who have said, With our tongue we will prevail, &c.* and in all probability this was meant of Sauls courtiers and others, that sided with him to seek Davids ruine. See 1 Sam. 20. 31. and 23. 23.

Verf. 5. *I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*] See the Note Psal. 10. 5.

Verf. 6. *The words of the Lord are pure words, &c.*] That is, wholly free from all vanity and falsehood, and so not like the words of sinfull men, full of lying and flattery and deceit; yea the words of the Lord are so pure in themselves, that they are the means of purifying the children of men. And this is added here, to shew how safely the poor might rely on that promise of God mentioned in the foregoing verse. As for the following words, how the words of the Lord are tryed words, *as silver tryed in a furnace of earth, purified seven times*, see in the Note 2 Sam. 22. 31; and why it is said *seven times*, see Gen. 33. 3.

Verf. 7. *Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*] That is, Thou wilt alwaies preserve them from the men of this generation, though they all in multitudes combine against them. Yet some would have the meaning to be, that God would for ever preserve his servants from all such wicked wretches, as were those of that generation.

Verf. 8. *The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.*] This expression of walking on every side implyes, first, that they then swarmed in every place whereever a man could come: secondly, that they did not hide themselves, but boldly and arrogantly strutted about, vaunting themselves in their wickedness: and thirdly, that they went about seeking to lay wait, to ensnare and to mischief the righteous.

P S A L M XIII.

Verf. 1. **H**ow long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever?] That is, How long wilt thou continually seem not to mind me? or, how long wilt thou proceed to disregard me, as if thou meantest never more to mind me?

Verf. 2. *How long shall I take counsell in my soul, having sorrow in my heart dayly?*] This David complains of, because men in trouble will be eagerly busie to devise in their minds how to free themselves, and through sollicitous fears and cares their minds will run from one thing to another, not knowing what to pitch upon, even

as sick men are wont to tосse up and down in their beds, not knowing how to lye at ease; but, alas, get nothing hereby, but the wearying and vexing of their minds with anxious and distracting thoughts, all proving vain, and their sorrow rather encreasing dayly upon them then otherwise, till God is pleased to send them relief. I know there are some understand this word *dayly* as implying the greatnesse of Davids sorrow, in that it lay heavy upon his heart even in the day time, when businesse are wont to free men from such carking cares: but our Translation will hardly bear such an Exposition.

Verf. 3. *Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.*] Some understand this thus, Keep me waking and watchfull, lest if I grow secure and fall asleep, my sleep prove like that of those that die in their sleep. But by desiring that God would lighten his eyes, he rather desires either first, that God would inform him by the counsell of his spirit what course he should take, lest otherwise he should perish, being left to himself; and so these words may have reference to that he had said in the foregoing verse, *How long shall I take counsell in my soul, &c.* or secondly, that God would chear up his fainting spirit, and comfort his soul, by delivering him out of his troubles, and causing the light of his countenance again to shine upon him, lest he should die in his sorrow and misery: for indeed as sorrow and fainting do usually darken the eyes, whence is that Lam. 5. 17. *For this our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim;* so when the spirits are cheared and the heart comforted, it may well be tearmed an enlightening of the eyes. See 1 Sam. 14. 27. and the Note 2 Sam. 22. 29: or thirdly, (which I like the best, though all three may be comprehended) that God would protect his life, and that by preserving him out of the hands of his enemies, Saul and others. For the Lords giving and preserving of life is often expressed in the Scripture by the enlightening of the eyes, as Prov. 29. 13. *The poor and the deceitfull meet together; the Lord lighteneth both their eyes;* and Joh. 1. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

Verf. 4. *Lest mine enemies say, I have prevailed against him, &c.*] To wit, notwithstanding my confidence in thee; which must needs, Lord, tend to thy dishonour: and those that trouble me rejoyce when I am moved, that is, when I am overthrown, and moved from that condition wherein at present I am, or trusted to have been.

Verf. 5. *But I have trusted in thy mercy, &c.*] As if he had said, Let them doe what they will, be things never so bad with me, I will never be moved from this hold.

Verf. 6. *I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.*] That is, when God shall have dealt bountifully with me, I will for that sing praise unto his name.

P S A L M XIV.

Verf. 1. **T**He fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God, &c.*] David here bewails the horrible prophanenesse that had overspread the face of the Church, the Israel of God, in Sauls time: and to in the first place he mentions the secret Atheism that was in their hearts, as the root of all their wicked-

wickednesse, *The fool*, that is, the wicked man, (see 2 Sam. 13. 13.) *hath said in his heart, There is no God*, that is, he doth what he can to perswade himself that *there is no God*, and to extinguish the light of knowledge and conscience that is in him concerning God; and that secret contempt of God, that is in his heart, is in effect a plain deniall of God and a clear sign that he doth not indeed believe there is a God: which appears by the impiety of such mens lives, *they are corrupt, they have done abominable works, &c.*

Vers. 2. *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men; to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.*] That is, any that did truly know God, and seek after him in the right manner, to wit, to know and serve him, to approve themselves to him, and make him and his glory the end of all their actions. Some conceive that this is expressly spoken of the old world; as if David had said, And thus it was in the daies of Noah, *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, &c.* as it is said Gen. 6. 12. *God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way.* But I rather conceive that David speaks still of the prophanenesse of his own time, (though haply in the expression he useth he may allude to that which is there said,) and that it is all one in effect, as if he had said, The all-knowing God sees it is thus: *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men*, that is, those that are in their unregenerate estate, *to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God*; and he saw there was not any. For that this last is implied is evident, because the Apostle cites the words thus Rom. 3. 11. *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

Vers. 3. *They are all gone aside, &c.*] or *gone back*, as it is expressed Psal. 53. 3. (which is the same in a manner with this) to wit, from God, or from the waies of holinesse and righteousness, wherein God hath prescribed them to walk: *they are all together become filthy*, as being corrupt, and doing abominable things, and consequently good for nothing; whence it is that the Apostle renders this clause thus, Rom. 3. 12. *they are together become unprofitable.* And because this David, or the Lord rather having looked down from heaven, pronounceth concerning the wicked in those daies of Saul, that were not regenerated by the spirit of God, therefore the Apostle applyeth it to shew, that thus all mankind are corrupted before they be regenerated, Rom. 3. 12. See the Note Psal. 5. 9.

Vers. 4. *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread.*] That is, who dayly devour the poor, who are my speciall care, yea the poor of my peculiar people, the Israelites, and that without any fear, yea with delight, making no more conscience of it, then a man would of eating a piece of bread, and so feed and fat themselves thereby, as if they were appointed to be meat for them. See the Note also Job 19. 22. As for the Interrogation in the beginning of the verse, *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people, &c.* some conceive it hath the force of a commination; as if the Lord had said, Do they not know that there is a just God, that must needs one day punish them for this their horrible wickednesse and profanenesse? Well, they shall know it. Again, some think it hath the force of an affirmation, *Have they no knowledge? yea doubtlesse, so it is, they are become very brutes, they have no knowledge; else*

else they would not doe as they doe. Again, some conceive, on the contrary, that it hath the force of a vehement negation; Can they be ignorant that they sin in these things, and that there is a God that will be avenged on them for it? Doubtlesse they are not, nor cannot be ignorant of it: and that is manifest by the terrours that ever and anon they feel in their consciences; which is added in the next verse. But others (which I judge the rightest) do understand it as spoken by way of admiring, and bewailing that they should be so stupid and brutish.

Verf. 5. *There were they in great fear, &c.*] Psal. 53. 5. these words, *where no fear was*, are added. All the difficulty here is to know what is intended by this word (*There.*) Some conceive of it thus, *There*, that is, before God and his judgement were they in great fear; which is opposed, say they, to the judgement of the world: and they alledge that as a parallel place, Eccles. 3. 17. *God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there*, that is, before God there is a time of judging men for every purpose and for every work. But there are three other Expositions of this word, which seem to me more probable: to wit, First, that this word *there* hath relation to Gods punishing these Atheisticall wretches: the former Question, *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* &c. implying that God would make them know, that there was a God that would punish such profanenesse and impiety, hereupon he adds *There*, that is, when God begins to punish them, *were they in great fear, &c.* & so also this expression may imply the certainty of their punishment, whilst he points at it, as it were, with his finger. Secondly, that by *there were they in great fear* is meant, that they were terrified in their hearts and consciences: The foregoing Interrogation, *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* might imply, that they could not but know in their consciences, that there was a God that would judge them; and so with relation thereto it follows, *There*, that is, in their hearts and consciences *were they in great fear*. And thirdly, (which seems the clearest) that this hath relation to that which is said before concerning their devouring Gods people, and not minding to call upon the Lord, namely, that *there*, that is, as they were running on securely and in the midst of this their profanenesse, horrid terrours from God should seize upon them: and so this expression may imply how suddenly this should come upon them, as in Psal. 36. 12. *there are the workers of iniquity fallen*; and that these inward terrours did evince, that they could not be ignorant that there was a God that would call men to account for their sins. *For God is in the generation of the righteous*, namely to protect them, and take their part against those that injure them: and this may be added to imply, either that by the discovery of this the wicked are terrified, or that therefore for the righteous sake God strikes them with terrours. In Psal. 53. 5. in stead of this clause, there are these words, *For God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee*; that is, God hath destroyed the strong enemies that had beset thee, and so hath delivered thee, O thou righteous servant of God, *thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them*: which is the same in effect with that we have here.

Verf. 6. *You have shamed the counsell of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge.*]

Here David turns his speech to those wicked men he had spoken of. The words may be taken as spoken ironically, *You have shamed the counsell of the poor*, &c. as if he had said, You thought to have made frustrate the hope of the poor, but in your own terrors you feel what it is come to: and thus he derides them for scorning and deriding the poor. But rather David doth therein expressly charge them with shaming, that is, with endeavouring to shame the counsell of the poor, either by opposing them in their hopes and endeavours, or rather by deriding them for hoping in God, when the Lord seemed not to regard them; as if he had said, You will not call upon the Lord your selves, and you deride them that do so: and this he chargeth upon them, as that which would farther provoke the Lord to destroy them.

Verf. 7. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Sion*, &c.] This might be meant, both first of a temporall deliverance, as if he had said, O that the Lord who dwelleth in Sion would deliver his Israel; or that from heaven, whereof the Tabernacle in Sion was a type, he would save his people from the tyranny of Saul, and all other their proud oppressours! O that he would settle me in the kingdom that he hath promised me, that I might then purge out this profaneness out of the land! and if we take it thus, then the following words must be thus understood, *When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoyce, and Israel shall be glad*; that is, when the Lord shall thus free his people from the slavery under which they are now held, then shall all true Israelites exceedingly rejoyce. And if it be objected, that this Psalm cannot be intended of the profaneness of Sauls daies, because of the mention that is here made of Sion, the Ark not being in his daies removed thither; to this it may be answered, either that David might speak this by a propheticall spirit, or that haply he composed this Psalm after the Ark was placed in Sion, though he writes therein of former times. And secondly, it may be meant of the spirituall Redemption of his people: Being grieved at the horrible impiety of the children of men, O, saith he, *that the salvation of Israel were come out of Sion*! that is, O that God would send his Son our Redeemer, to save man from the bondage of sin and death! and those words *out of Sion* are added, because thence the Messiah was to come, Rom. 11. 26. *There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodlinesse from Jacob*; and thence also the Gospel was expected, Esa. 2. 3. *Out of Sion shall goe forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*: and so then we must also understand the following words, *when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people*, &c. to wit, of Christs delivering his people from the bondage of sin and death, the great joy of all true Israelites.

P S A L M XV.

Verf. 1. **L**ord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?] This Question David propounds to the Lord, that the answer afterwards added might be received as a divine Oracle of unquestionable certainty. Some understand it of the qualification of those that present them-

themselves to serve God in the Tabernacle or Temple: *Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle?* &c. as if he had said, Many flock thither, but who are they that have a just right to come? or who are they that may expect to have this privilege continued to them, of resorting to thy house? But more generally it is understood of the qualification of those that are true members of the Church here, and shall live for ever in heaven hereafter. Some conceive that it is the kingdom of heaven, that is here called both Gods Tabernacle and holy hill; and to make the summe of the whole Question to be this, Who shall dwell with thee for ever in heaven? But because the Tabernacle was more peculiarly a type of the Church militant, and the Temple on the holy hill of Sion a type of the Church triumphant, therefore more commonly Expositours understand this Question thus, Who shall be acknowledged true members of thy Church on earth, and who shall dwell for ever in thy Church triumphant in heaven?

Vers. 3. *Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.*] To wit, by raising false reports, or any other way of reproaching them, or by hearkening to others, or enduring them that doe it. See the Note upon Exod. 23. 1.

Vers. 5. *He that putteth not out his money to usury, &c.*] See the Notes Exod. 22. 25, and Deut. 23. 19, and under this all other unjust waies of gain are comprehended.

He that doeth these things shall not be moved.] That is, He shall never be cast out as an hypocrite: he shall certainly continue a true member of the Church, and shall for ever live in Gods kingdome of glory.

P S A L M XVI.

The Title. **M***ichtam of David.*] The same Title is in the 56, and the four following Psalms: and the same that is said before often of others, is by many said of this, as that it was the name of some Musicall Instrument, Song or Tune. Besides some make it a word compounded of (*mach*) which signifyeth *poor* or *afflicted*, and (*tam*) which signifyeth *simple* or *sincere*: and so they render the Title, A Psalm of David that was afflicted and sincere. But it is best render'd, as in the margin of our Bibles, *A golden Psalm of David*; intimating that David made precious account of it, that it was to him as a chain or jewell, or crown of gold.

Vers. 1. *Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust.*] Because some passages in this Psalm vers. 8. and 10 are by the Apostles cited as spoken by Christ, Act. 2. 25. 31, and 13. 35, therefore some of our best Expositours do understand every clause of this Psalm as uttered by Christ; and accordingly they say that in these words, *Preserve me, O God*, Christ prayeth to his father, that he might be sustained and preserved in the time of his agony and death, that he might not sink under them, but might at last triumph over all his enemies and sufferings. But in regard there are some passages in the Psalm that cannot so conveniently or properly be applyed to Christ, as that vers. 4, that he should professe that he would not partake with Idolaters in their superstitions, who was far above the danger of any

such contagion, (and others of the like nature) I rather conceive that David doth here pray and give thanks, sometimes in the name of Christ, of whom he was a type, and sometimes in the name of all the faithfull members of the Church, of whom he was one, and sometimes also of both together.

Verf. 2. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, &c.* David doth often in the Psalms thus speak to his own soul; as in Psal. 42. 11 and in other places. This here is all one in effect as if he had said, Therefore do I hope in thee, and seek to thee, because from my soul I have taken thee, the great Lord, governour and preserver of all things, to be my Lord, and have given up my self to be thy servant, and therefore I know thou wilt preserve me, according to that Psal. 123. 2. *Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, &c. so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God untill that he have mercy upon us.*

My goodnesse extendeth not to thee; but (verf. 3.) to the Saints that are in the earth, &c. They that understand the whole Psalm of Christ, make this place parallel with that Joh. 17. 19. *For their sakes I sanctify my self, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* But I rather conceive it is added, either as a necessary explanation of what he had said before, to wit, by shewing that though he pleaded to be preserved, because of his relation to the Lord as his servant, yet it was not out of an opinion that he could bring any advantage to the Lord by any thing he could doe, only to his Saints he desired to doe what good he could: or else rather as a farther argument to move God to preserve him, because he relyed merely upon his mercy, and not upon any meritoriousnesse in his service, and that withall his delight was in the Saints that were precious in Gods eyes.

Verf. 4. *Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another God, &c.* or, *that give gifts unto another God:* that is, Whilst they afflict themselves that are carried with a blind and mad zeal after other Gods, as being still anxious to know what to doe to please them, or whilst they impoverish themselves in expences upon them, alas, they do but encrease their own sorrows, since at length to their grief all their hopes will fail them, their cost will be all as cast away, their Idols shall not profit them; but in stead thereof, they will draw miseries and troubles upon themselves, the just effect of Gods indignation against them. But this is only prefixed to make way to that which follows, wherein he professeth that for this he abhorred to joyn with Idolaters in their Idol-worship: *Their drink-offerings of bloud will I not offer.* As the Israelites by the direction of Gods law, so the heathens also had, as appendences to their sacrifices, both meat-offerings and drink-offerings, and these were usually of wine, as is evident Numb. 15. 5, and Deut. 32. 37, 38. *Where are their Gods? &c. which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drink the wine of their drink-offerings?* and the offerers used first to drink some part of them, and the rest they used to pour upon their sacrifices; to which the Apostle seems to allude in that 1 Cor. 10, 21. *Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils.* But what then is meant here by their drink-offerings of bloud? I answer; some think that thereby is meant sacrifices gotten by rapine and bloud, and others think that it is the bloud of their slain sacrifices that is here called *drink-offerings of bloud.* But because many writers testify, that the heathens used to pour out drink-

drink-offerings of the bloud of men, or because they used to pour the bloud of the beasts they slew upon their sacrifices, which must needs be an abomination to the Jews, who might not eat any bloud, it seems most probable, that these were the *drink-offerings of bloud* of which David here speaks. Only we must remember, that under this one particular he protests against having communion with them in any of their idol-services; and that this he alledgeth too as an argument to move God to preserve him: to which purpose also the next clause is added, *nor take up their names into my lips*. For though some restrain this to not swearing by their names; yet that it comprehends more of detestation then so; see in the Note upon Exod. 23. 13. As for those that understand the whole Psalm of Christ, they conceive that both clauses may be most probably understood thus; *their drink-offerings of bloud will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips*: that is, I will not present their offerings to my Father, nor so much as mention their names, when I make intercession for the Saints.

Verf. 5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup, &c.*] In the word *cup* there is an allusion to the custome of allotting every one that sat at meat their severall portions; of which see the Note Psal. 11. 6. And David might call the Lord the portion of his inheritance, both objectively, because he accounted the very enjoying of God and his favour that which was all in all to him, and wherein he solely placed his solace and happinesse; and likewise efficiently, because he depended upon him alone, as the authour of all the blessings he did or could hope to enjoy: as if he had said, whilst others run after other Gods, I have chosen the Lord Jehovah to be my God; or, whilst some place their blisse in riches, and some in honours, the Lord is the all-sufficient portion which I take for mine inheritance. And besides, it might be spoken as in reference to his enemies endeavouring to drive him out of the land of Israel; affirming, that though they sought thus to expell him out of the inheritance of Gods people, as if he had no part in God, yet he knew well that the Lord was his inheritance, which he was sure they could never take from him; for, saith he, *thou maintainest my lot*, that is, mine inheritance, (there is an allusion in the word to the custome of dividing inheritances by lot:); and he ascribeth to God the maintaining of his lot, not only because it was of God, that any outward blessings conferred upon him were continued to him; but also especially, because the unchangeableness of his condition, in keeping the Lord as his portion, and having heaven reserved for his inheritance, was merely of God, and not of himself.

Verf. 6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, &c.*] To wit, in that the Lord was his God, & so he had a sure interest in all spirituall and heavenly blessings; and then besides over and above, the kingdome of Israel was settled upon him and his seed after him: & this he seems to adde, as in opposition to what he had said before verf. 4. concerning the multiplied sorrows of those that hastened after other Gods. But still we see he speaks of his inheritance, *My lines are fallen to me, &c.* as alluding to earthly inheritances which fall to men by lot, after they have been divided by lines; and of this last see the Note Deut. 32. 9. As for them that understand the whole Psalm of Christ, they take this verse to be an expression of the

precious account that Christ makes of his Church, his inheritance given him of his father.

Verf. 7. *I will blesse the Lord, who hath given me counsell, &c.*] That is, who hath by his spirit perswaded and enclined my heart thus to chuse thee for my part and portion; and so in other things also to doe what may be pleasing unto thee: *my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons*; that is, by the inward and secret instinct of Gods spirit I find my thoughts, affections and desires moved, as to other things agreeable to Gods will, so especially to this of chusing God to be my portion: (see the Note Psal. 7. 9.) and this he mentions to have been done in the night, when he had no body else to counsell him but God, yea and constantly night after night, *in the night-seasons*; because indeed when men are free from worldly employments, and the distraction of the senses, the spirit of God finds the minds of men fittest for serious and holy meditations: and withall haply thereby to advance the praise of God, in that by the inspirations of his holy spirit he was moved to those holy thoughts and desires at those times, when men are usually surprized and overborn with drowsinesse, and if awake, subject rather to distracting affrightments, yea often overborn by temptations to sin. Indeed they that understand each passage of this Psalm of Christ, do otherwise expound these words: to wit, that God did inwardly counsell and strengthen Christ in that time of black darknesse that was upon his spirit, when the Lord in a great measure withdrawing the light of his countenance, and pouring forth his wrath upon him, he was thereby inwardly both in soul and body filled with most exquisite tortures, through pain and grief and fear, which made him cry out, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup passe from me*, and afterwards, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*? But the former Exposition is to me far the better.

Verf. 8. *I have set the Lord alwaies before me, &c.*] The Apostle Peter expressly saith that David spake this concerning Christ, Act. 2. 25. *For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord alway before my face, &c.* and he proves it, by shewing that the words following verf. 10 could not be properly and literally understood of David. But yet, because the Apostle there yieldeth that these words were spoken by David, and it is evident that he that speaks here speaks of himself, *I have set the Lord alwaies before me, &c.* therefore for the resolving of this doubt we must say, that though David spake these words of himself, yet it was chiefly in reference to Christ; and that not only because being a type of Christ, he did as it were represent Christs person, but also especially because Christ was now in his loyns according to the flesh: and indeed the Apostle in that place seems to render this as the reason why he applyed these words of David to Christ, Act. 2. 30, 31. *Being a prophet, (saith Peter) and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loyns according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, &c.* So that these words were spoken by David both concerning himself, and concerning Christ: *I have set the Lord alwaies before me, &c.* that is, I have set my thoughts continually upon God, as being ever present with me; and that both as having respect in all things to doe his will, (as indeed it is said of Christ Phil. 2. 8, that he humbled him-

himself and became obedient unto death; even the death of the cross; and also as resting solely upon him for help and support in all my troubles and sufferings. *Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved;* that is, because he is ever present with me, and still ready to assist and protect me, I shall not be moved from that happy condition wherein I stand, I shall not lose the favour of God, nor fall from my integrity, nor from my hope and confidence in God. And as these words are intended of Christ, they imply also, that he should not be swallowed up of his sorrows, nor removed from his constant obedience to the will of his father. Gods readinesse to assist is expressed by this phrase of his being at our right hand, because the right hand is the chief strength of a man, and thereby he assails his enemies; and therefore this had need to be chiefly secured and protected.

Verf. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, &c.*] That is, my tongue: see the Note Gen. 49. 6. *My flesh also shall rest in hope.* That is, When my body shall be laid at rest in the earth, it shall not be without hope of a joyfull resurrection. For hope is here ascribed to the dead body figuratively, as an earnest expectation and waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God is ascribed to the senselesse and unreasonable creature, Rom. 8. 19.

Verf. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.*] This the Apostle Peter saith could not be spoken of David, but of Christ only, that is, properly and literally; and that because Davids body was left in the grave unto that day, and was corrupted, Act. 2. 29, &c. *Let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; &c.* but he spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption: and the like the Apostle Paul affirmeth concerning this place, Act. 13. 36. 37. *David, after he had served his own generation, by the will of God fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but he whom God raised again saw no corruption.* But yet, because David knew well that Christ should rise again, as the head of that mysticall body, which should all partake of the same benefit together with him, and that by vertue of Christs resurrection even he also should one day be raised from the grave, (whence it is that Christ is called 1 Cor. 15. 20. *the first fruits of them that sleep*) therefore David had doubtlesse respect also to himself in this which was principally and prophetically intended concerning Christ, namely, that God would not leave him for ever in the grave, nor suffer him to perish in the pit of corruption. The Papists would from this place conclude, that the soul of Christ immediately upon his death did locally descend into hell, the place of the damned; but without any just ground. For in the Scripture frequently by the soul is meant the life of man, (see the Note Psal. 7. 2, 3.) which when a man is dead may be said to be overwhelmed or detained in the grave: or else the whole person of man, as Act. 7. 14. *Then sent Joseph and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls;* and 1 Pet. 3. 20. where speaking of the Ark he saith, *wherein few, thine is, eight souls were saved by water;* see also the Note Psal. 5. 2. And so likewise by hell is meant the whole state and dominion of death, yea usually the graves; so Gen. 42. 37. *I will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave,* and Psal. 141. 7. *Our bones*

are scattered at the graves mouths: the word translated grave is the very same that is here translated hell. So that the meaning of these words, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, &c.* is no more but this, Thou wilt not leave me in the grave, or, Thou wilt not leave me or my life under the power and dominion of death: and because death chiefly seizeth upon the body, therefore the body is here chiefly intended. And indeed even amongst Pagan writers we find the like phrase, as in Virgils *Animamque sepulchro Condimus*. But however, that it cannot be meant of Christs soul being locally in the hell of the damned, is clear, because first, his soul, was during the time of his buriall in Paradise, Luk. 23. 43. *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, that is, in heaven, 2 Cor. 12. 2, 4. secondly, the words speak evidently of a deliverance from a penall condition, whereas the Papists themselves hold that Christs soul was triumphant in hell: thirdly, the Apostles, in the places before cited, expressly say, that David was left in that hell from whence Christ was raised; so that it is clear they understood the words of Christs rising from the grave, as the second clause doth more plainly expresse, *thou wilt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption*, that is, Christ, *the holy one of God*, as the devils themselves called him, Mark 1. 24.

Verf. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life, &c.*] In Act. 2. 28. it is render'd thus, *Thou hast made known to me the waies of life*. However, the meaning of the words is this, that God would raise Christ from the grave, and bring him to live for ever in heaven: and because by vertue of Christs resurrection all the members of Christ shall also rise again unto life eternall, there is no doubt but that David spake this with reference to himself. Yet the phrase that is here used, *Thou wilt shew me the path of life*, seems plainly to imply, that the way of life was unknown and impossible to men, till it was revealed to Christ, and by him to the children of men, and till by his resurrection he became the first fruits of them that rise; and consequently, that from God through Christ these three great benefits are conveyed to all the faithfull, to wit, 1. the enlightening of their minds with the knowledge of the way of life; 2. the translating of them in their conversion from a state of death to a state of life; and 3. the resurrection of their dead bodies to life eternall: concerning which he adds, *In thy presence is fulnesse of joy*, or, as it is render'd Act. 2. 28. *Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance*, which is meant of the beatificall vision. Whereas earthly joyes can never satisfie, and are alwaies mixt with sorrows, there shall be fulnesse of joy; and that by reason of Gods favourable presence, which as it is here in part, so shall it be there in perfection, the blisse of the glorified Saints; and therefore it is said of the wicked, 2 Theff. 1. 9. that *they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord*: *at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*: which is spoken either in relation to Christ, because he was to sit in heaven at the right hand of his Father, or in relation to the Saints; and that either because they shall be set at Christs right hand, and shall be in a state of favour and honour with God, (which sitting at Gods right hand imports) or because they shall be brought to the enjoying of those pleasures by the mighty power and great bounty of God, whence it is that he speaks of them here as the gifts of his right hand.

P S A L M XVII.

Verf. 1. **H**ear the right, O Lord, &c.] That is, Hear him that pleads for nothing, but that which is just and right; or, out of respect to the righteousness of my cause, hear me, O Lord: *give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips*; that is, lips that plead not innocency where there is no such thing, or that speak that which my heart thinks not. Now this mention of the righteousness of his cause makes it most probable, that this Psalm was composed upon occasion of Sauls persecution, and the unjust clamours which his followers made against him.

Verf. 2. *Let my sentence come forth from thy presence.*] As if he had said, I appeal to thee from the unjust accusations of men: deal with us according to that which thou, that art the searcher of the heart, findest; and then I know mine innocency shall be made known in the destruction of mine enemies.

Verf. 3. *Thou hast proved mine heart, thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing, &c.*] That is, nothing wherein I have injured these that are mine enemies. Concerning Gods proving and trying mens hearts, see the Notes Psal. 7. 9, and 11. 14. Amongst other expressions, whereby he sets forth how exactly God knoweth all that is in man, this is one, *thou hast visited me in the night*: and that because 1. when men are then free from imployment, God doth usually by his spirit instruct and perswade them to doe well; 2. then they are wont to sin the more boldly, by reason of the nights secrecy; and 3. then many and various thoughts are wont to come into their minds. *I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgresse*; that is, that I will not wrong mine enemies, no not in a word, or that I will not murmur against thee, however mine enemies prosper; &c. or, that my tongue shall not utter any thing my heart thinks not.

Verf. 4. *Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.*] Some would have the meaning of the first clause, *Concerning the works of men*, to be in effect as if he had said, As far as man may, as far as it was possible for poor man to doe, *I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer*. Others think, that having said in the foregoing verse, how he had restrained himself from speaking evil, *I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgresse*, here he adds also what his deeds had been; *Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me, &c.* But I rather conceive the sense of those first words to be this: *Concerning the works of men*, that is, As concerning those evil works whereto men are naturally carried (according to that of the Apostle 1 Cor. 3. 3. *Are ye not carnall, and walk as men?*) *by the word of thy lips*, that is, by the help of thy written law; which I esteem no otherwise then if it had been delivered by an audible voice from heaven, *I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer*: whereby is also meant, that he had kept himself from those waies of outrage, violence and destruction, wherein others walked; so intimating, that he had not suffered himself to be carried away by the ill example of others; or that whereas they accused him that he wasted and destroyed the kingdome, and sought the ruine of Saul and his family,

mily, yet it was nothing so, he had kept himself, and his souldiers too, from offering any violence to Saul, or to the kingdome in generall, according to that testimony which Nabals servants gave of Davids men, 1 Sam. 25. 15. *the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing*; or (which I think is chiefly intended) that however his enemies had provoked him, by seeking his ruine, and doing him all the mischief they were able, yet he had not repaid evil with evil. Yet some do otherwise understand these words: *by the word of thy mouth I have kept me from the path of the destroyer*; that is, by the direction of thy word I have kept me from falling into the hands of those that would have destroyed me.

Verf. 5. *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.*] That is, Cause me to persevere in those waies of godlinesse wherein I have hitherto walked, that I may not seek to revenge my self upon Saul and his followers, nor may by any other temptations be made to goe astray from the waies of thy commandements: and thus he implies, that what he said before of his avoiding the evil that others ran into, was not spoken by way of boasting of himself, and that he ascribed what he had done hitherto wholly to the grace of God. Yet some take this to be rather a Petition for preservation from his enemies, *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not*; that is, Uphold and preserve me, that I fall not into any evil which mine enemies have plotted against me.

Verf. 7. *Shew thy marvellous loving kindnesse, O thou that savest by thy right hand, &c.*] Or, *O thou that savest them which trust in thee from those that rise up against thy right hand*, to wit, in that they rise up against thy people, and oppose thy will, as they doe that seek to keep me from the throne of Israel, wherein thou hast undertaken to settle me. Now the kindnesse which David here desires the Lord to shew him, he calls *marvellous loving kindnesse*, because his dangers were so desperate, that it would be a work of wonder if he were delivered; and because it was indeed marvellous kindnesse, that the great God of heaven should mind the prayers of sinfull dust and ashes, and should put such a difference betwixt his elect and others, they being in themselves as unworthy of any kindnesse as others are.

Verf. 8. *Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.*] See the Note Ruth 2. 12. Both these similitudes do imply, as Gods tender care and watchfulnesse over him, so likewise his own tendernesse, and how easily they might ruine him, if God should not carefully preserve him.

Verf. 10. *They are inclosed in their own fat, &c.*] See the Note Job 15. 27. *with their mouth they speak proudly*; they are not afraid openly to publish their pride. See the Note Psal. 12. 3.

Verf. 11. *They have now compassed us in our steps, &c.*] This word (*now*) hath reference to that particular distresse of Davids, which occasioned the penning of this Psalm: haply that, when Sauls forces had in a manner compassed him on every side, 1 Sam. 23. 26. However, the meaning of the words is this; They watch me and my followers whereever we goe, so that we cannot stir a foot, but they are presently upon us, and are ready to beset us: *they have set their eyes bowing down*

to the earth; that is, they do most intently watch me; and incessantly seek my ruine; they mind in a manner nothing else. This phrase, of setting their eyes bowing down to the earth, may be meant; either of their watching his steps, or of their eagerness in laying snares for him. Both expressions are metaphorically taken from huntsmen, who are wont to trace the beasts they would take by the prints of their feet; and when they find where they are lodged, do then hemme them in with nets or otherwise: and that last, of setting their eyes bowing to the earth, may be taken from those that with fixed eyes do level at such beasts with their guns or darts, when espying where they lye they seek to kill them. Yet some think that this expression is used, to imply how cunningly and closely they sought his ruine; as hunters that stand silent watching for their sport, or as lions that lye couching and bowing to the earth, as it were to hide themselves, when they watch for a prey: which indeed the words in the following verse seem to favour.

Verf. 12. *Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking, &c.* See the Notes Psal. 7. 2, and 10. 8, 9, 10.

Verf. 13. *Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, &c.* This seems to be desired, as in reference to that he had said before verf. 11. concerning his enemies compassing him about: as if he had said, Though mine enemy thinks now to make sure of me; yet, Lord, prevent him: *deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword*; that is, do not thou punish me by the ministry of thine enemies; they can do nothing without thou art pleased to make use of them, and therefore deliver my soul, that is, me or my life, from them: for the wicked is here called Gods sword, as the Assyrian is called his rod, Isa. 10. 5. *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger.* Yet some read this clause thus, *deliver my soul from the wicked by thy sword*, that is, by thy power, or by thy judgements: as if he should have said, In this extremity of danger there is none else that can deliver; or thus, Let thy sword free me from his fury against me; for mine hand shall not be upon him: according to that which David said of Saul, 1 Sam. 26. 10, 11.

Verf. 14. *From men of the world which have their portion in this life, &c.* That is, from those worldlings, that were never called out of the world into the number of thy children, and that only mind the things of this world, placing all their felicity therein: *which have their portion in this life*; that is, that chuse the things of this life for their portion, and accordingly have indeed therein all the blisse they are like to have: *and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure*; that is, to whom thou givest, according to their desire, plenty and abundance, and that of the choicest delicacies, and desirable things that are in the world. For these I conceive are here called the *hid treasure*, wherewith God doth in a manner glut them; and that because they are not afforded in common to all men, (few can find the way to such wealth, and such rare and extraordinary dainties) but are locked up closely in Gods treasures, and reserved for these men. I know some hold, that by Gods *hid treasure* here is meant gold and silver and precious gems, which are hid in the earth; others say that hereby is meant meat and drink, wherewith God fills the bellies of worldlings, and that they are called a *hid treasure*, because

they are, as it were, hid in the earth and in the air, in regard they spring out of the earth, being moistened with the rain that distils from the earth, and yet we cannot comprehend how they are produced. And then again others understand it of earthly blessings in generall, affirming that they are called Gods *hid treasure*, either because the judgement of God, in allotting such plenty of these things to wicked men rather than others, is secret and hidden; or because God dispenseth them where he pleaseth, nor can any man find out the way to attain them, unlesse God gives them out of his treasures; or, because wicked men take no notice that they come from God. But the first Exposition seems far the best.

They are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.] It may also be read, *Their children are full, and leave &c.* However the meaning is the same, to wit, that though they live in great plenty, yet they have store enough to leave also to their children and childrens children: and so all is according to their hearts desire. All which David mentions, as bewailing that it should be thus, and desiring that God would pull down the pride of these wicked men.

Verl. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.*] Some hold that in both clauses of this verse David speaks of what he expected in this life; as if he had said, Let worldlings rejoyce in their portion; there is somewhat that I expect better then that, to wit, that though at present thou seemest to hide thy face from me, yet, in regard of the righteousness of my cause, and my endeavouring to walk in all righteousness before thee, I shall behold thee again looking favourably upon me: and then, *when I awake*, that is, when I shall be raised out of this afflicted condition, (for he compares his estate in his afflictions to that of a man that is asleep, because of the lumpishnesse and faintnesse and wearinesse and terrors, which will creep upon men when they are in such a condition) whereas worldlings have never enough of the world, the beholding of the light of thy countenance shining favourably upon me will abundantly satisfie me. Again, others understand both clauses of the beatificall vision, when, as Saint John saith 1 Joh. 3. 2, *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* And indeed, considering that David opposeth this to that which was said before of worldlings having their portion in this life, I conceive that necessarily, either both clauses must be understood of the blisse he expected in heaven, or at least (which I like the best) the first clause may be referred to this life; *I will behold thy face in righteousness*, that is, being assured of the righteousness of my cause, and endeavouring in all things to doe that only which is just and righteous, I will behold thy face, not doubting of thy favour: and then the second clause must be understood of his blisse in heaven; *I shall be satisfied, when I awake*, that is, when I arise from the dead, *with thine image*, that is, with beholding thee, as thou shalt manifest thy self to thy Saints in glory; or by beholding thee in the Lord Christ (who is indeed said to be *in the form of God*, Phil. 2. 6, *the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse image of his person*, Hebr. 3.) when he shall appear in glory; or with being made like unto thee, or thy Christ in glory, according to that 1 Joh. 3. 2, and that of the Apostle Paul 1 Cor. 15. 49. *As we have borne the image of the earthy, so must we also bear the image of the heavenly.*

PSALM XVIIII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, &c.] See the Notes upon this Psalm in the 22. Chapter of the 2 of Samuel.

PSALM XIX.

Verf. 1. **T**He heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.] That is, it makes known whose handy-work it is, even the work of an all-wise and almighty God; to wit, in that it sheweth how accurately and admirably in every regard it is made; and consequently it sheweth what God can doe, and how admirable he is in all his works. The same may be said concerning all the creatures: but because the heavens are the chief of the creatures, and most glorious, but especially because they are seen by all men in the world, as is afterwards expressed verf. 3, 4. which other creatures are not, therefore he mentions these above others.

Verf. 2. *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.*] Some learned Expositours understand it thus; that day after day, and night after night, or as one day and one night succeeds another, they do proclaim the power and goodnesse and wisdom of God; there is not a day nor night that do not thus glorifie God: and the chief thing intended hereby they hold to be, that the orderly and constant succession of day and night in their severall times, caused by the set course and revolution of the heavenly orbs, doth clearly make known the power and providence of God. But because in the following words he still speaks of the heavens, and especially because of this expression, *Day unto day, and night unto night*, the full drift of the words I conceive to be this; that day and night, or the heavens, by the discovery that is made of them both by day and night, do unceasingly without intermission instruct us concerning the wisdom, and other the glorious attributes of God; for those words (*sheweth knowledge*) may comprehend both 1. that they discover Gods wisdom and knowledge, and 2. that they teach us to know God. And because the day and night do glide away, and there is a constant succession of each of them, therefore David expresseth himself in a kind of poetical elegance; as if when one day had sounded forth the glory of God, it did then deliver over to the following day the following on of the same work, and when one night had as it were sung a hymne in the praise of God, it should speak to the following night to take its turn likewise in doing the same.

Verf. 3. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*] As if he had said, Whereas men cannot speak their minds to those that are of another nation and language, that cannot understand the language they speak; at least though they be men that can speak severall languages, yet they cannot speak at one time to severall men in their severall languages: it is otherwise with the heavens; for they make known the glory of God at one

and the same time to all nations, and they all do hear and understand their language. For the word here translated *heard*, *there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard*, doth also signifie *understood*; and so it is render'd 2 Kings 18. 26. *ni nishu' l'ayim noqir u'sof' edut* [26. nishu' l'ayim noqir u'sof' edut]

Vers. 4. *Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world, &c.*] By *their line* may be meant, 1. their delineation or fabrick, framed exactly as it were by line or by rule, according to that which is spoken concerning the earth, Job 38. 5. *Who hath layed the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?* and this is said to be *gone out through all the earth*, because it may be beheld all the earth over, and is that whereby all the earth may be instructed concerning the glory of God: or 2. their writing, or direction, or precept, according as the word is again used Esa. 28. 10. *for precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, &c.* and so the heavens are compared to an open book written fairly with lines of great capitall letters; and because all the inhabitants of the earth may be directed and taught thereby what to think of God, therefore it is said that *their line or writing is gone out through all the earth*. The Septuagint, having more respect to the sense of the place, then to the word in the Hebrew, have render'd it, *Their sound went into all the earth*; and so the Apostle hath cited it, Rom. 10. 18. The great question concerning these words is, how the Apostle cites them in that place where he is speaking of the preaching of the Gospel, seeing it is evident that David speaks here of Gods discovering his glory to all nations by the heavens? Now to this it is answered by some, that under the historicall narration of the heavens and their sound, is a hid prophecy of the Apostles preaching of the Gospel: and this they hold the more probable, because in the later part of the Psalm David speaks so much in the commendation of the written word. But there are two other answers given that are more satisfactory. The first is, that the Apostle alledgeth the words in the sense that David intended them, to wit, as spoken concerning the language of the heavens, and that as drawing an argument from thence to prove the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles; But I say, *have they not heard? yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world*: as if he should have said, Have not the Jews heard? or, have not the Gentiles heard? or, why should it seem so strange, that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles? we see that God hath from the beginning of the world made known himself to all the world by the book or voice of the Creatures, sufficiently to render them inexcusable; and why may we not as well think that he will also reveal the Gospel to all nations? yea why may we not look upon that as an intimation, that he would in processe of time reveal himself savingly unto all the world? Or it may be taken as an argument from the lesse to the greater, thus; If God hath revealed himself unto all the world by the teaching of the Creatures, much more may we think he will doe it by the Gospel, wherein the glory of God is far more abundantly revealed. And indeed this Exposition agrees well with the drift of David in this Psalm, which is to show how much more fully God hath revealed himself by his word, then by his works. The second answer is, that Paul alledgeth these words

of the Psalm only by way of allusion; as if he had said, *Have they not heard? yes verily: what was said by David concerning the preaching of the heavens; may well be said concerning the preaching of the Apostles, their sound went into all the earth, and their words into all the world.* And if it be objected, that the Apostles had not then preached the Gospel in all parts of the world, since in many places it hath not yet been preached: to this it may be answered, 1. that these words import no more then what is expressly said elsewhere, as Col. 1. 5, 6. *Ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you, as it is in all the world;* and vers. 23. *the Gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven:* And 2. it was sufficient to make good these words, 1. that the Apostles had preached to some in a manner of all nations, as it is said Act. 2. 5. *that there were dwelling at Jerusalem (when the Apostles preached there) Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven;* 2. that they had preached the Gospel in the remotest parts of the world, that were then known, according to that which is said Luk. 2. 1. *that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed;* and as for those countries that now know nothing of Christ, it may be that they were not then inhabited, or that the ancient inhabitants had the Gospel preached amongst them, though now their posterity have it not; and 3. that however the sound of their doctrine shall goe out even into those parts, where as yet it hath not been preached.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the Sun.] He saith a tabernacle, not a house, because the Sun is ever in a flitting condition, and never stayeth in one place.

Vers. 5. *Which as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, &c.*] The Sun is here compared 1. to a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; because when it hath been hid all night in the lower hemisphere, as in a chamber, it then ariseth early in the morning gloriously adorned with golden and beautifull rayes, as with gorgeous attire, even as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, Esa. 61. 10. and that to make the earth his spouse fruitfull with his embraces: and 2. to a strong man which rejoyleth to run a race, that is, which cometh forth with a chearfull and courageous mind to run a race; and that because the Sun seems as it were to leap and sparkle when it riseth, and doth with admirable swiftnesse run its course about that vast compasse of the heavens, and yet is not wearied. And indeed by the account of the best Mathematicians, within the compasse of a day and night it passeth over one and twenty thousand and six hundred miles of the earth.

Vers. 6. *His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, &c.*] That is, from the East it goeth to the West, and so round about under the earth to the East again. Yet some conceive that under these words (*his circuit*) the Suns moving Northward and Southward, according to the severall seasons of the year, is also comprehended; and that by *the ends of the earth* may be meant the severall places of the Suns rising and setting. As for the following clause, *and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof*, either the meaning is, that there is nothing, neither man nor beast, tree nor plant, that can be hid from the scorching heat thereof; or that there is nothing so deeply hid in the bowels of the earth, which doth not feel the enlivening heat of the Sun, or the effectuall operation thereof.

Vers. 7.

Verf. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, &c.*] By the *law* here is meant the whole word of God, see the Note Psal. 1. 2 : or the whole doctrine of salvation; for any doctrine in Scripture is called law, as the law of works and the law of faith, Philip. 3. 27. And it is said to be *perfect*, because it is faultlesse, and doth perfectly reveal the will of God in all things necessary unto salvation. And thus David passeth to that which was his chief drift in this Psalm, namely, to shew how far the instruction of the word, which God hath afforded his people, doth surpasse that of the creatures: by the creatures much may be learnt concerning God; but in his word he hath perfectly revealed all things necessary unto salvation: and it is said to convert or restore the soul, because it doth restore men to life, that were dead in sin; or generally, because it doth restore men to a good condition, that are fallen from the blisse of their first estate, according to that of the Apostle Act. 26. 18. As for the 2. clause, *the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple*, why the word is called *the testimony of the Lord*, see in the Note Exod. 25. 16. And it is said to be *sure*, because it is so unquestionably certain and true; and to make wise the simple, because those that are of meanest capacities may hereby be made wise unto salvation, if they be humble, and not highly conceited of their own wisdom; neither is there any true wisdom in men, till hereby they are made wise.

Verf. 8. *The statutes of the Lord are right, &c.*] That is, They do clearly and plainly reach men that which is right, and direct them in the right way: *the commandments of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes*, that is, enlightening men with knowledge, or comforting them in their sorrows.

Verf. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever, &c.*] If we understand this, as some do, of that filiall fear of the Lord, which is in all the godly, that is said to be *clean*, because it purifies mens hearts and waies; and to endure for ever, because even in heaven the Saints shall fear and reverence the Lord, or because this fear must alwaies be in the people of God, and will bring them unto life eternall. And if we understand it of the worship of God, that may be called *clean*, because of the inward and outward purity that God requires in those that serve him, and we know it must be for ever in the Church of God. But here evidently it is the Word that is called *the fear of the Lord*. For as God is sometimes called *fear*, because he is the object of our fear, as Gen. 31. 53. *Iacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac*, and Psal. 76. 11. *bring presents to him that ought to be feared, or to fear*, as it is in the Originall; so the word or law of God is here called *the fear of the Lord*, because the law was given with fearfull majesty, and the Word it is that worketh in men a due fear and reverence of God, and that teacheth men how to worship him. And why this may be said to be *clean*, see also Psal. 12. 6. As for those words, *enduring for ever*, they intend, either that the Word is an eternall and unchangeable law, which shall alwaies be continued in the Church; or that the truths contained therein shall for ever be found sure and certain, and likewise that it is the means to bring men to live for ever in heaven. In the last clause, *the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether*, the commandments of God are called his *judgements*, either because they are the commandments of him who is the judge of

of the world, or because according to them he will judge men, or because of the threatnings of judgements thereto annexed, or because God hath therein declared what he hath judged or determined that men should doe: and they are said to be *true and righteous altogether*, both to signifie that they are all such, and that they are perfectly and exactly such.

Verf. 10. *Sweeter also then the honey and the honey comb.*] That is, the honey that of its own accord drops from the comb, which is accounted the sweetest.

Verf. 11. *Moreover by them is thy servant warned, &c.*] To wit, to avoid the sins he was subject to, both in regard of his generall and particular calling, as he was Gods anointed king: and in expressing this he termeth himself Gods *servant*, as rejoycing in his walking in Gods waies, which he had said were so delightfull to him. As for the following clause, *and in keeping of them there is great reward*, it may imply 1. that God is wont abundantly to reward all those that sincerely endeavour to keep his laws; and 2. that the very keeping of them is in it self a reward sufficient, there being so much sweetnesse and so much of the first fruits of life eternall enjoyed therein.

Verf. 12. *Who can understand his errors? &c.*] This may be inserted here in reference to severall foregoing passages: as that verf. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect*; but, alas, we are so far from observing it perfectly, that no man can tell how many waies he breaks it: or the words of the foregoing verse, *By thy law I am preserved from much evil*; but, alas, in many things we offend all: They that keep thy law shall be richly rewarded; but who can tell how many waies they transgreffe it? so that it is thy grace in pardoning my sins, that I must rest upon, and not mine own righteousness; and therefore, saith he, *cleanse thou me from secret faules*.

Verf. 13. *Then shall I be innocent, &c.*] To wit, if the Lord would preserve him from sinning; as he had desired him to doe in the foregoing words, *keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins*.

Verf. 14. *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, &c.*] Some understand this of his prayers, as if he had said, Let my requests, which after due meditation in my heart I pour forth in my prayers, find gracious acceptance with thee. But rather David proceeds still to desire, that God would preserve him from sin, namely, that God would not suffer his words or thoughts (and consequently his deeds also) to be any other then such as might please him. To which purpose also it is that he gives the Lord in the close of his request those titles, *O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer*; that is, the God by whom I hope to be strengthened against my corruptions, and to be rescued from the power of my spirituall enemies. Yet in these words, *my Redeemer*, he might also have respect to Gods redemption of his people by Christ.

P S A L M XX.

Verf. 1. **T**HE Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, &c.] That is, thee, O king; whom verf. 6. he tearms the Lords Anointed. It seems therefore that this Psalm was composed by David as a Prophet for the use of Gods people, as a prayer for their king, when he was to make war, especially when he was to goe out in battel against his enemies in his own person; and that because at those times immediately before their going forth they used to offer up prayers and sacrifices to God by way of seeking his assistance, as is evident by that of Saul 1 Sam. 13. 12. *The Philistines will come down upon me, and I have not made supplication to the Lord; I forced my self therefore and offered a burnt-offering:* and therefore it is that the people are taught here to pray for the acceptance of their kings prayers, as also his sacrifices verf. 3. Yea some conceive that the particular occasion upon which this prayer was first composed for the peoples use, was the war which David made against the Ammonites and Syrians, and that because they had such a multitude of horsemen and chariots, as we may see 2 Sam. 10. 18. whereto David seems to allude verf. 7. *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, &c.* But however clear it is, that they are taught to pray both for the successe of his enterprize, and the safety of his person, *The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Iacob defend thee:* which is all one as if he had said, the God of Iacob defend thee, or the majesty and power of God defend thee: see the Note Psal. 5. 11. Or else, by *the name of God* may be meant the invocation of God; as if he had said, May the calling upon the name of God be thy defence: or else, the interest which he had in God, or the cause of God; as if it had been expressed thus, Mayest thou be defended, because the name of God is called upon thee, as being the Lords servant, yea the Lords anointed, or because thou maintainest Gods cause, and fightest his battels. As for his tearming God in expressing this *the God of Iacob*, either it is meant personally of Jacob the Patriarch, and then the reasons why he gives God this title in this place may be, either because God had more expressly revealed himself to Jacob concerning the kingdome of the tribe of Judah; or because Jacob, being a man of great troubles, had yet by prayer obtained deliverance from God, as it is now desired that David might doe, and almost with the same words that Jacob used Gen. 35. 3. *I will make there an altar unto the Lord, who answered me in the day of my distresse:* Or else by *Iacob* may be meant the people of Israel, the seed of Jacob, as in Isa. 44. 1. *Hear, O Iacob, my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen;* and so in many other places: and then this title *the God of Iacob* may be here given him, either by way of distinguishing him from the false Gods of the heathens, and so intimating the ground of their hope, in that they trusted in the true God; or by way of pleading the covenant which he had made with Jacob and his seed for ever. Many Expositours do also understand this whole Psalm as a prophesy of Christ. And indeed because God had promised by the kingdome of David and his seed to save his people, and so Davids kingdome was a type of Christs, I see not but the whole Psalm may in a spirituall sense

sense be applyed to Christ: as this, *The Lord hear thee, &c.* to the Lords hearing him, and supporting him in his passion.

Verf. 2. *Send thee help from the sanctuary, &c.*] That is, from heaven, according to that which followeth verf. 6. *the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven;* for which see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 7: or from the tent or tabernacle, where the Ark was placed by David in Sion; so that it is all one in effect as if he had said, The true God, the God of Israel hear thee; for the Sanctuary was a sign that God owned them for his people, and would hear their prayers: see Psalm 3. 4.

Verf. 3. *Remember all thy offerings.*] This expression seems to allude to the law that appointed part of the offering to be burnt as a *memoriall*, Levit. 2. 2. It may also be understood of the sacrifice of Christs death: see the Note also verf. 1.

Verf. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart, &c.*] To wit, all thou desirest now in the cause in hand; yet with reference to their assurance, that holy David would ask nothing but according to Gods will, this might be thus expressed. It may also be understood of Christs prayers on earth, and his Intercession in heaven.

Verf. 5. *We will rejoyce in thy salvation, &c.*] That is, in thy preservation, O king, who art the breath of our nostrils, and in the victory which God hath given thee; or in the saving of the people by thy means under God, and the great deliverance which by thy victory thou hast effected for the people for whom thou didst fight: *and in the name of our God we will set up our banners;* to wit, in a way of triumph, as tokens of victory, and to the honour of God. Yet some understand this of their going forth in the confidence of Gods help with their banners displayed against their enemies.

Verf. 6. *Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed, &c.*] That is, Even now before-hand through faith, or now upon these our prayers, we know that God saveth his own anointed king: for it is the people speak here as one man, unanimously agreeing in that which is said. Or these words may be added, as the words wherewith they should triumph; as if it had been said, And then shall every one say, *Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed.* Or it may be understood thus, *Now know I*, that is, by this victory I see by proof and experience, *that the Lord saveth his anointed.* For this Psalm might be composed after the victory was obtained.

Verf. 7. *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.*] That is, Our enemies, or rather, more generally, the men of the world, trust altogether in outward things, some in chariots, and some in horses, and so never mind God; but we will think on God, and the great things that he hath formerly done, and will trust in God, and pray to God, as our only help.

Verf. 8. *They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.*] That is, Our enemies, or those that trusted in their chariots and horses, that were before exalted in their pride, and in a lofty condition, for all their bragging, are

now laid low enough, being vanquished and slain; and we that trusted meerly in the name of the Lord, though we were before oppressed and in a low condition, yet are now raised to a better, and through Gods help are safe and sure. The first clause, *They are brought down and fallen*, some understand thus; whereas they were carried aloft on their chariots and horses, now they are from thence cast down. But then by way of opposition the following clause, *but we are risen, &c.* must be understood of being raised up on chariots and horses; which seems no way probable.

Verf. 9. *Save, Lord, let the king hear us when we call.*] That is, as some expound it, Let God the great king of the whole world hear our prayers. But rather I conceive it must be understood thus, *Save, Lord, let the king hear, &c.* that is, Preserve the king, O Lord, that when we call to him for help, through thine assistance he may deliver us: Or, Preserve us, Lord, and that by making our king instrumentall for our preservation, when we seek to him for help. And this must be understood principally of Christ, as our king and Mediator.

P S A L M XXI.

Verf. 1. **T***He king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; &c.*] To wit, as thankfully acknowledging that by thine assistance he hath prevailed over his enemies. In this Psalm the people are brought in blessing God for conferring upon their king those mercies which they had prayed for in the foregoing Psalm. And this must be understood both of David, and Christ, of whom David was a type.

Verf. 2. *Thou hast given him his hearts desire, &c.*] As was desired in the foregoing Psalm verf. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfill all thy counsell.* How this was verified eminently in Christ see Psal. 2. 8. Luk. 22. 15. Joh. 11. 42. and 17. 1, &c.

Verf. 3. *For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodnesse, &c.*] That is, Thou hast bestowed many good blessings of thine own free grace and goodnesse, which he neither did desire nor could deserve: *thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head;* that is, thou madest him king over Israel, when he dreamt not of any such thing; for ~~this is~~ mentioned as one of those blessings which God bestowed upon him undesired. Because it is by some conceived that the foregoing Psalm was composed upon occasion of Davids making war against the Ammonites, therefore they understand this as spoken with reference to their kings crown, 2 Sam. 12. 30. *He took their kings crown from off his head (the weight whereof was a talent of gold, with the precious stones) and it was set on Davids head:* but this seems not so probable. Taking this as spoken of Christ, either it may be meant of his kingly office, the kingdome of David being restored in him the son of David, which had been quite lost as it were for a time; or of that incorruptible crown of glory, whereto, after his sufferings and being crowned with thorns, he was exalted in heaven. See Heb. 2. 7.

Verf. 4. *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, &c.*] That is, Being often in despe-

desperate dangers, he desired that thou wouldest save his life, and not suffer him to fall into the hands of his enemies; and thou didst grant his request, and gavest him his life for a prey, *even length of daies for ever and ever*, which was more then he desired. And hereby may be meant, either 1. that God granted him a long, yea a very long life, to the great benefit of his people (for this only the Hebrew phrase may imply;) or 2. that the Lord did not only cause him to live to a good old age, but also gave him assurance of life eternall hereafter; or 3. that God granted him that his kingdome should be continued in his posterity till the coming of Christ, in whom it should become an eternall kingdome. And indeed if the words be understood of Christ, they must be referred to his desire, that he might not be swallowed up of death, and to his resurrection, and his obtaining of eternitie of dayes in heaven, both for himself and for his members: concerning which see Heb. 5. 7. Rom. 6. 9. Revel. 1. 18. Heb. 7. 25.

Verf. 5. *His glory is great in thy salvation, &c.*] That is, His fame and renown is great by reason of his many glorious victories; and that especially because it is so evident, that thou, O Lord, hast taken his part, and made him so victorious. Understanding it of Christ, it must be meant of the exceeding glory he attained by the work of mans salvation, however he was scorned and despised at first: concerning which see Joh. 13. 31. and 17. 1. and Philip. 2. 9, 10.

Verf. 6. *For thou hast made him most blessed for ever, &c.*] As if he should have said, Why should I goe about to number the particular blessings conferred upon him, which are innumerable? Thou hast made him most blessed in every regard: *thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance*. See the Notes Psal. 4. 6, 7. and 16. 11. and 17. 15.

Verf. 7. *For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.*] That is, He resteth upon the promises thou hast made to him (meaning that 2 Samuel 7. 16. concerning the perpetuity of his throne, and others of the like nature) and therefore his kingdome shall be established for ever.

Verf. 8. *Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies, &c.*] That is, Thine hand, O God; shall destroy all those that, being enemies to thine Anointed, are also enemies to thee: see the Note Psal. 2. 2. Or, thine hand, O king, (meaning David, or Christ) shall destroy all thine and thy peoples enemies; they shall not be able to hide themselves, or escape from thee.

Verf. 9. *Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger, &c.*] That is, Through thy wrath they shall be still burning like an oven, implying judgments without intermission; or, they shall be as those things which the fire devours and consumes when they are cast into an oven, that is, they shall be utterly and suddenly consumed: *the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall consume them*; which may be meant of their being swallowed up in hell fire. See also the Notes Deut. 32. 22. and Psal. 11. 6.

Verf. 11. *For they intended evil against thee, &c.*] To wit, in that they intended

evil against thy people, yea against thine anointed, in seeking to destroy him, or to oppose his kingdome; but all in vain, as is expressed in the following clause, *they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to effect.*

Vers. 12. *Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, &c.] Or, thou shalt set them as a butt, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them:* and so he compares them to men tyed to a stake, that they may be shot to death; or the bodies of wicked men are compared to a butt, and their faces to the white mark that is fastned on the butt. See also the Notes Deut. 7. 10, and Job 7. 20.

Vers. 13. *Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength.]* To wit, by defending and advancing the kingdome of thine anointed; which may be meant both of David, and Christ.

P S A L M XXII.

The Title. **T***O the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.]* Though David wrote this Psalm concerning himself, (as the whole frame of the Psalm, compared with the Title, doth methinks evidently shew) yet doubtlesse his chief aim was thereby to represent the passion and resurrection of Christ, and the propagation of his kingdome, of whom he both in his sufferings and kingdome was a type. And hence it was, that foreseeing by the spirit of prophecy what Christ should suffer, some passages are inserted according as they were literally to be accomplished in Christ, which can only figuratively be applyed to David; as that vers. 16. concerning the piercing of his hands and feet; and that vers. 18. concerning their parting his garments, and casting lots upon his vesture: and of the last of these both Matthew and John have punctually noted, that when the souldiers did this to Christs garments, that was therein fulfilled which is here spoken by the prophet David, as we may see Matth. 27. 35. and Job. 19. 24. And so likewise the Apostle Heb. 2. 11, 12. cites the words of the 22 verse of this Psalm, as spoken by Christ, *He is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee.* As for those words in the Title of this Psalm, which are in no Title of the foregoing Psalms, *upon Aijeleth Shahar, or, the hinde of the morning;* (as it is render'd in the margin of our Bibles) either it was the name of some musickall Instrument, wherewith this Psalm was to be sung; or rather these words were the first words of some song, to the Tune whereof it was to be sung. Many Expositours, I know, hold that David tearms himself here *the hinde of the morning*, because he was hunted up and down by Saul and other his enemies from one place to another, even as a hinde is usually hunted by men, when she comes forth in a morning from the place where she had lodged all night: and others, that it is Christ that is meant thereby; (to shew that the Psalm was written of him) and that he is called *the hinde of the morning*, either 1. because as when a hinde comes forth in a morning to seek out for pasture, she is usually hunted and killed for dainty meat, so was Christ hunted and worried and killed by the Jews and Gentiles, those dogs men-

mentioned here vers. 16. and that early in the morning Joh. 18. 28. or in the first dawning of the day-light of the Gospel, when he was seeking to doe the will of his Father, which was meat unto him, Joh. 4. 34. and so became meat for us, though the Iews intended no such thing, no more then the hounds do intend, when they hunt any beast, to provide meat for their masters; or 2. because he arose from the grave early in the morning, Joh. 20. 1, as a hinde that comes rushing forth chearfully from the place of her repose; and indeed Christ is in the Canticles often compared to a hinde, as chap. 2. 9, 17. and again chap. 8. 14. or 3. because Christ is the true morning star, see Numb. 24. 17. and it is the morning star that is here called *the hinde of the morning*, because it comes forth with the first dawning of the day, leaping as it were over the mountains, as the hinde doth. But these things have more wit then solidity in them. It hath more probability, which some other Expositours say, that these words were to signifie that this Psalm was appointed to be sung in the morning, if not every morning.

Vers. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? &c.*] In the Hebrew this is, *Eli, Eli, Lamah hazabthani*; but our Saviour using these words, expressed them in the Vulgar Syriack, Matth. 27. 46. *Eli, Eli, Lamasabachthani*. This interrogation may be the same in effect, as if he had desired that God would not forsake him; as we may see is noted concerning a like expression, Exod. 32. 11. Yet withall I conceive it impliyes a profession and complaint of his extreme sufferings. For though the person of the Son of God was never separated from his humanity, neither did God the Father cease to love Christ, or wholly withdraw his help from him; (for even upon the Crosse *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *Behold my servant whom I uphold*, &c. saith the Father of Christ, Isa. 42. 1. *Te shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*, saith Christ to his disciples Joh. 16. 32.) yet because 1. Christ was to bear the wrath and curse of God due to his people for their sins, and 2. hereupon God did not only withdraw from him all manifestation of his love and favour, but also made an impression of wrath upon his spirit, in regard of our sins imputed to him, and 3. the Godhead did so far for a time suspend its influence, as to suffer him to be surprized with the fear of death, and to endure incomprehensible anguish and horroir of spirit because of the wrath of the Almighty; therefore did Christ apprehend himself for the time as forsaken of God, and brake out into this bitter complaint, yet without sin, because he underwent this only in our stead, that he might save us, and did still in the midst of this agony cleave fast unto God, as those words, *My God, my God*, &c. do clearly imply.

Vers. 2. *I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.*] That is, as some expound it, without ceasing, never holding my peace. But the meaning of that last clause, *and am not silent*, is rather this; that for all his crying to God in the night, yet he found no ease nor comfort, and consequently there was no end of his groanings and complaints. Some think also, that the mention that is here made of crying day and night is with reference to Christs praying by night in the garden, and by day on the Crosse: whereas doubtlesse the meaning is only, that he cryed unto God incessantly, both by day and by night.

Nor

Nor must this be restrained to verbal and vocal praying, but must also comprehend the inward desires and groanings of his soul and spirit. Nor doth this complaint of Gods not hearing the Lord Christ contradict what Christ himself said, Ioh. 11. 42. *I knew that thou hearest me alwaies.* For there were two sorts of desires and cryes in Christ: the one of his deliberate and absolute will, which were alwaies consonant with the will of God; and these God alwaies heard; whence it is said, Heb. 5. 7. that *when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that he feared,* and vers. 24 of this Psalm, *when he cryed unto him, he heard:* but then the other were the desires of nature in him, the cryes, as I may say, of his sensitive will, as that he might not tast of the cup of death, &c; which it is no wonder though his Father heard not, since himself never gave any full consent thereto.

Verf. 3. *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*] That is, Thou art pure, and so infinitely gracious, just and faithfull, never failing to doe good, and to make good thy promises, O thou that constantly and without any intermission dost dwell and rule as a king amongst thy people Israel, giving them thereby continuall cause to praise thy name. And this may be here added, either as a farther aggravation of his misery, that his prayers should be disregarded by a God so holy, that doth so constantly give his people cause to magnifie his name; or else rather by way of checking himself for complaining, and to imply, that if God heard not, it was his fault, not Gods, and that he might encourage himself to wait upon God in hope of a gracious answer, who was so holy, and that did so constantly fill the mouths of his people with his praises. For indeed God is here said to inhabit the praises of Israel, either 1. because the Sanctuary, the place of Gods speciall presence, was the chief praise and glory of Israel, or rather the place where the Israelites did meet together to praise God; *our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire,* saith the Church of the Temple, Esa. 64. 11: or 2. because the Lord dwelt amongst a people that were constantly employed in this work of praising his name, by reason that he gave them dayly occasion so to doe, as is more fully set forth in the two following verses: or 3. because God was continually in the mouths of his people, when they were employed in advancing his praise.

Verf. 6. *But I am a worm, and no man, &c.*] That is, I am scorned and despised, and by every base wretch trampled under foot, without any respect or pity, and so am esteemed and used more like a worm then a man. This was verified in Christ, when they preferred Barabbas a robber and a murtherer before Christ; in regard whereof he became not only *lower then the Angels,* Heb. 2. 7. but also lower then man. And this also may be alledged, as tending to his encouragement, as well as the setting forth of his low condition, implying, that surely that God, who was so compassionate to all that are in misery, would pity him that was in such extremity of misery. See the Note Job 25. 6.

Verf. 7. *All they that see me laugh me to scorn, &c.*] Besides that these words *all that see me* do set forth how generally he was derided, they do also covertly strike at the inhumanity of his enemies, that were so far from condoling him, when they,

they saw his misery, that on the contrary they did then insult over him, and laugh him to scorn; whereas men are wont to compassionate the worst of malefactors, when they see them suffer: *they shoot out the lip*, that is, they make mouths at me, *they shake the head*, to wit, by way of derision; see Matth. 27. 39. see also the Note Job 16. 4.

Verf. 8. *He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*] Neither did Davids nor Christs enemies intend by these taunting words, that God was not able to deliver him, but that God would not doe it; and that hereby his hypocrisie and folly would be discovered in his former boasting of his peculiar interest and confidence in God.

Verf. 9. *Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mothers breasts.*] The meaning of these words may be only this, that from his childhood he had hoped in God: see the Note upon a like expression Job 31. 18. Or if they be limited strictly to the time when he first hung upon his mothers breasts, it must be taken as a figurative expression of the common dependance of all the creatures upon God, which may be termed a hoping in God, as all creatures are said to wait upon God, Psal. 145. 15. and the young ravens to cry to God, Psal. 147. 9. Or else the drift thereof may be to imply, that Gods providence over him in his tender infancy was such, as might have made him even then to hope in God had he been then capable of it; or at least that by that which was then done for him he might be taught in after-times to hope in God. And it may well be, that understanding these words as spoken by Christ, they might have speciall reference to his deliverance in his infancy from Herod.

Verf. 10. *I was cast upon thee from the womb.*] To wit, because all that can be done for a poor infant would avail nothing, if God did not by his speciall Providence preserve it and provide for it.

Verf. 11. *Be not far from me, for trouble is near, &c.*] He pleads the nearnesse of his trouble, because in such extremities God is wont to come in to the help of his servants. And understanding this of Christ, it may be meant either of the nearnesse of his trouble when he was to be delivered up to his enemies, of which he spake Matth. 26. 45, *behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners*; or rather of the near approach of his death, because indeed it is evidently his Passion on the Crosse that is described throughout the Psalm, as we may see verf. 1. 7, 8, 16, 17, 18.

Verf. 12. *Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.*] Because in Bashan there were very rich and fat pastures, and so the breed of cattel there was fat and bigge, and their bulls in particular strong and furious; yea perhaps the inhabitants of that countrey were many of them men of a gigantine stature, as appears by Og king of Bashan, Deut. 3. 11. therefore he terms his mighty and furious enemies *bulls of Bashan*. It may be meant both of Sauls courtiers, and of the chief priests and Scribes that crucified Christ.

Verf. 13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.*] See the Note Job 16. 10. As it is spoken in reference to Christ, it is meant of the Jews, when with such fury they pressed his death, and roared out to have him crucified;

cified; even as a lion that roareth, either out of hunger when he seeketh his prey, or out of fiercenesse and fury when he hath gotten his prey, according to that Amos 3. 4. *will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry on of his den, if he have taken nothing?* Yet withall Satans violent assaulting of Christ at his death must be included too, of which our Saviour spake before-hand, Ioh. 14. 30. *the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me;* and with reference where-to it is said at his first temptation Luk. 4. 13. *that the devill departed from him for a season.*

Vers. 14. *I am poured out like water, &c.*] That is, My life is in a manner gone, past hope of recovery, and so I am, as it is said in the same or a like case 2 Sam. 14. 14. *like water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again:* or rather thus, My spirits and strength do wast and flow away, even as water that runs out of a leaking vessel; see the Note Gen. 49. 3. *and all my bones are out of joynt,* that is, By reason of my sufferings, both inward and outward; my limbs have lost their strength and power to move themselves, no otherwise then as if my bones were all out of joynt: yea in Christ this was literally accomplished, by the stretching and racking of his limbs upon the Crosse. *My heart is like wax, it is melted, &c.* that is, by reason of the fire of Gods displeasure, (as indeed Christ, for the sins that were imputed to him, did bear the fiery indignation of the almighty) my heart through faintnesse and fear doth as it were melt within me: see Ioh. 7. 38.

Vers. 15. *My strength is dried up like a potsheard, &c.*] That is, By my sufferings outwardly, and in particular through the losse of so much blood that hath been shed, and through that grief and fear that lay upon my spirit, my radicall moisture, the spring of life and strength, is so dried up, that I am more like a dry potsheard then a living man: and indeed Solomon saith Prov. 17. 22. *that a broken spirit dryeth the bones.* And hereto agreeth that which follows, *and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws:* for though this phrase doth sometimes imply forced silence or inability to speak, (see the Note upon Iob 19. 28.) and therefore some would have it referred to Christs silence when he was arraigned and falsely accused, of which the prophet speaking saith Esa. 53. 7. *that he opened not his mouth;* yet sometimes also it implyeth extremity of thirst, as Lam. 4. 4. *the tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to his mouth for thirst,* and the context makes it evident that it must be so taken here; and so it referres to Christs thirsting when he hung upon the Crosse, Iohn 19. 28. *And thou hast brought me* (for it was not done without the providence of God) *into the dust of death;* that is, I am even ready to drop into the grave.

Vers. 16. *For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me, &c.*] That is, a company of base, wicked, malicious wretches have, like a pack of hounds, beset me, and with all possible rage set upon me. For though some would have it, that the rascall crew of Davids and Christs enemies are here called dogs, to wit, the souldiers and others, as the rich and mighty ones were before tearmed bulls; yet I rather think it is meant of all his enemies in generall. For I am sure those words, *the assembly of wicked men,* seem clearly to have reference to that which is said so often, that the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people assembled themselves together; as we may see Matth. 26. 3. and 27. 1. and

and in many other places. As for the following clause, *they pierced my hands and my feet*, it is one of those passages which can hardly be understood of David. But though it was literally accomplished only in the nailing of Christs hands and feet to the Crosse, for which see Luk. 24. 40. and Ioh. 20. 25. yet figuratively David might speak this of himself, meaning thereby, that his enemies had so bound him up, as it were, as a man that is fetter'd hand and foot, that he could neither move his hands to defend himself, nor his feet to flee away from them.

Verf. 17. *I may tell all my bones, &c.*] To wit, by reason of his leanness, caused by the grief of his heart and grievous sufferings, which had brought him to be nothing but skin and bones; or (as it is spoken in reference to Christ) by reason of the extreme stretching of his body on the Crosse; especially considering that before by their cruell scourging of him they had made such gashes in his skin and flesh: *they look and stare upon me*, to wit, as delighting to behold me in so much misery, Luk. 23. 35. which agreeth with that triumphing of Davids enemies, Psal. 35. 21, *Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.*

Verf. 18. *They part my garments among them, &c.*] This was also literally accomplished in Christ, when the souldiers divided his garments amongst them, and as by way of sport cast lots upon his vesture: see the Note before upon the Title of this Psalm. Yet David might also figuratively thus complain of his enemies, in regard that when he was forced to flee from the Court, they seized upon all that was his, (not sparing his wife) every one catching at what they could get, even literally perhaps his very garments.

Verf. 19. *But be not thou far from me, O Lord, &c.*] That is, Though others stand aloof, and there be none to help; yet do not thou stand afar off. How Christ was heard herein, see the Note verf. 2.

Verf. 20. *Deliver my soul from the sword, &c.*] That is, me or my life from death; see Job 5. 25, *my darling from the power of the dog*; that is, from wicked men, called before dogs, see the Note verf. 16. Some conceive, that this is meant of the devil; and others, that it is expressed in the singular number, because his enemies were so united together as one man: but I rather think that *dog* is put for dogs. However, it is doubtlesse his soul or life, which he prayes may be delivered from the power of the dog: which he terms his *darling*, because the soul is the most precious part of man; or because naturally every man makes such precious account of his life; or his *only one*, as it is in the Originall, because it was left desolate, as he had said before verf. 11. *there is none to help.*

Verf. 21. *Save me from the lions mouth, &c.*] See the Note before verf. 23. For thou hast heard me from the horns of the Unicorne; that is, thou hast upon my prayers delivered me, when I was in the midst of many cruell enemies, or from the power of those enemies.

Verf. 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, &c.*] That is, I will shew forth thy praise amongst them; and as it is meant of Christ, it was accomplished partly when he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection for fouerty daies together, informing them in the great things that God had done, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdome of God, Act. 1. 3. (for these he termed his brethren;

thren, Act. 20. 17. *Goe unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my father and your father, &c.*) and partly in that by their doctrine the knowledge of these things is spread abroad throughout the world; for all believers are the brethren of Christ, as is noted Heb. 2. 11, 12, and that because by Christ they receive the adoption of sons, who is therefore called *the first-born amongst many brethren*, Rom. 8. 29.

Verf. 24. *For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him, &c.*] Gods regarding of him is here opposed to the contempt of the world, of which he had said before verf. 6. that he was a *reproach of men, and despised of the people*, abhorred as a *worm, and no man*; and concerning which the prophet Esay speaks Isa. 53. 3. *we hid as it were our faces from him*. As for the last clause, *but when he cryed unto him, he heard*, see the Note before verf. 2.

Verf. 25. *My praise shall be of thee in the great Congregation, &c.*] That is, Thou wilt give me occasion to praise, or, I will praise thee in the solemn assemblies of thy people. Yet, as this is spoken in reference to Christ, by *the great Congregation* may be meant, the solemn assemblies that the Jews had on their three great feasts; or particularly that assembly, where after his resurrection Christ was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, 1 Cor 15. 6; or rather, the great Church of the Gentiles, of whom it was promised, that they should be as the stars in heaven for multitude, namely, that amongst them Christ would by his servants preach the Gospel of salvation, and thereby publish Gods praise. *I will pay my vows before them that fear him*; that is, the sacrifices or the praises which I have vowed to give thee: and observable it is, that he doth not only promise this, but he doth it also with a kind of rejoycing, as being glad to think of his doing this which he doth promise.

Verf. 26. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied, &c.*] By *the meek* here are meant those poor mortified souls, that being pressed in conscience with the burthen of their sins, and the apprehension of Gods indignation against them for their sins, either feared or felt, are humbled thereby, and have their fierce nature tamed and subdued. Yea and because a poor low and an afflicted condition doth often thus meeken the spirits of men, therefore some conceive that this is principally meant of such, who being distressed and oppressed, and being destitute of all outward help, do therefore humbly seek to God for deliverance; and therefore on the other side he affirms the same afterwards verf. 29. of those *that be poor upon the earth*. However that which is said of these, that they *shall eat and be satisfied*, is spoken with reference to those sacrifices and peace-offerings of praise, which David had tearmed *vows* in the foregoing verse, it being the constant course of those times to feast many, the poor especially, with their peace-offerings; yet that which is said, that eating they should *be satisfied*, is not meant so much of satisfying their bodily hunger, as that their souls should be satisfied, to wit, either with consolation in those spirituall benefits, which were signified by their sacrifices, or by being raised up fully to trust in God by experience of that readinesse in God to help, which had caused David to pay those

those his vows unto the Lord; as is more fully expressed in the following words. But now as this is spoken in relation to Christ, the meaning must be, that the meek should be fed with the word of the Gospel, or with Christ, the true nourishing food of our souls; both in the Word, and in the Sacrament of his body and blood; and so should be cheered and revived thereby, whereas before they were as dead men through the terrors of Gods wrath, &c. And accordingly we must also understand the two following clauses, *they shall praise the Lord that seek him*, that is, they that seek to know God and to obtain his favour, shall praise him, see the Note 1 Chro. 16. 11; *your heart shall live for ever*, that is, your hearts shall be cheered and revived for ever, or your souls through faith in the redemption of Christ shall be comforted and live for ever.

Verf. 27. *All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, &c.* This is meant of the conversion of the Gentiles upon the preaching of the Gospel; and the word *remember* may comprehend these three particulars: 1. that hereupon they should bethink themselves of their sins, and the curse thereby due unto them; 2. that they should be put in mind of the sufferings and glory of Christ, his Resurrection and Ascension, &c. (and that partly by the preaching of the Gospel, and partly by the Sacrament of his body and blood, of which Christ said, Luk. 22. 19. *Doe this in remembrance of me*;) and 3. that they should be often speaking of and extolling the Grace of God in Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 9. Yea some conceive also that this word *remember* is used in speaking of the Gentiles conversion, because those nations had formerly the knowledge of the true God, and professed the true religion, and should be then turned again from their vanities to serve the living God, Act. 14. 15.

Verf. 28. *For the king dome is the Lords, and he is the governour among the nations.* That is, God in Christ is the king of the Church; and therefore being also by nature the supreme Lord over all, it is fit they should serve him; or he will surely bring them to submit to his sceptre.

Verf. 29. *All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship; all they that goe down to the dust shall bow before him, &c.* That is, Both rich and poor shall believe and serve the Lord Christ; see the former Note verf. 26. For by those *that be fat upon the earth* are meant the rich and the great men of the nations, see the Note Job 15. 27. Though it be as hard a thing to winne these, as to make a camel goe through the eye of a needle; yet through the mighty efficacy of the Gospel, even these shall be wonne, Psal. 45. 12. *the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour*. And by those *that goe down to the dust* are meant the poorer and baser sort of people, to wit, such as lye in the dust, that live in a poor and low condition (the expression used may have reference to the custome of those that, being in distresse, used in those times to sit or throw themselves down upon the ground, to cast dust upon their heads, yea to rowl themselves in the dust; see the Note Job 16. 15.) or such poor lean starved souls, as are in a manner half dead, even ready to drop into the grave: see the former Note verf. 15. and that Job 30. 19. I know some by those *that goe down into the dust* understand all mortall men, and those that are actually dead; and so take the meaning to be, that even those that are

laid in their graves shall one day be raised up from thence, and shall then acknowledge and worship Christ. As for the last words, *and none can keep alive his own soul*, either they are added as a farther description of the persons mentioned in the foregoing clause, *they that goe down to the dust*, namely, that they are such as (poor souls!) are not able to sustain themselves, men in a manner dead without hope of recovery; or else as an intimation of the reason why they of whom he had spoken, should eat and worship Christ; namely, because none of them could nourish themselves, or cheer and revive themselves, or save themselves from wrath, and therefore they must be nourished and revived and saved by faith in Christ, and so him thereupon they shall worship and adore.

Verf. 30. *A seed shall serve him, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Christ shall have a seed that shall serve him, according to that Isa. 53. 10. *when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.* But rather it is meant of the seed of those mentioned in the foregoing verse, that being converted to the true faith should submit to Christs sceptre, to wit, that their seed should also serve him: or else it must be understood in generall, that in all ages there should be a seed that should serve him. And though some would referre this to the Jews, that even of them there should be a remnant, as the Apostle speaks Rom. 11. 5, that should believe in Christ; yet I rather referre it to the seed of the Gentiles converted, of whom he had spoken in the foregoing verses, or of all in generall: *it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation*; that is, they shall be reckoned and accounted a race or generation of Gods children, according to that Psal. 73. 15. *If I say, I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.*

Verf. 31. *They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.*] This may be understood either of those that were first converted, or of their seed mentioned in the foregoing verse, to wit, that they shall successively to their posterity declare his righteousness; that is, the righteousness of God in Christ made ours by faith, yea that *he of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. even that he hath done this, that is, all things that belong to our salvation: or, the righteousness and faithfulness of God in making good his promises, to wit, principally in the work of our Redemption by Christ, and so likewise in the conferring of any other blessing promised; and because Davids deliverances were a notable proof of Gods faithfulness herein, thereto those last words may have reference, *that he hath done this.*

P S A L M XXIII.

Verf. 1. **T**He Lord is my shepherd, &c.] This is a Pastorall Song; wherein David, that had been well acquainted with the imployment of a shepherd in his younger years, compares the tender care of God in Christ over him to the care of a shepherd over his own flock. And indeed men may well be compared to sheep, in regard they are so prone to wander, and through silliness to run without fear into any danger, and altogether unable to help

help or defend themselves, unlesse God should doe it for them: in the confidence whereof he adds those words, *I shall not want*, that is, he will give what shall fully content me, neither will he withhold any thing that he knows to be good, either for my body or soul.

Verf. 2. *He maketh me to lye down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*] These words imply a plenteous supply of meat and drink, yea of all things necessary both for body and soul: for lying down in green pastures doth not only imply rest and refreshing thereby, according to those expressions Ezek. 34. 15. *I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lye down*, and Cant. 1. 7. *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon*; but also plenty of feeding, wherewith when the sheep have filled their bellies, they use to lye down; and this to Christs sheep is principally the doctrine of life and salvation in the Gospel. And in the second clause, by *still waters* are meant calm waters, perhaps those in watering-troughs, or in gutters and furrows digged for the letting in of water to their grounds; at least they are opposed to swift and violent streams, which may be dangerous and harmfull to sheep: wherein also is implied that God provided not only for the thirst of his body, but also for the refreshing of his soul with his word and spirit, the waters of life. For though some think that he only intends the plenteousnesse of his pasture, by saying in the second clause *he leadeth me beside the still waters*, to wit, because watered grounds yield the best pastures: yet because in those hote countries they used to water their sheep, Gen. 30. 38. I question not but that in those words he hath reference also to the shepherds providing for his sheep therein; and that by leading him he alludes to the shepherds driving his sheep softly and gently, and would imply thereby the tender respect that the Lord had to his many infirmities.

Verf. 3. *He restoreth my soul, &c.*] That is, He comforts and revives my fainting soul, see the Note Psal. 19. 7; or, he brings me back into the right way, and fetcheth me home to himself, when I have strayed aside: so that he alludes to the shepherds care, either in cherishing his sheep when they are sick or feeble or faint, or in fetching them in when they are gone astray: *he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake*; that is, not for any righteousness of mine, or any thing else in me, but merely for the glory of his own name: see the Note 1 Sam. 12. 22. And herein he alludes too to the shepherds care in leading his sheep gently in fair and plain wayes, not through deep mire, brambles and briars, or over craggy, or any other wayes; that must needs be hard and troublesome for them to goe in.

Verf. 4. *Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, &c.*] As if he had said, through the deepest shadow of death; see the Note Job 3. 5. *I will fear no evil*. His meaning is, that though he should fall into the most desperate and deadly dangers, as a sheep that wandring falls into the paws of a lion, yet he would not cast off his confidence in God. For he doth not intend by these words, that he should be void of all fear; but that his faith in Gods providence should overcome his fear. *For thou art with me*, to wit, as a shepherd that stands watching over his sheep; *thy rod and thy staffe*, they comfort me. Some distinguish here be-

twixt the rod, and the staffe: by the staffe they say is meant the shepherds hook; and by the rod a little wand, which they say shepherds also used, to beat in the sheep when they went astray from the flock, to keep them up close together, and to hasten them forward when they lagge behind: and some, that it is the shepherds hook that is here called both a rod and a staffe. However doubtlesse the meaning of these words is, that considering that God as a carefull shepherd did watch over him, he was thereby comforted in his greatest perils; yet withall by his rod and staffe may be meant, 1. his Providence in guiding and preserving him, 2. his word and spirit directing him in all his waies, and his rod of correction, which may also properly enough be said to comfort him, as being an evidence of Gods fatherly care over him.

Verf. 5. *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, &c.*] As if he should have said, to their grief and vexation, they being no way able to hinder it, as it is expressed Psal. 112. 10. *The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away.* Some think that this expression is used also in allusion to the custome of Princes, that used to have those they had taken captives stand by when they were feasting, as by way of insulting over them, as we see in Adonibezek and Samson; but Davids meeknesse and piety make it improbable that he ever used to doe this. As for those words, *Thou preparest a table before me*, he alludes therein to the royall plenty he dayly enjoyed, comparing the liberall provision that God afforded him to a plenteous feast, for which great preparations are made beforehand, and which is spread on a table, and set out in the most curious manner: and to the same purpose is that which follows, *thou anointest my head with oyl, my cup runneth over*; for though some understand this anointing his head of his anointing to be king of Israel, yet it is far more probable, that this expression is used in reference to the custome of feasting in those times, when they used to welcome their guests with pouring forth sweet precious oyles upon their heads; whence Amos speaking of feasting saith, Amos 6. 6, that they did *drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments*, and Christ said to the Pharisee that had feasted him, *mine head with oyl thou didst not anoint*: and so likewise that, *my cup runneth over*, is in reference to the custome at feasts, of assigning to every guest his severall portion, see the Note Psal. 11. 6. So that the summe of the words is an acknowledgement that God had afforded him plenty of all things, not only for necessity, but also for delight. Nor can it be denied, but that it may be extended also to Gods feasting his soul with those spirituall dainties of the Word and Sacraments, and to Gods chearing of his soul with the comforts of his spirit, called *the oyl of gladnesse* Psal. 45. 7.

Verf. 6. *Surely goodnesse and mercy shall follow me all the dayes of my life, &c.*] By goodnesse and mercy may be meant, not only the grace and favour of God, but also the effects thereof in a gracious supply of what was truly good for him; for of this he might be sure that God would never fail him: and the expression is very emphaticall when he saith, *goodnesse and mercy shall follow me*; for it doth not only imply the continuance of Gods goodnesse to him, but also Gods readinesse to shew him favour: whilst other men pursue and follow after happinesse, happi-
nesse

nesse doth pursue and follow the servants of God; they do not with so much earnestnesse seek a blessing from God, as God seeks to blesse them. As for the following words, *and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*; either it is a resolution that he would to his lives end worship and praise him in his Sanctuary, implying that in this he rejoyced more, then in the abundance of earthly blessings that God had given him: or else it is a profession of his assured hope, that he should constantly abide in the Church here, and for ever in heaven.

P S A L M XXIV.

Verf. 1. **T**He Earth is the Lords and the fulnesse thereof, &c.] By the fulnesse thereof is meant all the creatures that are on the earth, but principally the nations that dwell therein; as is expresse in the following clause, *the world and they that dwell therein*. Now this is prefixed, that hereupon he might adde, (and that by way of admiring the goodnesse of God to his Israel) that though the whole world and all the inhabitants thereof were the Lords, yet all the world was not his as Israel was; though the whole Universe was his, yet he had chosen Jerusalem to be in a speciall manner his dwelling-place, & his Church to be above others his peculiar people: *The earth is the Lords, &c.* but saith he verf. 3. *who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? &c.* I know that some Expositours give another reason why this is here prefixed, namely, that from the Lords dominion over all the world, he might afterwards inferre how necessary it was that the Princes of the world, that dwelt in the Lords holy hill, should receive and obey Christ his anointed; which they conceive is that which is intended in those words verf. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.* But the reason before given is much the clearer. However very observable it is, that the Apostle 1 Cor. 10. 25, 26. proves by these words, that Christians might without scruple buy and eat any meats that were sold in the market, because all was the Lords, and made for mans use, and so they as Gods children (especially also if we adde the right they had to them through Christ) might lawfully take them from the hand of their fathers; *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lords and the fulnesse thereof*: and yet immediately verf. 28. by the same words he urgeth them not to eat of any meat, concerning which notice was given them that it had been offered to idols, to wit, because all the creatures being the Lords, they were to use them to his glory, and therefore might not eat them to the scandall of their brethren; or because the whole world being the Lords, they need not fear they should not have to eat, seeing out of his rich store he was able to provide otherwise for them, *But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: The earth is the Lords and the fulnesse thereof.*

Verf. 2. *For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the flouds.*] That is, say some Expositours, by the seas and by the flouds; as we use to say in that sense that London stands upon the river of Thames. But rather it is said that God hath founded it upon the seas, &c. because whereas the naturall place of the

earth is to be under the waters, God hath ordered it so, that it is above the seas and above the foulds, so that in outward appearance it seems as it were to stand upon the waters, and hereby it was made fit for the habitation of his creatures. See the Note Gen. 1. 9.

Verf. 3. *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?* As if he should have said, Though all the inhabitants of the world be the Lords, yet to dwell in Gods holy hill, as members of his Church, his peculiar people, that's a priviledge which few to speak of do enjoy, yea even amongst those that are his people in outward profession. But for the more clear understanding of these words, see the Notes Psal. 2. 6, and 15. 1.

Verf. 4. *He that hath clean hands, &c.*] That is, He whose works are blamelesse; and a pure heart, that is, a heart purified by faith from all sinfull pollutions, all erroneous opinions and carnall affections, he that is carefull to approve his heart unto God, as well as to avoid sin outwardly. As for the following clause, *who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity*, that is diversly expounded: Some understand it of the man that hath not worshipped idols, which are often tearmed vanities in the Scripture, see the Note 1 Kings 16. 13. Others of him that doth not give his mind to vain and foolish sinfull practises, or that doth not heed or trust in the vain and foolish designs of the world, nor the allurements of Satans temptations; see the Notes Job 31. 5. and Psal. 4. 2. But there are two Expositions which most follow. The one is, that by lifting up his soul unto vanity is meant vain and false swearing: for because they that swear do engage their souls thereby, and as it were offer them up as a pledge unto God, 2 Cor. 1. 23. *I call God*, saith the Apostle, *as a record upon my soul*; therefore the man that swears vainly and falsly may be said to *lift up his soul unto vanity*: and so they make this to be much the same with that which follows, *nor sworn deceitfully*. The other is, that by the man *who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity*, is meant the man that doth not set his heart upon vanity: because men are wont with much eagerneffe to look and gape after those things which they earnestly desire, Psal. 123. 1, 2, therefore by a borrowed speech, they that earnestly look after and greedily desire the vain things of this world, riches and honours and pleasures, or that prosecute eagerly any vain or sinfull desire, they are said to lift up their souls unto vanity. The same expression is used in the Hebrew much to the same purpose, Deuter. 24. 15. and Jer. 22. 27.

Verf. 5. *He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, &c.*] That is, He, and he alone, shall receive the blessing which the Lord hath promised his people, to wit, all blessings temporall, spirituall and eternall; for thus are all these comprehended under this word *the blessing*, 1 Pet. 3. 9. *knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing*: though indeed both here and there the blessing of eternall life may be principally intended, concerning which Christ shall say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdome prepared for you, &c.* Matth. 25. 34. And so in the following clause, *and righteousness from the God of his salvation*, it is this blessing promised that is there tearmed *righteousnesse*, to wit, either because it shall be the reward of their righteousness, or because God out of his righteousness or faithfulness

fulnesse will bestow it upon them; in both which regards the glory of heaven is accordingly called a *crown of righteousness* 2 Tim. 4. 8. See the Note Psal. 5. 8. Some, I know, understand this of the righteousness of God in Christ: but in regard he speaks of rewarding the righteous, the first Exposition must needs be intended.

Verf. 6. *This is the generation of them that seek him, &c.*] By a generation of men in the Scripture is usually meant some sort or kind of men; as Matth. 12. 39. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign*, and Luk. 16. 8. *The men of this world are in their generation wiser then the children of light*: and so it is taken here; *This is the generation of them that seek him*, that is, These that I have before described, are that sort or kind of men that do truly seek God, and are the true people of God. Yet withall I doubt not but that the title of *the generation of them that seek him* is here limited to these, purposely to shew how vainly those Israelites boasted of being the seed and generation of Abraham, and the peculiar people of God, who in the mean time lived not as became Gods people; and that though they went up amongst others to worship God in his holy place, (for this is spoken in reference to that before verf. 3. *who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, &c.*) yet they did not indeed seek God: and therefore in the second clause, by turning his speech to God (for so some read it, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *that seek thy face, O God of Iacob*) he doth as it were call God to witnesse that it was so; and so doth withall covertly imply, that however men might esteem them Gods people, yet before Gods tribunal it would not be so. But if we read it as it is in our Text, the meaning is this, *that seek thy face, O Iacob*, that is, seek to joyn themselves to the true Church and people of God, according to that of the prophet Isa. 44. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords; and another shall call himself by the name of Iacob, &c.*

Verf. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in.*] In these words first David expresseth his earnest desire that the Temple might be built, and the Ark settled therein; and therefore in a poetick manner he speaks to the gates of the Temple, calling them *everlasting doors*, because the Ark, that had been often removed from one place to another, was now in the Temple to continue for ever, according to that Psal. 132. 14. *This is my rest for ever, &c.* see also the Note 1 Kings 9. 3. And by speaking to the gates to lift up themselves, either first he may mean the building of them up; *Lift up your heads, O ye gates*, that is, Be ye built up, that the Lord of glory in his Ark may enter in to you: or secondly, the lifting up of the upper posts of the gates; as if he had said, Raise up and enlarge yourselves, and become greater then you are, because the great King of Glory is to enter in by you; alluding to the custome of opening the gates of a house or city to the widest, when some great Prince is to come in: or thirdly, the lifting up of their heads in a way of glorying and rejoycing; as if he had said, Triumph, and rejoyce, O ye gates; thereby the better to set forth the solemnity and joy of the Arks removall into the Temple. But secondly, Doubtlesse under this type, 1. he speaks to the Church, the true spirituall Temple, desiring that this Temple may be built up, and that at her doors (which are

called *everlasting*, because the Church shall continue for ever) the Lord Christ, the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2. 8, may be entertained with joy as their Lord and King, and so he may enter and rule as king amongst them: 2. to Christians, the particular members of the Church, or to all men in generall, who being converted become the true Temples of the ever-living God, 1 Cor. 3. 16; at the doors of whose hearts (called everlasting doors, because they shall live for ever) he knocks to have entrance, Rev. 3. 20, exhorting them to lift up their heads, that is, to raise up their hearts from all earthly things, and to prepare them by faith, that God in Christ, the Lord of glory, and by whose merits all his members are glorified, may enter in and dwell and rule in their hearts by faith: 3. as some conceive, to Princes and Magistrates, exhorting them to let in the Lord Christ, and the Gospel and kingdome of Christ, into their kingdomes and common-wealths, expressing this in these tearms, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.* either as alluding to the custome of Magistrates sitting in the gates in those times when they judged the people; or because of the great power that such men usually have, either to let in or to keep out the profession of the Christian religion amongst the people: and 4. to the gates of Gods holy Temple in heaven, calling upon them with all joy to entertain the Lord Christ, when he should after the accomplishment of the work of mans Redemption triumphantly ascend into heaven; and so in these words, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.* there may be an allusion to those triumphall Arches which used to be set up for the entertainment of great Conquerours.

Verf. 8. *Who is this king of glory? &c.*] These words must be taken as a question propounded by David, either in his own name, as if he should have said, But who now is this king of glory that I speak of? that so he might take occasion to extoll this king of glory, and shew what reason there was why they should gladly receive him; or in the name of some other that might move this question, as if he should have said, But now if any one shall demand of me, *Who is this king of glory?* I answer, *the Lord strong and mighty, &c.* I know, many Expositours take them to be the supposed reply of those that were spoken to in that foregoing figurative expression, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.* and accordingly they conceive that this reply is made, either by way of scorning and despising Christ, as if they should have said, What is this your glorious king, that we should submit to him? or else by way of desiring to be informed and satisfied concerning Christ: yea they that understand the former verse of Christs ascension into heaven, take these words as the reply of the Angels, admiring that one clothed with a humane body should ascend above the heavens, and enter in as the Lord of that Jerusalem. But that which is first said of this seems most probable. And however that which is answered, *The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battel*, plainly imports, that it was he, who being of infinite power, was able to destroy those that would not submit to him, and to protect his people against all their enemies, both temporall and spirituall, and to make them victorious over them all; and it may have speciall reference to Christs conquest over Hell and death, when after his Resurrection he ascended triumphantly into heaven.

Verf. 10. *The Lord of hosts, &c.*] See the Note Gen. 2. 1.

P S A L M XXV.

Verf. 1. **U**nto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.] That is, In thee only do I trust and hope; and my hearts desire for help and comfort is only towards thee, and with much eagernesse doth expect good from thee.

In the Hebrew this Psalm is so composed, that we have all the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet one after another in the first letter of every verse (except only in two or three verses) and that, as we may probably conceive, that being a Psalm of singular excellency and speciall use, it might by this help be the better remembered. The like elegancy there is in the 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145 Psalms.

Verf. 2. *I trust in thee, let me not be ashamed.*] To wit, as they use to be, that when they have hoped for any thing with great confidence, and have boasted of their hope, yet at last have been disappointed.

Verf. 3. *Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed, &c.*] To wit, neither by their own disappointments, nor mine. For this last some adde, because if he should fail of his hopes, he knew this would be a great discouragement to others, that waited to see what the issue of Gods dealings with him would be. *Let them be ashamed which transgresse without cause,* that is, that causlesly afflict and trouble me, and oppose me in the businesse of the kingdome promised me: see the Note Psal. 7. 3. Yet some conceive that by *them which transgresse without cause* is meant, those that out of distrust do causlesly fall away from God: and others understand it of all wicked men whatsoever; all sin against God being in true judgement altogether unreasonable and causlesse. But the first Exposition is the best.

Verf. 4. *Shew me thy waies, O Lord, &c.*] That is, the waies wherein thou hast appointed thy people to walk: Or, *Shew me thy waies,* that is, the waies thou usest to take with thy children; as namely, how gracious thou art unto them, though thou dost usually afflict them, how faithfull in performing all thy promises to them, that so I may quietly rest upon thee, and may not through impatience or desire of revenge doe any thing to displease thee. And indeed if we understand these words in the first sense, of Gods teaching him to walk in the waies of his commandments, it is probable that in desiring that, he had respect chiefly to the distresse he was in, that he might not thereby be drawn to doe any thing that was evil, as men in adversity are prone to doe.

Verf. 5. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, &c.*] Many severall Expositions are given of these words: as, *Lead me in thy truth, &c.* that is, carry me with constant assurance and trust to rest on thy promises, thy truth and faithfulness; or, Cause me to be true and faithfull as thou art, &c. But I conceive this is the same in effect with that Psal. 5. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness:* concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 6. *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesse; for they have been ever of old.*] To wit, to me even from my first conception, and towards all thine from the beginning of the world; yea from all eternity, in that God set his love upon his 2 Tim. 1. 9. *before the world began.* And thus

doth David secretly comfort himself by pressing this, as knowing that the Lord was unchangeable, even the same still that he had ever been.

Vers. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions, &c.*] To wit, such as I have run into in my riper years. For by mentioning the sins of his youth in the first branch David intended not to imply, that he had not sinned since that time; or that he had no cause to be troubled for any sins but those of his youth; but rather hereby he sought to humble himself before God, that from his youth he had provoked God many wayes, and that if he should deal with him according to the rigour of his justice, he might charge upon him not only the sins he had more lately committed, but all his evil deeds even from his youth unto that time: and therefore he adds, *according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodnesse sake, O Lord*; that is, moved thereto by thine own goodnesse, or to declare and make known thy goodnesse.

Vers. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord, &c.*] That is, gracious and faithfull, really intending and faithfully performing whatever he hath promised: *therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; for which see the Note before vers. 4.

Vers. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgement.*] Who are meant by *the meek*, see in the Note Psal. 22. 26. And for that which is said, that God will guide them in judgement, the meaning may be, either that God will so direct them, that they shall walk judiciously, or in a right manner, ordering all their affairs with wisdom and mature judgement; or that God in judgement, that is in great wisdom and provident care, will guide them, having in all things a fatherly respect to their weaknesse and profit.

Vers. 10. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that keep his covenant and his Testimonies.*] That is, his Commandments, (see the Note Exod. 25. 16.) which by Covenant the people of God are bound evangelically to keep. Now to such it is said, that *all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth*, that is, all that God doth to them is done in mercy and faithfulness, yea such see and acknowledge that there is mercy and truth in all the dispensations of Gods providence towards them. Yet some here also by *the paths of the Lord* understand those that he hath appointed us to walk in, and so make the meaning to be, that all that God hath appointed his people to doe is for their good, and out of mercy and faithfulness to them it is enjoined them.

Vers. 11. *For thy names sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.*] This last clause, *for it is great*, is not added as a reason to move God to pardon his iniquity; (for properly and in it self the greatnesse of sin is an argument why God should punish, rather then why God should pardon) but rather it is added as a reason why he did so earnestly beg pardon of God, namely, because his iniquity was great, and therefore was the liker to endanger him, and lay the more heavy upon his conscience; as if a sick man should say to his Physician, Help me, I beseech you, for I am very sick: or as a reason why he pleaded that God would pardon him for his names sake, that is, of his own goodnesse and for his own glory, (see the Note 1 Sam. 12. 22.) namely, because his sin was so great, that nothing but Gods free grace and infinite mercy could give him hope of pardon, Yet withall

it is true, that where the party begging pardon doth truly repent and believe, even the alledging of the greatnesse of a mans sin may have some force of an argument to move God to pardon, because the glory of Gods mercy and grace is hereby the more magnified, according to that of the Apostle Rom. 5. 20. *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* However, by the iniquity which he saith was great may be meant some particular greater sin, which lay sore upon his conscience, or his sins in generall collectively considered.

Verf. 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord? &c.*] This question may imply the paucity of those that truly fear God, and withall their wonderfull happiness; *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* as if he had said, There are not many such; but oh, great is the happiness of that man that doth thus fear God! At least this question implyes how universally true that which he saith is concerning those that fear the Lord, *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* as if he should say, Whoever he be that doth this, *him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse;* that is, he shall be taught of God in the way that God himself doth prescribe or approve: or rather, God shall direct him what way to chuse in all his businesses and streights whatsoever, he shall not be left to his own choice, but God shall direct him what way to chuse.

Verf. 13. *His soul shall dwell at ease.*] The man that lives in a prosperous condition is said to live at ease, see the Note Job 12. 5. and accordingly the meaning of these words is, that he that feareth the Lord shall long enjoy plenty of all blessings, temporall and spirituall, even to the full content and ease of his mind, and after that eternall rest and joy in heaven. And indeed though the righteous be often much afflicted, (which their not fearing God, as they ought to doe, may bring upon them) and have not all things as they would themselves; yet, in regard of the inward sweet content of their minds, they may be well said to *dwell at ease*; and it may be that to imply this the word *soul* is here expressed, *His soul shall dwell at ease.* Some, I know, restrain this to the rest of heaven. But the first Exposition is every way the best.

Verf. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, &c.*] This may be meant of the secret of Gods Providence, and of the secret counsell of his spirit, see the Note Job 29. 4. But yet most commonly, and upon best grounds, it is understood of Gods revealing unto such men his will concerning mans salvation expressed in his word, as is more clearly set forth in the following clause, *and he will shew them his Covenant:* and that this is called *the secret of the Lord*, because it contains many things which are not to be known by naturall reason, but only by the enlightening of Gods spirit; as concerning the remission of sins, the sanctifying of our nature, and life eternall, with other secrets of heaven, which God only imparts to his friends, as Christ saith, Joh. 15. 15.

Verf. 15. *Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord, &c.*] This must be taken in the same sense, as when before he said that he lifted up his heart unto the Lord: see the Note verf. 1. and Psal. 5. 3. and then the following clause, *for he shall pluck my feet out of the net,* may be meant of all the streights he was in, and more especially of the plots whereby his enemies sought to ensnare him,

Verf. 17.

Verf. 17. *The troubles of my heart are enlarged.*] To wit, both for my sins, and the miseries I endure.

Verf. 20. *Let me not be ashamed.*] See the Note before verf. 2.

Verf. 21. *Let integrity and uprightnesse preserve me.*] That is, Preserve me, because of mine integrity and uprightnesse; as I have no way injured others, even those that are now mine enemies, so let not others hurt and injure me. Yet with all he might also in these words desire of God, that he might be still kept upright for his security, that nothing his enemies did might drive him to seek revenge, or any other way to doe that which was evil in his sight. Some, I know, limit the words to the integrity of his faith, and so make them a request, that God would preserve him, because he did sincerely rest upon God alone: but we had better understand them of his integrity in regard of his enemies.

Verf. 22. *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.*] The rather did David adde this, because God, by anointing him king, had committed his people to his care; and it most grieved him, that they, the godly especially, were involved in his troubles.

P S A L M XXVI.

Verf. 1. *Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity, &c.*] That is, in that integrity wherewith I carried my self from the beginning, both towards Saul, and the rest of mine enemies; as I was guiltlesse at first, so I have still continued, though never so much provoked by them. See also the Notes Deut. 32. 36. Psal. 7. 8, and 17. 2, and 4. 1, and 2 Sam. 22. 21. *I have trusted also in the Lord, therefore I shall not slide;* that is, I shall not fall from mine integrity, and from mine endeavour to doe only that which is just in thine eyes, or from my stedfast hope that thou wilt defend me and my just cause.

Verf. 2. *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.*] As if he had said, I appeal to thee; take exact notice whether I be not inwardly such as I professe my self to be. See the Note upon a like expression Job 31. 6. And for the word *reins*, see the Notes Psal. 7. 9, and 16. 7.

Verf. 3. *For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, &c.*] In two severall respects David might set Gods goodness before his eyes, by meditating frequently & seriously thereon: namely, 1. that he might be render'd thereby the more carefull to obey God in all things, and the more fearfull to offend him, even because he is so good and gracious, according to that Hos. 3. 5. *they shall fear the Lord and his goodnesse in the later daies;* and 2. that being hereby confirmed in his faith, that God would be good to him, as he useth to be to all his, especially to the afflicted and oppressed, and that he would help and protect him, this might keep him from recompencing evil for evil, and taking any unlawfull course to help himself. And in both these respects therefore David might here alledge his continuall setting of Gods goodnesse before his eyes, both as a proof of his integrity, and that he was far from those sinfull practises which his enemies charged him with; and to shew with what confidence he might therefore well appeal to God to be judged by him.

And

And accordingly we must also understand the following clause, *and I have walked in thy truth*; to wit, either that he had lived according to the direction of Gods word, which is truth, Joh. 17. 17; or else, that he had continually walked in the confidence of Gods faithfulness, and lived by faith in his promises, continually meditating on the promises which God had made both to the righteous in generall, and to him in particular concerning the kingdome, and so waiting upon God in the way of righteousness, whom he knew to be a God of truth to make good his promises, and not seeking by any unlawfull courses to help himself. I know there are some that understand both clauses of imitating Gods goodness and truth: *thy loving kindnesse is before mine eyes*, to wit, as a pattern which I desire to imitate; *and I have walked in thy truth*, that is, I have endeavoured to imitate thy truth and faithfulness; and others understand it of the goodness and truth which God requires in his people; *For thy loving kindnesse is before mine eyes, &c.* that is, the loving kindnesse which thou requirest, I have endeavoured to practice, and to walk in the truth which thou hast prescribed. But the former Exposition is clearly the best.

Vers. 4. *I have not sat with vain persons, &c.* Some by *vain persons* understand lying, false, deceitfull men, and so hold that the next clause doth explain this, *neither will I goe in with dissemblers*; others, such as are not what they pretend themselves to be, as magistrates and counsellors of State, that pretend to be for the publick good, but do indeed mind no such thing, being as clouds without rain, and fountains without water. But doubtlesse David meant it more generally of all wicked men, who are called *vain persons*, because they were void of all true piety, and gave themselves wholly to vanity, that is, to seek after earthly things, which are vain and transitory, and to follow sinfull courses, which would never yield them any solid comfort or benefit, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* see also the Notes Judg. 9. 4. and Job 11. 11. However this is here added as a farther proof of his integrity; the intention of these words being to signifie, either that he had not sat plotting with wicked men, and taking crafty counsell against his enemies, as they had against him; or more generally, that he had not conversed with such kind of men, which indeed is a clear sign of a good heart: see the Note Psal. 1. 1. Yea and by joyning this with that which went before, concerning his setting Gods goodness before his eyes, and walking in his truth, he implies, that his trusting in Gods goodness and truth had kept him from joyning and conversing with such kind of persons.

Vers. 6. *I will wash mine hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.* Having professed, in the two foregoing verses, that he had carefully shunned the society of all wicked men, he adds here, that yet he would not because of them avoid the place of Gods publick worship; only he would not come thither, as many did, in their sins, but would be carefull to purge himself from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, & so he would come with his sacrifices to Gods altar. And thus these words may also include, first, a farther profession of his integrity, propounded before ver. 1, & secondly, an engagement of offering gra-

tulatory sacrifices to the Lord, if the Lord would plead his cause against his enemies, as he had there also desired. However, in this expression of washing his hands in innocency, which probably he spake in reference to the lifting up of his hands in prayer unto God, either he alluded to the custome of mens washing their hands, thereby to professe their innocency in any thing, as Pilate did to clear himself of the guilt of our Saviours death Matth. 27. 24. whence it is usuall with men still to say, I will wash mine hands of such or such a thing, meaning that they have had or will have nothing to doe in it: or else to those legall washings that were used before men approached to Gods altar to offer sacrifices; not only by the priests, of whom it is said Exod. 40. 32. *when they came near unto the altar, they washed*, but also by the people, especially if they had contracted any legall pollution; whence it is that the Apostle, amongst other their legall rites, mentions their divers washings, Heb. 9. 10. and that to signify what spirituall purity God required in those that would worship him; see also the Note Job 9. 30. And then for the next clause, *so will I compass thine altar*, this expression, I conceive, is used either in reference to the multitude of sacrifices he would bring, or else to his going together with many others to offer their sacrifices on Gods altar. Yet some hold, that because the people might not approach to the altar, but were to stand some distance off, they that were zealous in Gods service, that they might the more affect themselves with seeing what was done when their sacrifices were offered, used not to stand still in one place, but to move from one place to another round about, as occasion was, that they might see what was done; and that hence David, to set forth his diligence and alacrity in that service, useth this expression, *so will I compass thine altar, O Lord*.

Verf. 8. *I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* That is, where thy Majestie dwelleth, or where thine Ark is: see the Note 1 Samuel 4. 21. This is also added as an evidence of his integrity.

Verf. 9. *Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.* That is, Keep me still, as thou hast done, from the society of such persons, that I may not be wonne to partake with them in their wicked waies: or rather thus, Let me not fall into the hands of such persons; or, Involve me not in their curse and ruine. We have the contrary to this expressed in a contrary phrase, 1 Sam. 25. 29. *the soul of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of life*.

Verf. 12. *My foot standeth in an even place.* That is, I am in a sure and safe condition, to wit, because I walk in my integrity, and do not turn aside from the way of thy commandements, and so am sure that thou dost and wilt preserve me. The ground of this expression is, because in even ground there is sure footing.

P S A L M XXVII.

Verf. 1. **T**He Lord is my light, &c.] That is, He it is that doth teach me and guide me, and preserve my life, and deliver me out of troubles; he is my comforter, and the authour of all my happinesse. See the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 29. and Job 29. 3. And to the same purpose is that which he adds, *the Lord is the strength of my life*; that is, the supporter and preserver of my life.

Verf. 2. *When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, &c.*] That is, as it were to devour me. See the Notes Job 19. 22, and 31. 31, and Psal. 14. 4.

Verf. 3. *Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.*] That is, that *the Lord is my light and my salvation*, as he had said before verf. 1. Yet some referre it to the word *war*; in this, that is, in this war, *will I be confident.*

Verf. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, &c.*] Either this is added as a reason why he was so confident of Gods protection, to wit, because his only desire was to enjoy communion with God in the place of his worship; or else as a reason why he desired that God would still plead his cause against his enemies, namely, because his great aim was, that he might be settled in such a peaceable condition, that he might freely and constantly resort to the house of God: *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, &c.* as if he should have said, Though I be spoiled of my estate, bereaved of the society of friends, and driven from house and home, yet it is not the recovery of these things, no nor the obtaining of the kingdome which God hath promised me, that I desire, so much as *that I may dwell for ever in the house of the Lord*; concerning which see the Note Psal. 23. 6. As for the following words, *to behold the beauty of the Lord*, thereby may be meant, 1. the attaining of the knowledge, or the meditation of all the glorious excellencies and perfections of God in his attributes, his holinesse, justice, goodness and truth, &c. which by his word he manifesteth to his Church: 2. the consideration of Gods wonderfull works, and his bounteous gifts to the sons of men, which make him glorious in their eyes: 3. the mysteries of our redemption by Christ, and the benefits that redound to us thereby, which were shadowed forth in the sacrifices and other ceremoniall rites of the Tabernacle: and 4. the glory of heaven. And doubtlesse in this expression he alludes to the externall beauty and magnificence of the Tabernacle, or rather the glory of the Temple he intended and foresaw, which were typicall representations of these things. But in the last clause, *and to enquire in his Temple*, it is the Tabernacle which he intends by the Temple: of which see the Note 1 Sam. 1. 9.

Verf. 5. *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his Tabernacle, &c.*] That is, God will be graciously present with me, to shroud me and protect me from mine enemies: even as a shepherd should shelter his sheep in a tent or tabernacle from the heat of the Sun; or as if a king should undertake to protect one in his pavilion, whence none dare venture to take him; or as

men use to hide some precious thing in some secret place of their dwelling; or as when men are hid in Gods Tabernacle or Temple, whether they used to fly for shelter to the horns of the altar; yea as if a man were hid in the most holy place, whether none might enter, but only the High priest once a year, which is therefore called Gods *secret place* Ezek. 7. 22. *they shall pollute my secret place; for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.* To all these there may be an allusion: yet because of the dependance of this upon that said in the foregoing verse, concerning his longing after Gods Tabernacle, many think the last is rather intended, and so conceive the drift of the words to be this; that seeing he so earnestly desired to be present with God, God would be alwaies present with him to defend him.

Vers. 6. *And now also shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about, &c.*] That is, I shall be out of the reach of mine enemies; it shall not be in their power to hurt me: it is the same with that in the foregoing verse, *he shall set me up upon a rock.* See farther also in the Note Psal. 3. 3. *Therefore will I offer in his Tabernacle sacrifices of joy;* that is, sacrifices of praise, which were offered with great joy, with sounding of trumpets, Numb. 10. 10. and other musically instruments, 1 Chron. 16. 41, 42. And thus we see he trusted to come to Gods Tabernacle, and that he meant to expresse his joy in a holy manner, and not in that profane jollity wherewith carnall men are wont to triumph.

Vers. 8. *When thou saidest, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.*] As if he had said, Against all temptations concerning mine own unworthinesse, the weaknesse of my faith, and the delay of help, I oppose this, that thou hast commanded us to seek thy face, which imports thy readinesse to help, and gives me encouragement to seek and pray unto thee. For this phrase of seeking Gods face, see the Note 1 Chron. 16. 11.

Vers. 10. *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*] That Davids father and mother did never forsake him, is evident, 1 Sam. 22. 1. The meaning therefore is, that though those on whom he might most justly rely, even his father and mother, should forsake him, yet he knew God would never forsake him.

Vers. 11. *Teach me thy way; O Lord, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 25. 4, and 5. 8.

Vers. 12. *For false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breath out cruelty.*] That is, such as in all their talk discover the bloody intentions they have against me: yet this phrase of breathing out cruelty may have reference to that vehement blowing and breathing, which may be observed in men when they are furiously enraged.

Vers. 13. *I had fainted, unlesse I had believed to see the goodnesse of the Lord in the land of the living.*] That is, to enjoy the good things that God hath promised me here in this world: see the Notes Job 7. 7, and 28. 13. For though heaven may be tearmed in a speciall manner *the land of the living*, (the grave is the land of the dead, the earth the land of the dying, and heaven is only properly *the land of the living*) and though, as many learned men hold, the land of Canaan, which was a type of heaven, is sometimes peculiarly called *the land of the living*, as in Ezek.

26. 20. *I shall set glory in the land of the living;* yet usually in the Scriptures by *the land of the living* is meant this present world, as Esa. 38. 11. *I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world;* and so also Esa. 53. 8, Psal. 52. 5, and in many other places.

Vers. 14. *Wait on the Lord, &c.*] David, as being conscious to himself of his own weaknesse, and expecting farther tryalls, speaks this to himself: yet it may be also taken as spoken to others, out of a desire that others by his example would learn to wait upon God.

P S A L M XXVIII.

Vers. 1. **U***nto thee will I cry, O Lord, my rock, &c.*] See the Note Deut. 32. 4. *be not silent to me*, that is, refuse not to answer my prayer; or, *bear not to help me*, see the Note Exod. 14. 14: *lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that goe down into the pit*, that is, the grave: as if he should have said, for if thou help not (there is none else that can doe it) I am utterly undone; so great is my danger, that without help from heaven I am but a dead man, even as one that is ready to be carried to the grave. Yet some conceive that in this phrase he alludes rather to those, that going down or falling casually into some deep pit, from whence they cannot get out again, must needs there perish, if there be no bodie to hear their crie, and to help them up.

Vers. 2. *I lift up my hands toward thy holy Oracle.*] That is, toward heaven, of which the Oracle was a type; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 7: or towards the most holy place, where the Ark was, the sign of Gods presence. See the Note 1 Kings 8. 30.

Vers. 3. *Draw me not away with the wicked, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 26. 9. The phrase that is here used seems covertly to imply, that when wicked men are cut off, there is a hand of justice, dragging them as it were away as malefactours to their deserved punishment; and withall, that when such men die, they are violently and forcibly haled away, their affections being wholly fixt upon the world and worldly things.

Vers. 4. *Give them according to their deeds, &c.*] The great question concerning this and such like places is, how it could stand with Davids piety thus to pray, that Gods wrath might be poured forth upon his enemies, it being the expresse precept of Christ Matth. 5. 9. *Love your enemies, blesse them that curse you.* But to this it may be answered, 1. that David did not desire this out of a private thirst after revenge, but merely out of a zeal for Gods glory, and the good of his people, as having after long experience found, that they were implacable enemies of all godlinesse, and were become by degrees intolerably insolent; and therefore being grieved that they should proceed so far and so long without being called to an account, desired that justice might be executed on them: 2. that David penned this Psalm for the use of others, and not only for himself: and 3. that these expressions were in David rather prophesies, then imprecations; he did rather by the instinct of Gods Spirit foretell that it should be so, then pray that it might be so.

Verf. 5. *Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, &c.*] This may be meant generally of all the works of Gods providence, wherein the hand of God was apparently seen, the good he did for the righteous, and his judgements on the wicked; (for so the very same words are used by the prophet Isa. 5. 12.) but withall it may be more particularly meant of Gods chusing and anointing David to be king, the many victories he obtained, whereby much good had been done for Gods people, and the Lords delivering him from so many desperate dangers, which were clear proofs of Gods tender care over him, and the precious account he made of him, and that he had determined he should be king; which his enemies not regarding, did as it were obstinately fight against God; for which cause, saith David, *he shall destroy them, and not build them up*, that is, he shall destroy them without all hope of recovery: for this phrase of building up men see the Note Job 22. 23.

Verf. 8. *The Lord is their strength, &c.*] Having spoken in the foregoing verse how he had been helped, he adds, *The Lord is their strength*, that is, the strength of my souldiers; and so, though they were but few in comparison of mine enemies, by their help I have been preserved: or it may be meant of Gods people, as being spoken in reference to the following verse, *The Lord is their strength*, that is, the strength of his people: (see the Note Exod. 15. 1.) and *he is the saving strength of his anointed*, that is, of me his anointed; and so he terms himself, because that was the ground both of his enemies rage against him, and of his confidence in God.

Verf. 9. *Save thy people, and blesse thine inheritance, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 25. 22. *Feed them also, or rule them*, to wit, as a shepheard doth his flock: (see the Notes Psal. 23. 1, 2, &c.) and *lift them up for ever*, that is, exalt them, and make them every way great and glorious, even above other nations; or set them in a safe condition above the reach of their enemies, and that successively in all generations. Some understand it also of Gods carrying them on, and raising them still up to farther degrees of grace, till they were brought at last to live for ever with God in heaven.

P S A L M XXIX.

Verf. 1. **G***ive unto the Lord, (O ye mighty) give unto the Lord glory and strength.*] That is, Confesse how glorious and strong the Lord is, & that both by word and deed, to the praise of his name; (and *strength* is here the rather mentioned, because those works of God, of which he speaks afterward, do singularly manifest his mighty power and strength) or, acknowledge that all the glory and strength you have, yea all glory and strength whatsoever, is of God. His intention in these words is, that the great ones of the world, that in their pride are wont above others to exalt themselves against God, should humble themselves under the hand of God, who is of such infinite power, and hath all things subject to him, as he sheweth in the following verses: see also the Note Psal. 8. 2.

Verf. 2.

Vers. 2. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, &c.*] That is, due to him, or such glory as is due to a God of such Majesty, the acknowledgement of his infinite excellencies, or the worship which he hath prescribed in his Word: *worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*, that is, in his beautifull holy place, in his glorious Sanctuary, as it is in the margin. See the Notes Psal. 27. 4, and 1 Chro. 16. 29.

Vers. 3. *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, &c.*] The thunder is called *the voice of the Lord*, because it comes out of heaven, and is an effect of Gods mighty power: and some think that it is said to be *upon the waters*, that is, upon the sea, because it maketh a noise, and runneth as it were upon the sea a long time together. But I rather understand these words thus, *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters*, that is, in the watry clouds: for so also Psal. 18. 11. the clouds are called *dark waters*. And because in such storms of thunder there useth to be abundance of rain, therefore in the last clause it is said, *the Lord is upon many waters*. Having in the beginning of the Psalm called upon the mighty men of the world not to exalt themselves against God, but to humble themselves before him, here he puts them in mind of this mighty work of God; because nothing doth more terrify the most atheisticall men, convincing them that there is a God that is higher then the highest, then the thunder doth. And some conceive that it was some extraordinary tempest, perhaps some tempest that helped to the foyling of Davids enemies, that was the occasion of composing this Psalm.

Vers. 4. *The voice of the Lord is powerfull, &c.*] That is, of mighty force: *the voice of the Lord is full of majesty*, to wit, both in regard of the dreadfull noise it makes, and of the bright flashes of lightening that goe along with it. Yet some conceive that it is said to be *powerfull* and *full of majesty*, because Gods mighty power and glorious majesty is thereby so clearly discovered.

Vers. 5. *The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars, &c.*] To wit, by the thunderbolts, which are cast down upon the earth in the thunder claps; or by the tempestuous winds which do many times accompany the thunder. However herein and that which follows is covertly implied, how strange it would be, if men that have reason and understanding should not be deeply affected with this terrible voice, which works so mightily upon the very unreasonable and senseless creatures.

Vers. 6. *He maketh them also to skip like a calf, &c.*] Either it is in regard of the bowing and tumbling of the cedars this way and that by the force of the winds in such tempests, that they are said here *to skip like a calf*; or else in regard of the violent rending and hurling of these trees up by the roots; or else in regard of the leaping and flying of the splinters and broken pieces of the trees severall waies, when they are thunder-strucken, and violently torn in pieces thereby. As for the following words, *Lebanon and Sirion* (of which see the Note Deut. 3. 9.) *like a young unicorn*, either they are meant of the trees that grow on those mountains, (and indeed that seems to me the most probable;) or if they be meant of the mountains themselves, they must be taken as an hyperbolicall expression of the violence of such tempests, that it is such, that they make the very foundati-

ons of mountains to tremble; like that Psal. 114. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.* Some, I know, understand it of earthquakes: but why they should be mentioned in this description of thunder-storms, I cannot conceive.

Vers. 7. *The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.*] The thunder is said to divide the flames of fire, either because by breaking the clouds it causeth the lightening to break forth in severall flashes one after another; or because the lightening doth disperse it self severall waies throughout the aire; or because the claps of thunder do still come between the flashes of lightening; and then too the doing of this in the midst of powring showres, where the fire and water is in a manner mingled together, makes it the more wonderfull.

Vers. 8. *The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness, &c.*] That is, It maketh the trees in the deserts to shake, yea the very earth there to tremble: see the former Note vers. 6. Or it may be very probably referred to the wild beasts in those vast wildernesses, to wit, that it maketh them to quake and tremble; which may seem the more probable, because of that which immediately follows in the next verse, that it *maketh the bindes to calve*: and so hereby may be intimated, for the greater advancement of Gods glory, that his terrours strike even those desert places, whether the power and dread of man doth not reach. Yet some would have this referred to the trembling of men as they travell through those deserts, who indeed in such vast wildernesses, that are dreadfull in themselves, are apt to be the more terrified with such horrid tempests.

Vers. 9. *The voice of the Lord maketh the bindes to calve, &c.*] That is, the thunder helps forward their calving, (see the Note Job 39. 1.) or rather, it causeth them through fear to cast their calves: *and discovereth the forrests*, that is, it pierceth the thickest forrests, and by the light of the flashes of lightening that strike through the trees, it makes those places to be seen therein, which were before hidden in darknesse: or by beating off the leaves of the trees, and by casting down the trees in severall places, it layes the ground bare, and exposeth both it and the wild beasts therein to open view, which before could not be seen. As for the last clause, *and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory*, it may be render'd, as it is in our Bibles, *and in his temple every whit of it uttereth his glory*; and then the meaning must be, that in the assemblies of Gods people in his Sanctuary every whit of that, which is before spoken of, is alledged for the setting forth of Gods glory. But if we read it, as most Interpreters do indeed render it, *and in his Temple doth every one speak of his glory*, then either these words are added to shew, that when God sent such storms of thunder, the people of God were wont to meet together in the Tabernacle, there to praise God by the acknowledgement of his mighty power, and to pray to God that herein he would be mercifull unto them; (And indeed the rather might they be said therein to praise God, because this voice of God, though only terrible to others, might well yield to them matter of comfort, as discovering what a mighty God they had to protect them, and confound their enemies) Or else they are added to shew, that though God do thus manifest himself by these works of his to the whole world, yet none do truly advance his

his glory, but only his people: the world is often little moved with these glorious discoveries of Gods power; or if they be, they are rather driven from God, then drawn to God thereby; but now to his people God hath revealed himself by his word in a far more eminent manner then he hath unto the world, and so when they are affected with these dreadfull works of Gods providence, yet they can then draw nigh to God as to a father, and can speak much more abundantly of the glory of God. And so also the drift of these words may be, both to bewail as it were that the world will not praise God as the Church doth; and likewise to stir them up to joyn with the Church herein, since it is indeed the work of salvation that must encourage us to draw nigh unto God, and open our mouths in a right manner to praise his name.

Verf. 10. *The Lord sitteth upon the flood, &c.*] That is, God hath the command of those inundations of water that are caused by these mighty tempests: though they may seem to threaten ruine to all where they come, yet God rules and orders them by his providence, both for the punishment of the wicked, and the preservation and good of the righteous: *yea, the Lord sitteth king for ever;* that is, He is and shall for ever be the Lord and governour of the whole world. The most Expositours, I know, refer this to Noahs flood, thus: that as the Lord did by his sovereign all-ruling power bring the flood upon the old world, for the punishment of their sins, so he still as King rules all things, and alwaies shall doe. But the first Exposition is best.

Verf. 11. *The Lord will give strength unto his people, the Lord will blesse his people with peace.*] This also may be referred to those thunder-storms of which he hath spoken, to wit, that God will preserve and hearten his people against the danger and terrour thereof: or it may be understood more generally of the Lords strengthening his people every way, and of his affording them all kind of peace and prosperity: and yet it may be added too as in relation to that which went before, to wit, as being inferred thus, that his people may take comfort in those works of his providence which are so terrible to others, the mighty power of God discovered therein being to them a ground of full assurance, that he was able to strengthen them and confer upon them all prosperity and peace.

P S A L M XXX.

The Title. **A** *Psalme and Song, &c.*] That is, A Psalm provided to be sung. But seeing all the Psalms were composed for that use, why this is expressed in some Psalms and not in others, I find no sufficient reason given by Expositours. *At the dedication of the house of David.* Some understand this of the dedication of his house, when the Ark of the Lord was brought into it. Again others think, that because Absalom had defiled Davids house with his incest and other wickednesse, therefore when David returned again to Jerusalem in peace, the conspiracy of Absalom being brought to nought, before he would dwell in his house again, as he removed his concubines, and put them in ward, 2 Sam. 20. 3. so he also caused his house to be dedicated anew, and so upon that

occasion this Psalm was composed. And the chief reason why they hold this, is because that which is said vers. 6, 7. concerning his growing secure by reason of his settled prosperous condition, and Gods hiding his face from him thereupon, and the troubles he then fell into, *In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved, &c.* doth better agree with that time, when, after some years spent in his exalted estate, he fell into that sin with the wife of Uriah, and so fell into great troubles, especially by the rebellion of Absalom, then with that time when he first built his cedar house, 2 Sam. 5. 11: for then, say they, he was but newly settled in the throne, &c. But because we find expressly, that their new built houses they were wont to dedicate at their first coming to dwell in them, see the Note Deut. 20. 5, and Nehem. 12. 27. and that 1. to blesse God for the finishing of them; 2. thereby to testifie, as it were, that they acknowledged God to be the chief Lord of whom they held their houses, and that upon the condition of doing him homage by a holy conversation, and making their houses as so many Sanctuaries for the worship of God all the time they dwelt therein; and 3. to pray to God to blesse them therein; but now of dedicating their houses anew, when they had been polluted with any grosse sin, we find not the least mention: therefore I rather conceive it is meant of the dedication of his new-built palace, 2 Sam. 5. 11. for there it is said vers. 12. that *David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom, &c.* because he had taken the strong fort of Zion, and had vanquished his enemies round about, all the tribes had submitted themselves to him, and having built a fair palace, he was quietly settled in his throne; so that it is no wonder that he should then begin to be puffed up with some thoughts of carnall confidence: and for those troubles, which God hiding his face, did thereupon befall him, it might be some sicknesse he fell into whilst his house was building, or that violent invasion of the Philistines, which is related 2 Sam. 5. 17: and so at the dedication of his house he blessed God for delivering him from this desperate danger.

Vers. 1. *I will extoll thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, &c.*] As if he had said, Because thou hast lifted me up, I also will endeavour to lift up or exalt thy name. What he means by Gods lifting him up, see in the Notes Psal. 3. 3, and 28. 9.

Vers. 2. *I cryed unto thee, and thou hast healed me.*] See the Note Psal. 6. 3.

Vers. 3. *O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave, &c.*] That is, thou hast delivered me from the very jaws of death; which may be meant of sicknesse, or any other desperate dangers. See the Note 2 Sam. 22. 6.

Vers. 4. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, &c.*] That is, ye that are sanctified of God, and whom alone God acknowledgeth for his peculiar people: and give thanks at the remembrance of his holinesse, or, to the memoriall of his holinesse; that is, when by his works, such as this of his delivering me from this danger, you are put in remembrance of his holinesse; or that the memoriall of his holinesse may be for ever continued in his Church. Yet some make this to be the meaning of this last clause, *give thanks at the remembrance of his holinesse*, that is, at the remembrance of our most holy God; or to the name of Jehovah, which is the memoriall

riall whereby he will be mentioned or remembred amongst his people, as it was said to Moses Exod. 3. 15. and likewise Hof. 12. 5. Yea and some by the memoriall of his holinesse understand the Tabernacle, because therein the holinesse of God was shadowed forth, into whose presence no unclean thing might enter.

Verf. 5. *For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life, &c.*] This some Expositours understand thus; Gods anger lasts but a little while, but it is of his favour that we live; or, of his favour he desires we should live, and not perish for ever. Others render the meaning of these words thus; Gods fatherly anger with his children is but for a very little while, he soon giveth them a tast of his favour again, and this then is life to them, that is, this chears and revives their hearts again. But because it seems clear, that *life* is here opposed to a *moment*, others do better, I conceive, give this sense of the words; Gods anger with his continueth but a moment, but his favour to his continueth all their life long: yea and life eternall may be herein also comprehended, in comparison whereof the longest afflictions are but momentary, as the Apostle saith 2 Cor. 4. 17. *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* And indeed we may well think that David had respect to this, that was so long in an afflicted condition, and yet could judge it but a moment of anger. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning:* as if he had said, As the darknesse of the night stayeth not long, but in the morning it groweth light again; so the afflictions and sorrows of Gods children continue not long, but there soon comes a morning of joy again: which is according to that of the prophet Isa. 17. 14. *behold at evening tide trouble, and before the morning he is not.*

Verf. 6. *And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.*] That is, When I was prosperously settled in the kingdome, I began to conclude within my self, that now there was an end of all my troubles, I should now live all my daies in a prosperous estate. See the Note upon the Title of this Psalm.

Verf. 7. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Thou hast strengthened me so, that my condition is as firm and unmoveable as a mountain, or that I am as safe, as if I were in some fort built upon a mountain: and indeed they were wont to build their castles and forts upon hills and mountains, not only because they were the more hardly to be assaulted, but also because their standing so aloft added the more majesty and splendour to them. But because kingdomes, in regard of their eminency of power, are usually tearmed mountains in the Scripture, as Isa. 2. 2. *the mountain of the Lords house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills,* that is, Christs kingdome shall be exalted above all kingdomes, and Dan. 2. 35. *the stone that smote the image became a great mountain,* that is, a great kingdome, and so in other places; therefore I rather conceive that by his *mountain* here David meant his kingdome; *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong,* that is, thou hast by thy favour most firmly established and strengthened my kingdome, above danger of any opposition: and it is likely too that in this expression he alluded to mount Sion, where he had built himself a palace,

and had made it the chief seat of his kingdome. And this is here alledged as the occasion of his growing so secure, namely, because his kingdome was so settled, and become so strong every way, that there seemed to be no fear of a change. Yet withall there seems to be likewise an intimation in these words, that seeing it was of Gods favour that his kingdome was so settled, it was a folly in him to grow so carnally secure, merely because he saw himself so strongly settled, since he might well think, that it was easie for him that had so settled him, to unsettle him again; as he acknowledgeth in the following words that God did. *Thou didst hide thy face; that is, thou wert offended with me for this my carnall confidence and security, and didst withdraw thy wonted help and protection: and I was troubled; that is, I fell into great distresse, and thereby was oppressed with much sorrow and anguish of mind.*

Verf. 9. *What profit is there in my bloud, when I goe down to the pit? &c.]* Because the life of every living creature is said to be in the bloud, Gen. 9. 4. therefore some Expositours understand this clause thus, *What profit is there in my bloud? &c.* that is, *What profit is there in my life?* as if he should have said, *Of what avail will it be that I have lived hitherto, if I be now cut off, when being settled in my kingdome I have more power to promote the cause of religion, and to doe good to thy people, then formerly?* But doubtlesse, by his bloud here is meant his death; and that which he intends in these words is, that if he should be cut off either by his enemies, or by Gods immediate hand, he should not then be able to praise his name, as he should if his life were prolonged; see the Note Psal. 6. 5. which is evident in the following clause, *shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?* that is, the truth of thy promises, or thy faithfulness in performing thy promises? And it is like he mentioneth this purposely to intimate his hope, that God would perform his promise made to him concerning settling the kingdome upon him and his seed.

Verf. 11. *Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladnesse.]* That is, Upon my prayer to thee, thou hast turned my sorrow into joy. *Thou hast put off my sackcloth,* which they used to wear in times of great sorrow, especially when with penitent hearts they humbled themselves before God to beg mercy at his hands: *and girded me with gladnesse,* that is, with garments of joy; or rather thou didst compasse me with gladnesse, giving me abundance of joy: as Psal. 18. 32. *thou hast girded me with strength,* that is, thou hast made me very strong.

Verf. 12. *To the end my glory may sing praise to thee, &c.]* See the Note Gen. 49. 6.

P S A L M XXXI.

Verf. 1. **I**N thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, let me never be ashamed.] See the Note Psal. 25. 2. Many Expositours are of opinion, that the occasion of composing this Psalm was, Davids distresse when the men of Keilah were likely to have delivered him up to Saul, and when immediately after that Saul had in a manner hemmed him in, in the wilderness of Maon, 1 Sam. 23. 12, 26: and indeed many passages in the Psalm seem to favour this conjecture, as shall be noted in the severall

rall.

rall places where it is so. But yet it is but a conjecture. *Deliver me in thy righteousness:* See the Note Psal. 5. 8.

Verf. 2. *Deliver me speedily.*] This he adds because help would else come too late. In 1 Sam. 23. 26. it is said, *David made haste to get away for fear of Saul.*

Verf. 3. *For thy names sake lead me, and guide me.*] That is, direct me in the way wherein I should goe, shew me what I should doe, and carry me on therein with a supporting hand. Yea some think that he useth these two words, *lead me and guide me*, (both in a manner of the same signification) to imply that he desired Gods help, not only in his present streights, but likewise after that still in all the difficulties he should fall into. See the Notes also 1 Sam. 12. 22, and Psal. 25. 11.

Verf. 4. *Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me, &c.*] Such as was that when the Ziphites observed the place where David hid himself, and discovered it to Saul, 1 Sam. 23. 19, &c. See the Note Psal. 25. 15.

Verf. 5. *Into thine hand I commit my spirit, &c.*] To wit, for the preservation of my life; and however for the saving of my soul even in death it self: as if he had said, Having no power to secure my self, I commit my soul, and consequently my whole man, into thine hands, as confidently relying both on thine almighty power, and wisdom, and fatherly care over me, and withall as willingly resigning my self to be disposed of by thee, as thou art pleased. *Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth;* that is, thou hast at other times delivered me out of great dangers, which makes me with confidence now to rely upon thee *the God of truth*, who art still the same thou hast alwaies been, and never failest to perform thy promises: and in this David might have respect to the promise made to him concerning the kingdome. But yet some understand this clause of our Redemption by Christ; as if he had said, Thou hast redeemed me to thy self from eternall death, and therefore being thine, and purchased to thy self by so great a price, I am resolved living or dying to rely upon thee.

Verf. 6. *I have hated them that regard lying vanities,*] That is, that do so mind and esteem vain hopes, or any outward things whereon it is in vain for men to hope, (as indeed they that hope in any thing but God, hope in lying vanities, that will deceive them) that either they rely thereon themselves, or would draw others to doe so. Some, I know, would limit this to idols, (see the Note 1 Kings 16. 13.) others to soothsayers, to which in those East countries they were much addicted. But it is better understood more generally.

Verf. 7. *Thou hast known my soul in adversities.*] See the Note Psal. 1. 6.

Verf. 8. *And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy, &c.*] As indeed he was like to have been by the men of Keilah, 1 Sam. 23. 7. *Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, &c.* and afterwards by Saul in the wilderness of Maon, verf. 26. *Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.* For the next words, *thou hast set my feet in a large room,* see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 20, and Psal. 4. 2.

Verf. 9. *Mine eye is consumed with grief, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 6. 7: *yea my soul and my belly;* that is, I am extremely weakned and decayed both in mind & body; or by his soul may be meant his vital parts, & by his belly his inward parts, or his whole

body. Yet many by the word *soul* understand that power of life which desireth food; and by the *belly*, that part of the body which concocteth the meat we eat; and so will have the meaning of the words to be, that he had neither any appetite to eat, nor strength to concoct what he did eat.

Verf. 10. *For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing, &c.*] That is, my life is wasted, and my years hasten away to an end: *my strength faileth because of mine iniquity*; that is, because of my sin, or because of my miseries and afflictions; for so the word iniquity is sometimes used in the Scripture, as Gen. 19. 15. which may seem here the more probable, because he speaks here only of his sufferings: *and my bones are consumed*, see the Note Job 30. 17.

Verf. 11. *I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, &c.*] That is, they despised and reproached me; or rather, they counted it a reproach to them to own me, or to have any thing to doe with me: *and a fear to mine acquaintance*; that is, mine acquaintance were afraid to shew me any favour, or any countenance, as being scared by that which befell Ahimelech and the other Priests that were slain with him, 1 Sam. 22. 18. or at least fearing that it would be a discredit and a disparagement to them: which is more fully expressed in the next clause, *they that did see me without fled from me*; that is, as fearing to be seen openly in my company; or as detesting me for those foul crimes, which they here charged upon me, looking upon me as one accursed of God. And thus too David implyes his misery to have been the greater, in that he was thus openly and in publick despised.

Verf. 12. *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind, &c.*] That is, in regard of the love they have formerly shewn to me, notwithstanding all the good that I have done for the kingdome, I am in a manner now quite forgotten; because they esteem me to be a lost man, of whom there is no hope, they now regard me not, I am now to them *as a dead man out of mind*. And indeed of the dead Solomon saith, Eccles. 9. 5. *that the memory of them is forgotten*; whence it is that the grave is called Psal. 88. 12. *the land of forgetfulnesse*: and therefore too he adds, *I am like a broken vessel*, that is, I am forgotten and quite disregarded, like an earthen vessel, which being broken men cast away, and never mind it more, because it cannot be mended again.

Verf. 13. *For I have heard the slander of many, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 4. 2. *Fear was on every side*; that is, I was beset with fear, as being beset with enemies on every side: yet it may be meant also of the fear of those that were about him. It is in the Hebrew *Magor missabib*, an expression which from this place Jeremy often useth in his prophesie, as Jer. 6. 25, and 49. 29, and in divers other places; and chap. 20. 3, 4. he gave this for a Name to Pashur the Priest, signifying that he should be a terrour to himself, and to his friends round about him.

Verf. 14. *I said, Thou art my God.*] To wit, though thou hast sorely afflicted me. See the Note Psal. 16. 2.

Verf. 15. *My times are in thy hand, &c.*] That is, The years of my life are in thy power, and not in the power of mine enemies: Or rather it may be meant more generally, of all the changes that could befall him (for *so every thing there is a sea-*

season and a time, Eccles. 3. 1.) to wit, that nothing could befall him, whether good or evil, but by Gods providence; and thereupon he inferres, as with reference to that he had said of his times being in Gods hand, *deliver me from the hand of mine enemies.*

Verf. 16. *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, &c.*] That is, Manifest thy love and favour to me, who am indeed persecuted because I serve thee, by delivering me from mine enemies. See the Note Numb. 6. 25, 26.

Verf. 17. *Let me not be ashamed, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 25. 2. *Let the wicked be ashamed*; see the Note Psal. 6. 10: *and let them be silent in the grave*; that is, not able to say or doe any thing against the righteous; see the Note 1 Sam. 2. 9.

Verf. 18. *Let the lying lips be put to silence, &c.*] This may be meant not only of his enemies slaunders and flatteries (see the Note Psal. 5. 6.) but also of their vain boastings and threatnings; as may appear by the following words, *which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous*, that is, against me and mine, whom they persecute causlessly: for the *grievous things* spoken by them may be, not only their slaunders, (which may be so called, both because they prove often the cause of much mischief, and likewise because it is so grievous to Gods righteous servants to have such foul crimes charged upon them, see the Note 1 Kings 2. 8.) but also their threatning of grievous things they will doe to them. And for those words, *proudly and contemptuously*, see the Note Psal. 12. 3. Out of the high conceit that wicked men have of their wisdom, &c. it proceeds that they contemn the righteous.

Verf. 19. *O how great is thy goodnesse, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, &c.*] Because of the following clause, *which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men*, many learned Expositours hold that David speaks here only of Gods goodnesse to his people here in this world: and that of this first it is said here, that it is *laid up for them that fear him*, either 1. because Gods goodnesse to them is hidden under many afflictions, and of the Lords withdrawing his help from them for a time, perhaps a long time together, so that not only the men of the world discern no such thing, but even the faithfull themselves have often much adoe to be assured of it; or 2. because many outward blessings God keeps in store for them, laid up as a treasure, which they do not at all times enjoy, though others be then openly conferred upon them; or 3. because Gods goodnesse is chiefly manifested to them in inward spirituall blessings, which cannot be outwardly discerned, as in the graces of Gods spirit, and of that inward comfort they enjoy; of which that is spoken Rev. 2. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it*; or rather 4. because it is the peculiar treasure of the righteous that truly fear him: for though God affords many outward mercies to all men whatsoever, yet there is this that is peculiar to the righteous in the good he doth for them, that he doth it out of a fatherly love to them, & that he causeth all things to farther their eternall salvation. And secondly, it is said that it is *wrought for them that trust in God, before the sons of men*, because even when God hides himself from his servants for a
time,

time, yet at last he is wont to manifest his love to them so, by taking their part, and by delivering them out of troubles, and otherwise, that their innocency and Gods precious esteem of them is manifest hereby as it were to all the world. But I see no reason why it may not be understood more generally, of all the good which God hath allotted to be the peculiar portion of his elect, and so may comprehend even that eternall blisse, of which it is said that it is *reserved in heaven for us*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. and with reference whereto Saint John saith, 1 Joh. 3. 2. that *it doth not yet appear what we shall be*, and Saint Paul 1 Cor. 2. 9. that *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, &c. the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*. For even of the goodnesse of God thus largely taken it may be said, that it is *laid up* for the righteous, and withall *wrought for them before the sons of men*, either because it is first laid up in Gods eternall decree, and then in time accomplished for them; or because it is kept in store for them, and in due time conferred upon them; or because it is in part conferred, and in part reserved for after-times.

Verf. 20. *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man, &c.*] See the Notes Job 29. 4, Psal. 25. 14, and 27. 5. The presence of Gods favour and grace, whereby he protects his servants, may be called *the secret* of his presence, either because they are thereby hidden (as it were) in secret from the rage of their enemies; or because this presence of Gods favour with the righteous, especially in their sore afflictions, is not discerned by the men of the world; whence it is that they are called Gods *hidden ones*, Psal. 83. 3. *Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues*; that is, from the contention of slandering and reviling tongues, or from tongues that cause contention, according to that of Solomon Prov. 15, 1. *grievous words stir up anger*.

Verf. 21. *Blessed be the Lord, for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindnesse, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 17. 7. and for the following words, *in a strong (or fenced) city*, the meaning is, that when he had no place to hide his head in, but lay naked and open to the malice of his enemies, having no place of shelter; yet through Gods protection he was kept as safe, as if he had been in a fortified city. I know, some conceive that it was Keilah he speaks of, (which indeed Saul called *a town that hath gates and bars*, 1 Sam. 23. 7.) namely, that God had shown him marvellous kindness there, in that he revealed to him that the inhabitants of that town would deliver him up to Saul: and others understand it of Jerusalem, that God had shown him great kindnesse by settling him after all his dangers in that strong city: yea some conceive, that it is the Church that is here, in reference to Gods protection, teamed a strong city. But the first Exposition seems to me the best.

Verf. 22. *For I said in mine hast, I am cut off, &c.*] It is said 1 Sam. 23. 26. that when Saul with his army had in a manner compassed in David in the wilderness of Maon, *David made hast to get away*; and accordingly of this *hast* some understand this place: but I conceive it is rather meant of the rashnesse and hastinesse of his spirit, that apprehending his danger to be unavoidable, on a sudden transported with fear, he said in his mind, what upon more deliberation he could not think, namely, that God had cast him out of his sight.

P S A L M XXXII.

The Title. **A** *Psalme of David, Maschil.*] Some say that *Maschil* was the name of some muscicall Instrument, or some Song to the tune whereof this Psalm was to be sung: But rather I conceive it is added to signifie the matter of this Psalm, and that it was composed to give instruction, according to the signification of the word set in the margin, *A Psalm of David giving instruction.*

Verf. 1. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*] To wit, from the sight of God, by the imputation of Christs righteousness, so that the Lord looks upon him no more as lying under the guilt of his sin. And the word *covered* seems to be used as in relation to the filthinesse of sin, making men loathsome in Gods sight. David having been long sorely oppressed with the burden of his sins, and the fear of Gods wrath, breaks forth into this patheticall expression concerning the blessednesse of the man whose sins are forgiven.

Verf. 2. *Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*] By *guile* here may be meant all hypocrisie in generall; and then this last clause is added, that he is blessed also *in whose spirit there is no guile*, because sincerity and unfeigned purity of heart is the necessary effect of justification and remission of sins, and so they that have truly obtained pardon do alwaies manifest their justification by their sanctification, even by their sincere endeavours to walk in all holinesse and righteousness before God. Or else it may be meant of that hypocrisie in particular, whereby men are kept from turning unfeignedly to God, that they may obtain remission of sins and reconciliation; as namely when men do vainly embolden themselves against all fear of Gods wrath, though they be never so profane, or when men beguile themselves with false flatteries, as by excusing or extenuating their sins, or by trusting in the observation of any outward rites which God requires in his worship, &c. In a word, whatever it be, whereby those that do not humble themselves before God in the acknowledgement of their sins do deceive themselves, and would as it were deceive God, that is the *guile* here spoken of. And this, I conceive, indeed is principally intended; and that David mentions this here out of a detestation of those false flatteries, wherewith for a time he had deceived himself, and so put off his repentance.

Verf. 3. *When I kept silence, my bones waxed old; through my roaring all the day long.*] It is evident, I conceive, that by keeping silence here David meant his not confessing his sins, because, as in opposition to this, it is said verf. 5. that he did at length acknowledge his sins. And because in the following words he saith, that *his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long*, I conceive it as evident, that he intends hereby to shew, that it was whilst he was sorely terrified in conscience, and perhaps also under the heavy pressure of some sickness, or some other outward affliction, that he kept silence, and confessed not his sins to God. So that the meaning of the words is this; *When I kept silence*, that is, As long as I forbear

to goe to God, confessing my sin, and begging mercy at his hand, but did still dissemble and conceal my sins, and sought ease otherwaies, *my bones waxed old*, that is, my strength decayed, or my inward parts were pained and withered and parched; (see the Note Job 30. 17. he alludes to sores that corrupt and fester, whilst they are concealed from the Chirurgeon) *through my roaring all the day long*, to wit, by reason of the terrours of Gods wrath that were upon him; as if he had said, though I powred forth my sorrow with cries, more like the roaring of a beast, then the complaints of a reasonable man, neither that nor any thing else gave me any ease, but rather encreased my misery, as long as I neglected to acknowledge my sins.

Verf. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, &c.*] To wit, in terrours of conscience, and perhaps likewise in some grievous outward affliction; see the foregoing Note: *my moisture is turned into the drought of summer*; that is, my radicall moisture is dried up, as the moisture of the earth is dried up in the heat of summer: see the Note Psal. 22. 15.

Verf. 5. *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid, &c.*] David repeats it here thrice, and with three severall expressions, that at length he acknowledged his sins to God, thereby to imply how full his confession was, and that he hid nothing from him. And again, by that word *I said* in the third clause, *I said I will confesse my transgressions*, the freedome of his confession is also implied, namely, that after some deliberation with himself he voluntarily resolved upon it, as believing assuredly that he should find mercy with God: *and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*; that is, thou didst remit the punishment of my sin, (for so the word iniquity is sometimes taken, see the Note Psal. 31. 10.) thou didst withdraw the stroke of thine hand that was upon me; or thou forgavest the evil and guilt that was in my sin, that is, thou didst assure me that thou hadst pardoned it, and so my torment was presently eased.

Verf. 6. *For this, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, for the pardon of sin. But rather we must understand it thus: *For this*, that is, Because thou dost so readily forgive those that confesse their sins, and seek to thee for mercy; or because thou hast dealt thus graciously with me: therefore *shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found*; that is, whilst yet there is grace offered, before death, (for after death there is no seeking for mercy, yea indeed at the hour of death men are hardly wonne to seek God in a right manner) or before thou hast pronounced an irrevocable sentence against them, or before thou dost withdraw thy spirit and grace from them, even whilst they feel their hearts stirred within them to fly to the Lord for mercy, and so they seek the Lord with all their hearts; for then is the Lord near at hand to hear mens prayers, Isa. 66. 2. Jer. 29. 13. whereas if they quench these motions of Gods spirit, the Lord perhaps may resolve never so to strive with them any more. *Surely in the floods of great waters*, that is, in the greatest troubles, see 2 Sam. 22. 17. *they shall not come nigh unto him*, that is, to overwhelm, or hurt him: so far shall he be from being punished in wrath for his sins, that even when there is in the place where he lives a deluge of overflowing calamities; though he may be in very desperate dangers,
God

God will secure him. And this therefore David applyes to himself in the next verse, or proves it from his own example.

Vers. 7. *Thou art my hiding place, &c.*] See the foregoing Note, and likewise the Notes Psal. 17. 8; and 27. 5: *thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance*; that is, by affording me many deliverances on all sides, thou shalt give me occasion to sing many songs of praise unto thee. It may also imply, that God would give to those that were about him, or to the whole people of God, occasion to praise him, both on his and their own behalf.

Vers. 8. *I will instruct thee, &c.*] Some take this to be inserted, as Gods answer to the profession David had made in the foregoing verse of his confidence in God; as if he had said, Thou mayest well rely upon me, for *I will instruct thee, &c.* (see the Note Psal. 25. 4.) *I will guide thee with mine eye*, that is, by keeping a watchfull provident eye over thee; or by discovering to thee my watchfull care over thee, which shall put thee in mind to avoid every evil way, as Christ counselled Peter, by casting his eye upon him, Luk. 22. 61. But I rather take these to be still the words of David. As Psal. 51. 13. upon his own repentance David promiseth to stir up others to repent too, *Then will I teach transgressours thy waies, &c.* so here likewise, having repented, and obtained pardon from God, and found great comfort therein, he undertakes to instruct others, and to perswade them likewise, directing his speech as to every man apart by himself, *I will instruct thee, &c. I will guide thee with mine eye*, that is, by that which I have seen, and whereof I have had experience in my self; or rather, by keeping a watchfull eye, and looking to thee with much solicitous care, as indeed Gods people ought to watch over one another.

Vers. 9. *Be ye not as the horse or mule, that have no understanding, &c.*] As if he had said, Harken to my counsell, and by my example be brought to repent, and to turn unto the Lord: Be not like brute beasts that will not be ordered by words, *whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near to hurt thee*, to wit, to bite or kick thee; implying, that God had also waies to tame men, if they would be stubborn against him; which are the sorrows mentioned in the following words.

Vers. 10. *Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, &c.*] As if he had said, If wicked men will not repent, and turn unto the Lord, their consciences will be often galled with the apprehensions of Gods wrath; and besides, many outward plagues will the Lord bring upon them; (the bit and bridle wherewith God subdues such refractory spirits) and at last they must expect the weeping and wailing of hell: *but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about*; that is, he shall have comforts and blessings on all sides, and shall be preserved from all dangers, the Lords protection compassing him *as with a shield*, Psal. 5. 12.

Vers. 11. *Be glad in the Lord, &c.*] Hereby he implies what exceeding joy follows upon faith, when men are thereby reconciled unto God, and are assured of the pardon of their sins: for of that he speaks in this whole Psalm.

P S A L M XXXIII.

Verf. 1. **R** *Ejoyce in the Lord, O ye righteous, &c.*] Thus as the foregoing Psalm ended, so this begins: *for praise is comely for the upright*, to wit, in regard they above others have such speciall and abundant cause to praise God, so that no imployment is fitter for them; as likewise because they alone do truly know God, and heartily desire to glorifie his name, and so from them it is acceptable with God; whereas when wicked men, that have no tast of Gods goodnesse, do undertake to praise God, they do but profane Gods holy name, and therefore God abhors their praises: see Psal. 50. 16.

Verf. 2. *Praise the Lord with harp.*] This Instrument is first mentioned, wherein David did much delight, and in the playing whereon he was eminently skilfull, 1 Sam. 16. 18. It is called Psal. 81. 2. *the pleasant harp.*

Verf. 3. *Sing unto him a new song.*] This is required, either to imply, that to him that attentively considers the works of God, there will still be occasion of composing new songs of praise; or rather to imply with what fervency and chearfulness of spirit he desired they should praise God, because upon occasions of unusuall joy they were wont to compose new songs, and to fit them with some rare and exquisite tune, and so they were sung and heard with the more earnestnesse and delight. Yet some say, that by *a new song* is meant a song that should never grow stale and out of date in the Church, where the people of God do continually enjoy manifold blessings conferred upon them in Christ.

Verf. 4. *For the word of the Lord is right, &c.*] That is, All his commands concerning the government of the world are just and equall, every way right and un-reprovable: *and all his works are done in truth*, that is, sincerely, without any guile; and faithfully, according to what he hath promised or spoken to his people. Some indeed understand the first clause of the written word, to wit, that that *word of the Lord is right*, that is, that what he hath promised, yea all that he hath spoken therein, is faithfull and true, sincere and without deceit, yea every way blamelesse: of which see also the Note Psal. 19. 8. But the first Exposition is the best, as agreeing with that which follows, verf. 6, and 9.

Verf. 5. *He loveth righteousness and judgement.*] That is, he loveth to do justice and judgement.

Verf. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, &c.*] See the Notes Gen. 1. 1, 2, 3, &c. *and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*, that is, by his command: see the Note also Gen. 2. 1. Yet some conceive that the three persons of the holy Trinity are here severally mentioned.

Verf. 7. *He gathereth the waters of the sea together, as an heap, &c.*] This is meant of that gathering of the waters of the sea together in the first creation, see the Note Gen. 1. 9, and Job 38. 8, 9, 10: yet because they are still kept in the hollow places of the earth by the same almighty power, by which they were at first disposed of there, it is expressed in the present tense, *He gathereth the waters, &c. he layeth up the depth in store-houses.*

Verf. 10.

Verf. 10. *He maketh the devices of the people of none effect.*] Though whole nations do combine together, and set themselves to bring any thing to passe, God can easily crosse them.

Verf. 14. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.*] So he calleth the sons of men, as by way of contempt, to imply the baseness even of the greatest of them, in comparison of the Lord, whose throne is in heaven.

Verf. 15. *He fashioneth their hearts alike,&c.*] That is, all mens hearts, none excepted, one as well as another. And this is ascribed to God, 1. because he it is that createth the souls and spirits of men in their first conception, with all the severall faculties thereof, see the Note Numb. 16. 22; and 2. because he ordereth and disposeth of their hearts and all the motions thereof, as it is said of the kings heart Prov. 21. 1. *he turneth it whithersoever he will.* And this is here expressed thus to imply, that therefore God must needs exactly know all men, they being his workmanship, yea even the thoughts and intentions of their hearts, and much more their works, which is expressed in the next clause, *he considereth all their works.*

Verf. 18. *Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him,&c.*] See the Note Psal. 11. 7.

Verf. 20. *Our soul waiteth for the Lord,&c.*] This he speaks in the name of the whole Church, to wit, that they would with all their souls wait upon God for help in all their troubles.

P S A L M XXXIV.

The Title. **A** Psalm of David when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech,&c. To wit, feigning himself mad; which circumstance seems here to be expressed, because this tended much to the magnifying of Gods grace, that notwithstanding his infirmity therein, yet God was pleased to deliver him; see the Notes 1 Sam. 21. 10, 11, 13. This is also one of the Alphabeticall Psalms, his exceeding joy causing him to compose this Psalm with the more exquisite art; but for this see the Note Psal. 29. 12.

Verf. 1. *I will blesse the Lord at all times,&c.*] That is, as long as I live, both in prosperity and adversity; I will never forget this wonderfull deliverance. And thus he ascribes his escape, not to that which he did, but to the providence of God; which is more clearly expressed afterwards verf. 4.

Verf. 2. *My soul shall make her boast in the Lord,&c.*] That is, from my very soul I will boast of the Lords favour and goodness to me: *the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad;* that is, they shall hear of my praising the Lord, and out of love to God shall rejoyce, that his name is so exalted: or rather, they shall hear of my deliverance, and so shall be glad, both on my behalf, that God hath so preserved me, and reserved me still to sit on the throne of Israel; and on their own behalf, as encouraged by mine example, chearfully to expect the like deliverance from God. For who are meant by *the humble* here, see in the Note Job 22. 29.

Verf. 3. *O magnify the Lord with me,&c.*] This may be spoken to all the faithful in generall, or in particular to the humble mentioned in the foregoing verse.

Verf. 4. *He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.*] And indeed when he was discovered and brought to Achish, he could not but be surprized with divers fears: as, lest Achish should slay him, and perhaps with great tortures, to satisfy his revenge; or lest he should deliver him up into Sauls hands, whom he knew now to be his enemy; and many such like.

Verf. 5. *They looked unto him, and were lightened, &c.*] This he speaks of those, of whom he had said before verf. 2. *the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad; they* (saith he) *looked unto him*, to wit, unto God in prayer, with faith and hope waiting upon God, see the Note Psal. 5. 3. *and were lightened*, see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 29. It may also be read, as it is in the margin, *they looked unto him, and they flowed unto him*; and then the meaning is, that encouraged by the Lords delivering him, they did in great numbers, and with much earnestnesse, alacrity and boldnesse, not doubting of good successe, flee unto the Lord for succour: *and their faces were not ashamed*, see the Note Psal. 25. 2.

Verf. 6. *This poor man cryed, &c.*] This some take, as spoken by David of himself; and indeed very frequently in the Psalms David tearms himself poor and afflicted, as Psal. 40. 17. *But I am poor and needy, &c.* and so in many other places: yet rather they are the words of those, of whom he had spoken in the former verse, that admiring the goodnesse of God in Davids deliverance, do here alledge it for their own encouragement. *This poor man* (say they) *cryed, and the Lord heard him*; this poor persecuted man, destined to death, and despised of all men, he cryed, and the Lord heard and delivered him.

Verf. 8. *O tast and see that the Lord is good, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Make tryall, rest and rely upon the Lord alone, and see whether you shall not find that God is very good to them that trust in him: and indeed the faithfull find much sweetnesse in it, when they can cast all their cares upon God. But rather it is meant of observing the proofs that God gives of his goodnesse, such as was that of Gods delivering him out of the hands of Achish; *O tast and see that the Lord is good*, that is, Mark and observe it by experience, that being affected therewith (as you must needs be, if you be not senselesse and stupid) it may yield much pleasure and delight unto your souls: see 1 Pet. 2. 3. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in him*, to wit, because God will be sure to doe good to such.

Verf. 9. *O fear the Lord, ye his Saints, &c.*] This is prescribed as the means, whereby men may make sure that God will be in a speciall manner good unto them: and more particularly the aim of these words is, to perswade men, not to take any other course to provide for themselves, as by deceiving and oppressing others; which may appear by the following clause, *for there is no want to them that fear him*, God will give them what they desire, or give them a contented mind without it.

Verf. 10. *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger, &c.*] This many understand of rich and great oppressours, men ravenous as lions: see the Note Job 4. 10. But there is no reason why it may not be as well understood of the beasts themselves, to wit, that young lions, that are strongest and most ravenous, shall sooner be hunger-bitten, then *they that seek the Lord*, that is, that fear God, shall want any

any thing that is good for them. See the Note Psalm 22. 26.

Verf. 11. *Come, ye children, hearken unto me, &c.*] This expression David useth, either as a Prince, because such they usually stiled fathers; see the Note 2 Kings 5. 13. or rather as a prophet, because such were esteemed spirituall fathers; and therefore the prophets disciples were called *the sons of the prophets*; 2 Kings 2. 3. and Christ called his disciples children, Joh. 13. 33. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you*; and so did Paul the Galatians, whom he had converted, Gal. 4. 19. and that to make known how dearly he loved them, thereby to render them the more willing to hear and embrace his counsell: Or else it may be spoken as in the name of God, as knowing that he spake and wrote by the inspiration of Gods spirit, according to that 2 Sam. 23. 2. *The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.*

Verf. 12. *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many daies, that he may see good?*] That is, that he may enjoy a blessed and happy life both here and hereafter: see the Notes Job 7. 7, and Psal. 21. 4. It is expressed by way of interrogation, to imply, that if any man do really desire this, they must take the way that is here afterward prescribed; and how strange it was that all men should pretend a desire of this, and yet so few should really desire it, as is evident because so few take the right way to attain it. This with the four following verses is alledged by Peter, 1 Pet. 3. 10, &c.

Verf. 13. *Keep thy tongue from evil, &c.*] Though all evil-speaking is here forbidden, yet more especially that, whereby a man deceives or wrongs his neighbour (for still he seeks to make good, that he that fears God shall be well provided for, and needs not use any unlawfull means to help himself) as is clear in the following clause, *and thy lips from speaking guile*: and that expression, *keep thy tongue*, implies, how slippery the tongue is, and prone to offend, if it be not with much watchfulness restrained.

Verf. 14. *Depart from evil, and doe good.*] Though this also may be understood generally of all good and evil, yet more particularly it is meant of avoiding the doing of any injury to our neighbours, and seeking to doe them all the good we can: and by joyning these two together we are taught, that as it is not enough barely to abstain from wronging any body; so neither will God be pleased, if we defraud or oppresse some, and then with goods so gotten do good to others. And besides that expression, *Depart from evil*, may imply both, 1. that men will be continually followed with temptations to evil, which therefore they must most carefully avoid; 2. that the purity of man consists, rather in abandoning the evil which we have done, then in keeping our selves pure from evil.

Verf. 15. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, &c.*] Because they that thus walk in the fear of the Lord, not daring to return evil for evil, but making peace with those that are enemies to peace, may seem likely to be exposed to many injuries; this that follows is added for their encouragement. For this first clause, see the Note Psal. 11. 7.

Verf. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, &c.*] That is, whose hearts are even broken, so that they are no other then as dead men, by reason of the

the extremity of their miseries and sorrows; and then withall those that are greatly humbled hereby and afflicted in spirit, through grief and fear of Gods displeasure because of their sins.

Verf. 20. *He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.*] The meaning is, that God preserveth the whole man, every member of his body; and much more then his soul. Yet this must be understood with subordination to the Crosse; God will preserve his bones, unlesse the breaking of any one of them may tend to the eternall good of his soul.

Verf. 21. *Evil shall slay the wicked, &c.*] That is, His sin shall destroy him; or more particularly, The evil he practiseth against the righteous shall prove his own ruine: yet some understand it of the evil of punishment, to wit, that the wicked man shall, by the judgements that God brings upon him, be irrecoverably cut off: *and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate, or, shall be guilty.* See the Note Psal. 5. 10.

Verf. 22. *The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants.*] See the Note Psal. 31. 5.

P S A L M XXXV.

Verf. 1. **P**Lead my cause (O Lord) with them that strive with me, &c.] To wit, who would gladly live peaceably with them, but that they are so implacably contentious, and will not let me be quiet. In this first clause David desires, that the Lord would maintain his innocency against those that falsely accused him; in the next, *fight against them that fight against me*, that he would withstand those that did unjustly persecute him. And thus he doth ingage God in his quarrel, as knowing that the cause was Gods as well as his, who had chosen and anointed him to be king.

Verf. 2. *Take hold of shield and buckler, &c.*] That is, either shield or buckler, therewith to defend me; that they that presume so much upon their armes may find, that there is a God who is armed with such power for the defence of his servants, that against that their armes shall nothing avail them.

Verf. 3. *Stop the way against them that persecute me, &c.*] That is, that they may not flee away and escape out of thine hands; or rather, that they may not come at me to hurt me: *say unto my soul, I am thy salvation;* that is, make me to know by experience, that thou hast undertaken my defence; or, assure me inwardly by thy spirit, that thou wilt save me from mine enemies. And it may well be that in this expression he alludes to those, that intending to relieve a place besieged, are wont by messages to assure them before-hand, that they will come to their succour.

Verf. 4. *Let them be turned back, &c.*] That is, Let them be put to a shamefull flight; or, Let them be disappointed of their purposes, and not be able to goe on forward with the evil they have plotted against me.

Verf. 5. *Let them be as chaff before the wind, &c.*] As if he had said, As they have driven me up and down from one place to another, so let them be scattered and flee before thee; or let them be ever in a restless condition, driven up and down with

with the inward terrours and affrightments of their own minds and consciences, not thinking themselves safe in any place: see the Note also Job 21. 18. *and let the angel of the Lord chase them*; as if he should have said, Yea in stead of the wind, let an angel, of far more force and might then the mightiest wind, pursue them so that they may not have any breathing time. And this may be meant either of a good or an evil angel, as we see in Saul 1 Sam. 16. 14.

Verf. 6. *Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.*] That is, Let the way, whereby fleeing they seek to escape, be fearfull, dangerous and troublesome; as if he had said, Let them not know what course to take, nor be able any way to escape, but fall at last under the stroke of thine avenging hand. Whilst a man may goe leasurely, he may goe safely, though it be in the dark, and in a slippery way; but being forced to flee in such a way by the secret pursuit of an angel, what hope can there be of escaping? That this is the meaning of these words we may see by the like expression Jer. 23. 12. *Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery waies in the darknesse; they shall be driven on and fall therein.*

Verf. 8. *Let destruction come upon him at unawares, &c.*] That is, against him that persecutes me, indefinitely, see verf. 3. or it may be meant particularly of Saul.

Verf. 10. *All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor? &c.*] This he speaks as in reference to that which he had found by his own experience. That expression which he useth, *All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee? &c.* some understand, as if he had said thus; I who am at present quite consumed, nothing in a manner but skin and bones, shall notwithstanding extoll thy great name. But doubtlesse it is rather an hyperbolicall expression of the strong desires he should have to set forth Gods praise, if he would vouchsafe to take his part against his enemies, *All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee?* as if he should have said, Not my soul only, but my whole man, all the members of my body, yea all my inward parts will be so affected with thy goodnesse, and so inflamed with a desire to praise thee, that my very bones, though senselesse, could they speak, would break forth into thy praises, and cry out, *Lord, who is like unto thee?* To which purpose there are many expressions elsewhere, not much unlike to this: as that Psal. 84. 2. *My heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God;* and that Psal. 5. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce;* and that Job 31. 20. *If his loyns have not blessed me, &c.* concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 12. *They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul.*] To wit, as seeking to take away my life, whereby the soul is stripped or spoyled of the body; or, as seeking to deprive me of all that might be any help or joy or comfort to me; as to spoyl me of all my goods, to drive me from my countrey, and from the presence of my God in his worship and ordinances.

Verf. 13. *But as for me, when they were sick, &c.*] and consequently when they were in any other misery, *my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine own bosome:* concerning which last clause, there

are many different Expositions, and divers of them seem equally probable. For some conceive that these words imply his perseverance in praying for them, *my prayer returned into mine own bosome*; as if he had said, I found my self still as mindfull of them, as earnest to call upon God for them, as ever, and so was ready still to renew my prayers for them again and again upon all opportunities. Secondly, others think that David hereby intended to signify the sincerity of his prayers, to wit, that there went nothing out of his lips when he prayed, but his heart was affected accordingly, and so what he desired for them, he desired it sincerely from his very soul. Thirdly, others take it thus, that if his prayer prevailed not for them, yet it brought back a blessing upon himself, God did recompence it into his bosome; at least his heart was replenished with comfort thereby. Fourthly, others understand it of the same blessings, that either he desired that of God for his enemies, which he could be glad might be done to himself; or that God did that for him, which he did beg of God for his enemies (both which do imply how sincerely he prayed for them:) the like whereto we find Psal. 79. 12. *Render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosome, &c.* And fifthly, others say it is meant of his praying for them in secret; which may be alledged as a clear proof that he did it sincerely, as truly grieving for their misery, and desiring their recovery, and not for ostentation or making shew of that which was not in his heart. And indeed as they are said to laugh in their bosome (or, as we say, in their sleeve) that rejoyce in secret, but do not shew it openly; so they may be said to mourn or pray in their bosome, that do it secretly, no body taking notice of any such thing: which may also seem the more probable, because this word (*bosome*) doth often in the Scripture signify secrecy, as Prov. 21. 14. *A gift in secret pacifyeth anger, and a reward in the bosome strong wrath*; and Psal. 89. 50. *I do bear in my bosome the reproach of all the mighty people.* But the third and fourth of these Expositions, I think, are most agreeable to our Translation.

Vers. 15. *But in mine adversity they rejoyced, and gathered themselves together, &c.*] To wit, to rejoyce and triumph together at my troubles, and to consult and bandy together to further mine utter ruine: *yea the abjects gathered themselves together against me*; that is, the scumme of the people: *and I knew it not*; which is added to imply, either his integrity, in that he never suspected any such thing, as not being conscious to himself of any cause that he had given them to use him so; or his danger, in that not knowing their evil purposes, he was the lesse able to prevent them; or their dissembling and fawning upon him at the same time, which made him fearlesse of any such plots that they had against him. *They did tear me, and ceased not*, to wit, with their scoffs and calumnies and reproaches: which agreeth with that Matth. 7. 6. *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine; least they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

Vers. 16. *With hypocritical mockers in feasts, &c.*] This is meant either of Sauls proud courtiers, who when they sat gorging themselves at their full feasts, could rail against poor David, and seek his death; or else of those court parasites, or base scurrilous jesters, that for the filling of their bellies would say any thing
against

against David, to please those that entertained them: *they gnashed upon me with their teeth*, to wit, as if they would eat me.

Verf. 17. *Lord, how long wilt thou look on? &c.*] That is, only look on, and not come in to my help? *rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions*; see the Notes Psal. 22. 20, 21.

Verf. 19. *Neither let them wink with the eye, that hate me without a cause.*] To wit, by way of scoffing and rejoycing at my misery: for this may be expressed by winking; whence is that Prov. 10. 10. *He that winketh with the eye, causeth sorrow.*

Verf. 20. *They devise deceitfull matters against them that are quiet in the land.*] That is, that would fain have lived quietly and peaceably, though the contrary be pretended, that we are the great disturbers of the kingdome's peace.

Verf. 21. *Yea they opened their mouth wide against me, &c.*] See the Note Job 16. 10.

Verf. 22. *This thou hast seen, O Lord, &c.*] This is spoken as in opposition to that triumphing of his enemies at his misery, mentioned in the foregoing verse, *Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it*: as if he had said, Whilst mine enemies rejoyce in seeing my miseries, my comfort is, that thou, Lord, hast seen them too; though thou hast suffered them to goe on, as if thou didst not see them, yet I know well that thou hast seen both my troubles, and their malicious practises and insultations over me. *Keep not silence*: see the Note Psal. 28. 1.

Verf. 24. *Iudge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness.*] To wit, whereby thou art wont to plead the cause of the innocent against those that oppress them: see the Note Psal. 26. 1.

Verf. 26. *Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together, that rejoyce at mine hurt, &c.*] As if he should have said, As they gathered themselves together, verf. 15, to insult over me, and to plot mischief against me; so let them be confounded together: implying, that God was able as with one blow to overwhelm them all together with confusion, though they were never so many. As for the following words, *let them be clothed with shame*, see the Note Job 8. 22.

Verf. 27. *Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause, &c.*] That is, Let those that favour me, though they be not able to help me, be glad both on my behalf, and likewise through experience they shall have thereby of thy readinesse to help the oppressed: *yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, &c.* And this he covertly opposeth to his enemies exalting themselves; as desiring that God might be exalted, maugre their pride and lifting up themselves above his people.

P S A L M XXXVI.

The Title. **A** Psalm of David the servant of the Lord.] So he styles himself here, because God had anointed him to serve him as king in the government of the kingdome of Israel; and in the confidence hereof he seeks to God in this Psalm for help against his wicked enemies. Yet

some conceive it is rather, because being to set forth herein the profanenesse of A. theisticall wretches, that would not be subject to God, and yet flourished, whilst the godly were in trouble, he would hereby imply, that for all this he would be, and rejoyced to professe himself to be, *the servant of the Lord.*

Verf. 1. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.*] That is, His wicked life doth testify to me within my heart, from the wickednesse of his life it seems to me, or I do certainly conclude, *that there is no fear of God before his eyes.* And this last clause is alledged by the Apostle Rom. 3. 18. to prove the sinfull and corrupt disposition of all naturall men.

Verf. 2. *For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, &c.*] To wit, by perswading himself, upon false deceitfull grounds, that what he doth is not evil; or that however no evil shall befall him thereby, he shall scape well enough; or by applauding himself for doing those things wherein he pleaseth himself, though he doth displease God, out of a brutish stupidity and contempt of God, *untill his iniquity be found to be hatefull*, to wit, by the wrath of God that it brings upon him: or the meaning of this clause may be, that by his so flattering himself, he is found to be hatefull, either because this applauding of themselves in their wickednesse is to all men, that are not desperately Atheisticall, a most hatefull thing; or because by thus emboldening themselves, they proceed to such degrees of wickednesse, that at length they become detestable both to God and man.

Verf. 3. *The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit, &c.*] That is, they tend to iniquity and deceit: *he hath left off to be wise, and to doe good*; that is, he refuseth all instruction, and suppresseth the very light of nature in him, whereby men are enabled to know what is good and what is evil; and so never minds the doing of that which is good, but rather gives over the doing of that good which at first he did, though with a false and unsound heart. Yet some understand this still of the words whereby the wicked man flattereth and deceiveth himself in his evil waies, whereby he comes at last to be given over to a reprobate sense, so that he makes no difference between good and evil.

Verf. 4. *He deviseth mischief upon his bed, &c.*] Which implyes, both that he is violently bent upon evil, in that he will break himself of his rest, that he may contrive mischief; and that his own wicked heart is the chief cause of it, in that of his own accord he meditates evil, when he hath no outward enticement or evil example to draw him thereto: *he fethereth himself in a way that is not good*; he is resolved to runne on in his unwarrantable wayes: *he abhorreth not evils* to wit, no evil whatsoever; though he may not be guilty of every sin, yet he doth not avoid it because he abhorres it.

Verf. 5. *Thy mercy (O Lord) is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*] It is said Psal. 57. 10. *thy mercy is great unto the heavens*, and Psal. 108. 4. *above the heavens*; but the meaning of all these expressions is the same, namely, that the mercy and faithfulness of God, in making good what he hath spoken, are infinite, and above our reach and understanding, and all the creatures in heaven and earth do declare the same. Some conceive that this is inserted

ted here, as by way of admiring that God should bear with, and doe good to such Atheisticall wretches, as these he had now spoken of. But rather the drift of these words is, to declare Davids assurance, that notwithstanding all this horrid impiety of so many desperate wretches, yet he knew well that God was in the midst of all these confusions infinitely good and mercifull and just; as is farther expressed in the following verse.

Verf. 6. *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, &c.*] That is, it is firm and unmoveable; or rather, agreeably to those expressions in the former verse, it is infinitely high and great, above our reach, or eminently conspicuous that all men may see it: *thy judgements are a great deep*; that is, thy just and righteous dealings in the government of the world are incomprehensible and past finding out; or they are very great, as the ocean, being manifest above and beneath, yea in every place, which way soever we cast our eyes.

Verf. 7. *How excellent is thy loving kindnesse, O God! &c.*] Some understand this likewise, and that which followeth in the two next verses, of the kindnesse which God sheweth to all the creatures. But rather from the kindnesse of God to all the creatures he inferres here, that his loving kindnesse to his children must needs be far more excellent. *Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings*; therefore thy people, (poor sinfull frail creatures) however they see the wicked triumph, do securely cast themselves upon thy fatherly providence: see the Note Psal. 17. 8.

Verf. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatnesse of thy house, &c.*] That is, with abundance of the choicest blessings, both temporall, spirituall and eternall, which thou hast stored up for them that are of thy household & family. Thus, I conceive, these words may be generally taken: only then we must remember, that earthly blessings can only be said to satisfy Gods servants, in that they enjoy them as pledges of Gods fatherly love to them, and providence over them. Yet, I conceive, it is chiefly meant of spirituall and heavenly blessings: as 1. that they shall be refreshed and comforted, even to the full satisfaction of their souls, and to the rendring of them contented with their condition in other regards, whatever it be, with the graces and comforts wrought in them by the word and spirit of God, and especially the clear manifestation of his love and favour to them thereby; and so this may be termed *the fatnesse of Gods house*, in relation to the Tabernacle, or in relation to heaven, because the righteous in these joyes of Gods spirit have as it were a tast of the joyes of heaven before-hand: and 2. that they shall be abundantly satisfied with that fulnesse of joy and glory they shall have in heaven, Gods dwelling-place, so that they shall not hunger nor thirst any more, nor desire any thing but what they there enjoy. *And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures*; that is, thou shalt yield them a constant never-failing supply of those pleasures which thou only canst give, or which from thee shall successively flow in unto their souls. And this also must be understood, as the former clause, of all the comforts which God affords his people, both in this life, and that which is to come; but especially of those which they enjoy by the light of Gods countenance, which (as by these expressions David would imply) are as meat and drink unto the faithfull.

Verf. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life, &c.*] This seems to be added in reference to the foregoing words, *and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures*; for to make good this, David affirms here, that God is the fountain of life, both because he hath life in and of himself, and because all the life that is in the creature, both temporall, spirituall and eternall, flows from him, as rivers from their fountains, and so shall for ever, he being an ever-springing fountain of living waters, that can never be drawn dry. And because God by his spirit doth work that life of faith and grace, which is the spirituall life of his people, in relation thereto David might say, *with thee is the fountain of life*. However, the following clause must accordingly be understood, *and in thy light we shall see light*; to wit, though partly of that light of life wherewith all men are enlightened from God, yet more especially 1. of the spirituall enlightening of Gods people here in this world; *In thy light*, that is, by thine enlightening of us, and by the light of thy countenance shining upon us, *we shall see light*, that is, we shall enjoy all saving knowledge, comfort and joy; or by thy bringing of us truly to know thee, we shall certainly enjoy true blisse and happinesse: and 2. of their being partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light and life eternall; *In thy light we shall see light*, that is, in thee, who art the true light, and the fountain of light, we shall see thee who art that light inaccessible; (thus some understand these words, because whereas here we see God only in his works and word, by faith, and not by sight, *as through a glasse, darkly*, in heaven we shall see him in himself, *face to face*, 1 Cor. 13. 12, and that not by the help of any *medium*, as we see the Sun mediately by the aire, but immediately in and by himself) or else, in and by the light of thy glory, filling and transforming us, we shall be made capable of beholding thee, who art the true light, face to face, and so shall enjoy thy presence in glory for evermore.

Verf. 11. *Let not the foot of pride, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verse prayed for the faithfull in generall, *O continue thy loving kindnesse unto them that know thee*, &c. here, as reckoning himself one of that number, he adds, *Let not the foot of pride come against me*; that is, let not proud men invade me, or let them not be able to come at me, or trample upon me: *and let not the hand of the wicked remove me*; that is, let them not be able to beat me off from my confidence in thee, and from that way of truth and holinesse wherein I have hitherto walked; or, let them not put me to flight, or drive me from my country, and the place of Gods worship. See the Notes Psal. 11. 1, and 13. 4.

Verf. 12. *There are the workers of iniquity fallen, &c.*] To wit, when in their pride they thought to invade me. See the Note Psal. 14. 5.

P S A L M XXXVII.

The Title.

A *Psalme of David.*] And composed it was by him in his old age, as is clear vers. 25. *I have been young, and now am old.* It is another Alphabetical Psalm, concerning which see Note Psal. 25. 1; only there are here two verses allowed to a letter, unlesse in four verses, where there is but one verse to a letter, as in the other before.

Vers. 1. *Fret not thy self because of evil doers, &c.*] That is, as it is expressed vers. 7. because they prosper in their waies; vex not thy self for this, either by murmuring against God, or grudging against them.

Vers. 2. *For they shall soon be cut down like the grasse, &c.*] That is, God shall suddenly destroy them, as it were with one blow, as the grasse is mown down with one stroke of the sythe.

Vers. 3. *Trust in the Lord, and doe good, &c.*] As if he should have said, Be not drawn by the prosperity of wicked men to doe as they doe, but do you trust in God, and doe that which is good in his sight; *so shalt thou dwell in the land, &c.* that is, thou shalt long dwell quietly and safely in the land which God hath given thee, without danger of being cut off or cast out. And this too was to the Israelites, inhabiting the land of Canaan, a pledge of life eternall.

Vers. 4. *Delight thy self also in the Lord.*] As if he had said, Whilst wicked men delight themselves in their wicked waies, and outward prosperity, do thou delight thy self in God, living by faith in him, as the fountain of all good. See the Note also Job 22. 26.

Vers. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord.*] That is, By faith and prayer cast all thy affairs, and all the passages of thy life upon the Providence of God, resigning all to his will, and waiting patiently for what he will doe.

Vers. 6. *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noon-day.*] That is, Though thy righteousness may be obscured for a time, by the calumnies and false accusations of wicked men, or by the heavy afflictions thou maist undergoe, wherein God may seem to deal with thee as if thou wert a wicked man; yet as certainly as the morning-light doth at last break forth, and dispell the darknesse of the night, and so shines by degrees brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, so certainly shall the Lord cause thy righteousness manifestly to appear, either by discovering some way or other the falsnesse of their flanders, and convincing men inwardly of it; or by the rich blessings wherewith God shall lade thee, thereby testifying his love to thee, and the high esteem that he hath of thee: so that hereby, and withall by his punishing the wicked that have flourished for a time, thy righteousness shall appear as clearly as the morning-light, yea by degrees it shall become as manifest as the Sun at noon-day. And as confidently therefore maist thou expect that thus it shall be with thee, as men in the night do expect the breaking forth of the day; if not here, yet at least in the life that is to come: for, *then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father,* Matth. 13. 43. *Your life is hid with Christ in God* (saith the Apo.

Apostle Col. 3. 3, 4.) *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* As for the word judgement, see the Note Job. 27. 2.

Vers. 7. *Rest in the Lord, &c.*] Or, as it is Psal. 4. 4. *Be still, patiently and quietly waiting upon God.*

Vers. 8. *Fret not thy self in any wise to doe evil.*] That is, In any wise be sure that you fret not so, as thereby to be drawn to take those courses that the wicked take, hoping by that means to be in the same prosperous condition with them; or so as thereby to be overborn in your fretting to sin against God, as by murmuring against his providence, or being any way injurious to them, &c.

Vers. 9. *Those that wait upon the Lord, &c.*] That is, that in their afflictions and troubles do depend upon God for help, *they shall inherit the earth*: for 1. the faithfull only are by right of adoption through Christ the lawfull heirs of all things; 2. they only enjoy what they have by reason of that right with true comfort and peace; 3. they are sure in time to be provided for with whatsoever is good for them; and 4. though the wicked seek to destroy them from the face of the earth, yet they shall not be able to doe it: and that this last is chiefly intended, we may see by that which follows in the next verse.

Vers. 10. *Thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*] To wit, because he shall be grubbed up by the roots. See the Note Job 20. 9.

Vers. 11. *But the meek shall inherit the earth, &c.*] See the former Note vers. 9. and who are meant by *the meek* Psal. 22. 26: *and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*; that is, in their great plenty of all good things, or rather in the inward tranquillity of mind which they shall enjoy, *that peace of God which passeth all understanding*, Phil. 4. 7. whilst the wicked are disquieted with continuall troubles.

Vers. 12. *The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.*] To wit, out of malice and envy. See the Note Psal. 35. 16.

Vers. 13. *The Lord shall laugh at him, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 2. 4: *for he seeth that his day is coming*, that is, the day appointed by the Lord for the punishment of the wicked. So that by *his day* may be meant either *the day of the Lord*, as the day of vengeance is called, Joel 2. 1. or the wicked mans day, as Job 18. 20. (of which see the Note there) as the time when the woman with child comes to be in pain is called *her hour*, Joh. 16. 21. yea it may refer to that day, when that mentioned in the two following verses shall come to passe.

Vers. 15. *Their sword shall enter into their own heart, &c.*] where the wound must needs be mortall. The meaning is, that their mischievous attempts against the righteous shall prove their own ruine. *And their bowes shall be broken*, that is, their plots and practises shall be frustrate. See the Note 1 Sam. 2. 4.

Vers. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked.*] To wit, 1. Because the wicked do often enrich themselves by unjust means, and so have much vexation and trouble with them, and likewise thereby do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath; whereas the righteous with a little well gotten have much peace of conscience, with hope of heaven hereafter. 2. Because the righteous use theirs well, and are the better for them; whereas the wicked abuse theirs

theirs many wayes, and are in many respects the worse for them. 3. Because the righteous enjoy what they have from hand to mouth, as the gifts of God, and the pledges of his fatherly love and care over them, and so it is to them as manna from heaven, and hereby they enjoy much sweet comfort, and are fully satisfied with what they have; whereas the wicked have none of this joy nor satisfaction by their wealth. 4. Because God by his blessing doth usually make that the righteous enjoy to be more effectually for their good, then is the abundance of the wicked; a little course fare makes them more healthfull and strong then the wicked are with all their plenty. And 5. because the wicked enjoyeth not his wealth long, as the righteous man doth; and this indeed agrees best with the following words.

Verf. 17. *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, &c.*] That is, the power of their great wealth; see also the Note Psal. 10. 15: *but the Lord upholdeth the righteous*; that is, he will maintain and support them, though they be in never so weak a condition.

Verf. 18. *The Lord knoweth the daies of the upright, &c.*] That is, he takes care of them at all times, and doth daily supply their necessities; see the Note Psal. 1. 6: or, he knoweth their condition at all times, and accordingly provides for them; he knows their wants and dangers, and how and when to help them: or, as he knoweth and hath appointed the time how long they shall live, so accordingly he provides for them; neither can any power of the enemy cut short their daies: *and their inheritance shall be for ever*; that is, the estate they have shall be continued to them, and shall be transmitted to their posterity for many generations; yea and besides this (some also adde) after all they shall have in heaven an eternall inheritance.

Verf. 19. *They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, &c.*] This may be meant of any time of publick calamity; or particularly of that evil time mentioned in the following clause, to wit, the time of famine, *and in the daies of famine they shall be satisfied*; that is, God will provide for them, making them well content with their portion, though it be but little, whilst the wicked in abundance have never enough. But all these temporall promises must be understood with exception of the Crosse.

Verf. 20. *But the wicked shall perish, &c.*] To wit, in the daies of famine, of which mention was made in the foregoing verse; or, whilst the righteous are saved, they shall perish even in their plenty: *and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs*, to wit, when it is burnt upon the altar, or, when it melts away before the fire; and so thereby may be also covertly implied, that the wicked in their greatest prosperity are but as beasts fatted for the slaughter: *into smoke shall they consume away*; that is, they shall perish suddenly and utterly, not the least memoriall of them being left behind them.

Verf. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again, &c.*] To wit, because the curse of God following him, though he tries by all waies, right or wrong, to enrich himself, yet he falls into poverty. But now some understand it of his neglecting to pay his debts out of base covetousnesse, which suffers him not to part

with what he hath, though thereby he defraud others; or of his not being able to pay them, by reason of the excessive rate whereat he lives; and so they conceive that this is added to shew, that the wicked know not how to make a good use of their estates, thereby to make good what he had said before vers. 16. *A little that the righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked.* But the first exposition is the best; and accordingly we must understand the following clause, *but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth,* to wit, that God blesteth him so, that he hath both for himself and for others too.

Vers. 23. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, &c.*] This also some understand of the Lords guiding him by his spirit, to doe that which is good and right in his eyes: and the next clause, *and he delighteth in his way,* they understand thus, that it is a delight to the righteous man to walk in Gods waies. But surely David speaks still of the outward prosperity of the righteous, to wit, that God by his providence guides them in all their affairs so, that they may find good successe, and prosper therein: and the next words are added, to shew the cause hereof, namely, that God is pleased with their waies, as finding them carefull to approve themselves to him in all things, and therefore he prospers them: and indeed some understand that last clause thus, *and he delighteth in his way,* that is, God delights to see him thrive and prosper in all his waies.

Vers. 24. *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, &c.*] Some also understand this of the righteous mans falling into sin, to wit, that his falls shall not be deadly, he shall repent and rise again. But rather it is meant of his falling into outward calamities, to wit, that though he falls into any affliction, yet first God doth so mitigate his affliction, that it shall not so utterly overwhelm him, but that he shall be able to bear it: and secondly, he shall not perish thereby; the Lord shall raise him up, and recover him again, by stepping in seasonably to his help; for, saith he, *the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.*

Vers. 25. *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*] This is not meant of any seeking relief in want; (for so David himself desired bread of Ahimelech, 1 Sam. 21. 3. and he and his souldiers desired some supply of victuals from Nabal, chap. 25. 8.) but of living in a continuall way of begging from door to door; which is denounced as a curse against the wicked, Psal. 109. 10. *Let his children be continuall vagabonds, and begge.* Nor doth it hence follow, that neither the righteous man, nor his seed, are ever brought to this sad degree of misery; but only that it doth so rarely happen, that David in all his time had never seen it.

Vers. 26. *He is ever mercifull, and lendeth, &c.*] See the Note above vers. 21: *and his seed shall be blessed;* that is, say some Expositours, men shall praise them, and pray for them: but rather the meaning is, that notwithstanding the good mans bounty, he shall leave his seed a good estate, or at least that God shall blesse them, not only with spirituall, but also with temporall blessings.

Vers. 27. *Depart from evil, and doe good, &c.*] See the Note above vers. 3. and Psal. 34, 14, *and dwell for evermore:* See the Notes vers. 3, 9, and 18.

Vers. 28.

Verf. 28. *For the Lord loveth judgement, &c.*] That is, to execute judgement; or rather, the justice of men in their dealings.

Verf. 29. *The righteous shall inherit the land, &c.*] See the former Notes, as before verf. 27.

Verf. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgement.*] Some conceive that this is added, as one great means whereby the righteous man comes to be firmly settled in the land, to wit, that his speech is so wise and just, that the wicked cannot get any advantage against him; or to shew why God preserveth and blesteth such, to wit, because such men are so exactly carefull to approve themselves to God, that they will not so much as speak any thing, but what is wise and just and right. But I rather conceive that the drift of adding these words is, to shew what manner of man the righteous man is, of whom so much hath been here spoken; and withall haply to set forth how such a one will behave himself, when the wicked flourish, and the righteous are oppressed. And though some restrain these words, *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgement*, to the righteous mans instructing and exhorting others, to wit, that he doth not only give and lend to those that are in want, but also will seek their spirituall good, by teaching them true wisdom and piety, what is just and right to be done, and stirring them up thereto, by speaking to them of the just laws and righteous judgements of God: yet I rather understand it more generally, that his words are still full of wisdom and piety, and that he still speaks that which is just and right; if the wicked prosper, he will not deny Gods providence, nor speak any thing but honourably of Gods justice; and so in all other things his speech alwayes favours of uprightness, and is profitable to others.

Verf. 31. *The law of his God is in his heart, &c.*] That is, not only in his tongue, but also in his heart; to wit, because he understands it, he loves it, he remembers and minds it upon all occasions, and hath fully resolved to obey it, the holy Spirit of God having written the Law in his heart, and having stirred up in his heart affections, motions and desires fully agreeable thereto; see the Note Deut. 6. 6: *none of his steps shall slide*; that is, he shall constantly persevere in Gods waies, not turning aside because of the prosperity of wicked men, or for any threatnings or allurements from them; and so then withall he shall not fall from his prosperous condition, nor shall the wicked get any advantage against him.

Verf. 32. *The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.*] This is the rather here subjoyned, because that good which is said of the righteous in the two foregoing verses is the main cause of the wicked mans rage against him; and therefore he watcheth him, to wit, that he may get something against him for which to condemn him: see the Note Psal. 10. 8, &c.

Verf. 33. *The Lord will not leave him in his hand, &c.*] That is, Though the Lord may deferre his help, till the wicked have surprized the righteous, yet then he will deliver him, he will not leave him in his power; nor condemn him when he is judged, that is, nor suffer him to be condemned when he is called before them to be judged: to wit, unlesse God sees it may be more for his glory, and his servants

good, to let him suffer. Yea some understand this last clause thus, that God will not condemn the righteous man, though the wicked man do passe sentence upon him; intimating that God would make his innocency to appear whilst he doth suffer, and withall would acquit him, and punish his enemies at the last day.

Verf. 34. *He shall exalt thee to inherit the land, &c.*] That is, He shall raise thee out of thy troubles that thou mayest still inherit the land; of which see the former Note, as before verf. 27: *when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it*; that is, thy self being secure and free from danger, thou shalt see the wicked to thy comfort destroyed: see the Note Job 22. 19.

Verf. 35. *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.*] Or, *a green tree that groweth in his own soil*, which commonly thrives and flourisheth better, then those that are transplanted into another soil.

Verf. 36. *Yet he passed away, &c.*] That is, he was gone, as it were in an instant; and lo he was not, &c. See before verf. 10.

Verf. 37. *For the end of that man is peace.*] That is, quiet and prosperous: see the Note Job 22. 21.

Verf. 38. *But the transgressours shall be destroyed together, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 35. 26. *the end of the wicked shall be cut off*; that is, their hope, the end which they expected, shall not be; or rather this will be the end of the wicked, they shall be cut off.

P S A L M XXXVIII.

The Title. **A** *Psalm of David to bring to remembrance.*] That is, say some Expositours, to record Gods praises for his deliverance out of that great distresse wherein he had been; or, to put God in mind of his sad condition, that he might be wonne thereby to withdraw his hand, and to send him deliverance, according to that, Psal. 132. 1. *Lord, remember David and all his afflictions.* But rather I conceive the drift of this Title was to shew, that this Psalm was composed purposely to put himself and others in mind of the sore affliction he had been in, and of his sins that had brought it upon him, and of Gods mercy in his deliverance; that so, whereas men are naturally apt to forget their former sicknesses and troubles, when once they are well and safe again, by this Psalm it might still be brought fresh to his remembrance, and he might for ever reap benefit thereby; and that others also might by his example learn how to pray, and how otherwise to carry themselves in such a time of distresse. We have the same Title again Psal. 70. And this is the third of those that are called the Penitentiall Psalms; concerning which see the Note in the Title Psal. 6.

Verf. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 6. 1.

Verf. 2. *For thine arrows stick fast in me, &c.*] See the Note Job 6. 4: *and thy hand presseth me sore*; to wit, as being still heavier and heavier upon me.

Verf. 3. *There is no soundnesse in my flesh, because of thine anger, &c.*] That is, My flesh is broken all over my body, or every member of my body is full of pain and misery, through my sickness or sorrow, which thine anger hath brought upon me: neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin; see the Note Job 30. 17.

Verf. 4.

Verf. 4. *For mine iniquities are gone over my head.*] It is an over-forced exposition which some give of these words; to wit, that therefore he saith his iniquities were gone over his head, because they were more in number then the hairs of his head; or because it surpassed his wisdom to know how to bear the miseries they had brought upon him; or because they had deprived him of his understanding, or brought his reason into bondage. Doubtlesse it is either meant of the multitude of his sins, to wit, that they were grown to an exceeding great height, so that he was even overwhelmed therewith; see the Note Ezr. 9. 6: or of the miseries also which his sins had brought upon him, to wit, that he was in danger to be drowned and overwhelmed therewith, according to that expression Psal. 42. 7. *all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me*; which seems the more probable, because in the following verses he still proceeds to recite the greatnesse of his miseries, thereby to move God to pity him.

Verf. 5. *My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishnesse.*] That is, my blockishnesse and stupidity: for he speaks this by way of detesting himself for what he had done, and not as excusing himself in that he did it through ignorance. As for those first words, *my wounds stink and are corrupt*, either they must be understood literally, of the sores that were in his body, (as the words in the following verse may also seem to import) which he calls *wounds*, to intimate that he looked upon them as the wails or swelling tumors (for so the originall word may signify) which the rod of God had made in his flesh, or the wounds of those arrows of which he had spoken verf. 2. *Thine arrows stick fast in me*; or else figuratively, of any other miseries that God had brought upon him, comparing them to stinking and fester'd sores, either to imply the long continuance of them, or the sharp pains and sorrows which he felt in himself by reason thereof. Yet some, I know, would have it meant of the shame which his sins had brought upon him.

Verf. 6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.*] To wit, under the burden of my sins, of which he had said before, verf. 4. that they were a burden too heavy for him: and his meaning might be, both that his body was as it were bowed together, through weaknesse occasioned by sicknesse, or some other heart-breaking affliction; and that his spirit was also sorely oppressed and humbled with grief, not being like those stout-stomached men, that will by nothing they can suffer be brought to bow under the hand of God.

Verf. 7. *For my loyns are filled with a loathsome disease, &c.*] To wit, some loathsome sore, some impostume, or pestilentiall carbuncle: or else it may be understood figuratively, of the grievous sorrows and perplexities he underwent by reason of his afflictions; which he might also the rather term *a loathsome disease*, because they made others reproach and abhor him. *And there is no soundnesse in my flesh*: see the Note before verf. 3.

Verf. 9. *Lord, all my desire is before thee, &c.*] That is, Thou knowest all the desires of my heart; or, I have in prayer laid all my desires before thee. And this he saith, either to imply, that he wondered therefore that God did not grant him his desires; or to presse God that he would grant them; or to assure himself that God would hear and satisfy his desires.

Verf. 10. *As for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.*] See the Note Psal. 6. 7.

Verf. 11. *My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore, &c.*] To wit, either out of pride or fear; they would not or durst not come near me to afford me any friendly courtesie: see Job 19. 13, &c.

Verf. 13. *But I, as a deaf man, heard not, &c.*] That is, When mine enemies spake such mischievous things against me, as is said in the foregoing verse, whether I heard them my self, or heard it related by others, I was as silent as if I had been either deaf or dumb, neither muttering against God, nor replying upon them. But the chief drift of these words is doubtlesse to shew, that when their calumnies and false accusations were most mischievous, he was silent, either because he could not be suffered to plead for himself, or rather because he thought it better in patience and silence to swallow down these injuries, and to commit his cause to God.

Verf. 15. *For in thee, O Lord, do I hope; thou wilt hear, &c.*] Or, *thou wilt answer, O Lord my God*: and the meaning may be, that God would hear and answer his prayer; or that he would hear and answer his enemies, to wit, by pleading his cause against them.

Verf. 16. *For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoyce over me, &c.*] To wit, as triumphing over me, when they see that my hopes and my prayers fail me; or as if thou didst favour them, and so thy name will be blasphemed. This must needs be the meaning of the words according to our Translation. But others, that do not insert those words (*Hear me*) to make up the sense, as our Translatours have done, take this to be alledged as a reason of his silence mentioned before ver. 13, 14. to wit, that he would not reply any thing, lest if he had through impatience spoken any thing that might provoke God to leave him, then he might be made the scorn of his enemies; or lest they should have derided him for what he spake, and if things should fall out otherwise, then as he made profession to hope, then they should insult over him; of which he had often had experience: *when my foot slippeth* (saith he) that is, when I offend through infirmity in the hour of tryall, or rather when I fall into any misery (see the Note Deut. 32. 35.) or when I begin to fall, or am but in danger to fall; *they magnify themselves against me*, that is, both by word and deed they triumph over me.

Verf. 17. *For I am ready to halt, &c.*] Some understand this literally, as those passages before verf. 5, 6, 7. to wit, that he was like to be lamed with his sicknesse and sores: Others understand it of his pronenesse to offend and sin in the hour of tryall, as is said in the foregoing Note; and that this is here added as a reason why he kept silence, and would not reply upon his enemies, or why he begged of God that he would preserve him. But I rather think that it is meant of his falling into some irrecoverable misery, to wit, that he was in danger to fall and to be utterly ruined, according to that of the prophet Jer. 20. 10. *all my familiars watched for my halting*; and that this is added to move God to pity him, and to come in speedily to his help. *And my sorrow is continually before me*; that is, I am continually in heaviness, partly by reason of my continuall misery, and partly

ly through my grief for my sins that have brought these miseries upon me.

Verf. 18. *For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.*] Very many learned Expositours understand hereby his iniquity and sin the punishment of his iniquity, and so make the meaning of the words to be this; that David would continually bewail the miseries which his sins had brought upon him. But I rather conceive, that having mentioned his danger and grief in the foregoing verse, he adds this, that he would still charge all that he suffered upon his sins, that he would still confesse and bewail them before God, even his sins, rather than his afflictions, either as a ground of his hope that God would hear his prayer, or as an argument whereby he seeks to move God to hear him.

Verf. 20. *They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.*] That is, because I labour to live holily and righteously. Yet some would restrain this to one particular, to wit, that ungodly men hated him, because he was so strict in his government for the punishment of sin.

P S A L M XXXIX.

The Title. **T***O the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun.*] The meaning is, that this Psalm was delivered to Jeduthun, one of the three chief Musicians, 1 Chro. 25. 1. or rather to his sons, and those other Levites that were of their severall Quires.

Verf. 1. *I said, I will take heed to my wayes, &c.*] The summe of what David saith here in the beginning of this Psalm is this, that being in great distresse (whether it were by reason of sicknesse, or of the conspiracy of his son Absalom against him, or any other particular, we cannot say) he determined to look narrowly to himself, that he did not offend with his tongue; and yet notwithstanding at last brake forth and spake unadvisedly with his lips. *I said, I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue;* that is, I resolved to watch so strictly over all my wayes, to keep my self blamelesse therein, that I might not so much as sin in my speech, to wit, either by way of muttering against God, or returning evil for evil to mine enemies, or by uttering any word that was not seemly for me. *I will keep my mouth with a bridle;* that is, I will restrain my self from speaking, as men keep beasts in from biting with a muzzle or bridle, to wit, by a firm resolution to keep silence however I was provoked, by a diligent watching over my self that I might not on a sudden forget my self, and by using all holy means to perform this which I had undertaken; as by observing my passions, and by a speedy suppressing any discontented motions and swellings that might arise in my heart. For we must not think that David intended to give way to all kind of distempers in his heart, and resolved only not to discover them in his speech: but his meaning was, even by bridling his passions to keep his tongue in order; or at least, if his heart should boil through discontent, yet even then to bridle his tongue, if it were possible. As for that last clause, *while the wicked is before me,* I know some restrain it to wicked mens being present with him, to wit, that he would not speak a word whilst they were in his company, though they should never so much provoke

voke him; and that lest they should take occasion to rejoyce or insult over him, to reproach him, or blaspheme Gods name. But I rather understand it thus, that he would be silent whilst he saw the wicked flourishing in great prosperity, or so long as God should be pleased to exercise him by the flanders, revilings and persecution of such wicked men. However doubtlesse this he premiseth, either thereby to discover how exceeding great his sorrow was, in that being thus before-hand resolved, yet he could not at last contain himself; or by way of seeking mercy at Gods hands, in regard his full purpose was to have bridled his tongue from all evil whatsoever, though he could not doe it.

Verf. 2. *I was dumb with silence, &c.*] That is, for a while I did what I resolved; I was so long wholly silent, that I seemed in a manner to be dumb, and not able to speak. *I held my peace, even from good;* that is, I forbore to speak what I might well and lawfully enough have spoken, as from alledging any thing that I might have said in mine own defence, from making my complaint to God, and desiring justice at his hands, and such like; to wit, lest by degrees I should have been brought to utter any thing that was evil, and whilst I intended only to speak that which was good, some unseemly word might suddenly slip from me; or lest mine enemies should misconstrue any thing I spake: *and my sorrow was stirred;* as if he should have said, At last my grief for what I suffered began to work within me, or rather was encreased, to wit, by the addition of new miseries, or new provocations from mine enemies, or by suppressing it in silence, the hearts of men being apt to swell the more, and to be the more bitterly pained, when sorrow hath not a vent. I know these two last clauses are otherwise understood by some Expolitours, to wit, that he held his peace even from speaking any thing that was good, and that for this he was afterwards grieved; or, that he was wholly silent, and his *sorrow was stirred*, that is, though his sorrow was stirred: but the first exposition is the best.

Verf. 3. *My heart was hot within me, &c.*] To wit, his eager desire to speak being as a fire shut up within him; or rather because his passions grew hot within him, and set him as it were on fire, his grief for the misery he endured, or his indignation against his enemies; whereby he became impatient, and unable to bear the miseries and wrongs he suffered, perhaps particularly that he should hear his enemies reproach him to his face, and yet must keep silence: *while I was musing,* that is, whilst I sat plodding on my miseries, or thinking of many things in silence, but not speaking; or whilst I was musing whether I should speak, or still hold my peace; *the fire burned,* to wit, more and more, insomuch that not my heart only, but my whole body, seemed to be on a light flame. Thus I conceive the first part of this verse must be understood. Yet some do understand it of a holy zeal in him, which would not suffer him any longer to forbear speaking of good things. As for the last clause, *then spake I with my tongue*, the meaning of it doubtlesse is, that at last, not able any longer to contain himself, he brake forth into words of impatience and muttering against God: and many conceive that the words of impatience that he uttered are those that are added in the next verse. Yet some Expolitours would have the meaning of it to be only this, that when he might not

not ease his mind to men, he turned his speech at last to God, according to that which follows in the fourth verse.

Verf. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my daies, what it is: that I may know how frail I am.*] Or, *what time I have here.* Many learned Expositours take these to be those words of impatience, of which he said in the former verse, *then spake I with my tongue*: only some conceive, that David therein desired that God would presently put an end to his life, *Lord, make me to know mine end, &c.* as if he should have said, How long shall I be in this misery? since I am not like to see an end of my miseries, till I see an end of my daies, hasten therefore mine end, make me experimentally to know and see the full period of this transitory life of mine: and then others hold that he doth only herein expostulate with God concerning his laying so great afflictions upon him, notwithstanding the transitoriness of his life, *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my daies, what it is, &c.* as if he should have said, Since, Lord, thou art pleased to handle me so severely, let me, I beseech thee, know how long the time is, that thou hast appointed me to live; that so I may see whether in likelihood it may afford me a sufficient recompence for the miseries I now suffer: if thou hast appointed to lengthen out my daies for many ages to come, then indeed the hope of better daies hereafter might allay my grief; but if there be no such thing to be expected (as indeed there is not) must it not needs seem hard to me, that having so little a while to live, my life should be thus embittered with sorrows? Neither yet must we think that David did seriously hereby desire to know the just hour of his death, but only in the heat of his spirit, by intimating his assurance of the brevity of his life, to shew what just cause he had to be impatient, that he should be so continually in so sad a condition. But I rather, with others, take these words to be added by way of correcting that heat and impatience of spirit, and perhaps that murmuring whereinto with his tongue he had broken forth; *Lord, make me to know mine end, &c.* that is, cause me seriously to believe, and often to remember and lay to heart (which few do) the frailty and transitoriness of mans life, that so I may the more patiently endure my troubles, as knowing that I cannot long live to endure them, and that I may provide for mine end, and prepare my self against my change comes. Yea it may also imply an approbation of Gods dealing with him; as if he had said, Thou doest well, Lord, by these afflictions thus to take me off from the vanity of my former waies, and to make me see how frail a creature I am; and therefore I willingly submit to thy hand, *Lord, make me to know mine end, &c.*

Verf. 5. *Behold, thou hast made my daies as a hand-breadth, &c.*] According to the divers expositions of the former verse, this also may be understood divers waies: to wit, either as spoken in a way of impatience; or as by way of correcting his impatience; see the former Note: *and mine age is as nothing before thee*; that is, the time of my life is as nothing in respect of thee, who art eternall, before whom a thousand years are but as one day, 2 Pet. 3. 8. *verily every man at his best state*, that is, in greatest strength, and in his most flourishing condition, *is altogether vanity*; see the Notes Job 7. 16.

Verf. 6. *Surely every man walketh in a vain show, &c.*] This seems to imply 1. that man himself is but an empty representation and appearance of a man, as when we see a man in a glasse or in a dream, a picture or shadow of a man, rather than a man indeed; and that because he is continually in such a frail and changeable condition: 2. (which differs not much from the former) that the life of man is but an imaginary life, an appearance of life rather than a life indeed; namely, because it is so exceeding transitory, passing away in a moment, as a shadow, Job 14. 2: and 3. that the happiness and the good things which he seems to enjoy, are but shadows of such things, there being no real good nor happiness in them: his hopes are but vain hopes, and his enjoyments are vain: in the continuall labours and restless condition wherein he wearies himself (which is implied in that word *walketh*) he wearieth himself for very vanity; as is more fully expressed in the following words, *surely they are disquieted in vain, &c.* All which agrees with that of the Apostle 1 Cor. 7. 31. *the fashion of this world passeth away*; and that which is said of the prosperity of wicked men Psal. 73. 20. *As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.*

Verf. 7. *And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.*] As if he should have said, Seeing the life of man is so transitory, and seeing all things whatsoever, about which men busie and trouble themselves, are but mere vanity, I will no longer disquiet my self, either about mine own miseries, or the prosperous condition of others, but place all my hope, O Lord, in thee: let others, if they will, set their hearts upon these earthly vanities; I have a better hope, which will secure me against death, and against all changes of this world; for my hope, Lord, is in thee.

Verf. 8. *Deliver me from all my transgressions.*] That is, Pardon my sins, (for which indeed I am chiefly grieved) and free me from those afflictions which my sins have brought upon me.

Verf. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.*] This may be meant of all his afflictions in generall, or particularly of his silence when wicked men did reproach him, of which he had spoken in the foregoing verse: and it may be inserted here as an argument to move God to withdraw his hand, or not to expose him still to their derision and scorn.

Verf. 11. *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.*] which is easily and soon crushed to dust; see the Note Job 4. 19. Yet some understand this as if it were expressed thus, *thou like a moth makest his beauty to consume away*; that is, though thou dost not in a way of manifest vengeance bring some open judgements upon man to destroy him, yet by a secret curse thou causest his health and strength, and so also his beauty and comeliness, to consume and waste away: and indeed thus the secret judgements of God upon men are usually expressed, as Isa. 51. 8. *the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool*; and Hos. 5. 12. *Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness.* However, the meaning of the words is doubtlesse this; that when God undertakes to punish man for sin, whether it be in a way of fatherly severity, or as a judge pouring out the fierce-

fiercenesse of his wrath upon wicked men for their iniquity, that is, according to what they have deserved, he soon consumes their beauty and glory. For the word *rebukes*, see the Note Psal. 6. 1.

Verf. 12. *Hear my prayer, O Lord, &c. for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.*] See the Note 1 Chron. 29. 15. This phrase, *I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner*, is all one as if he had said, Either I am a stranger before thee, thou knowest I am a stranger here; or, I live by faith with thee, I set thee before mine eyes, and my heart is continually set upon thee, even whilst I am absent from thee, and live as a stranger here in this world; or, I am a stranger here in thy land, and am wholly herein at thy disposing. And this is added here as an argument to move God to hear and help him; partly because the condition of strangers was to be pittied, in regard they are subject to so many labours and troubles and dangers; and partly because esteeming himself a stranger in the world, that was but a while to live there, he did not set his affections upon things below, but did long and seek after that heavenly country whether he was travelling. As for that last clause, *as all my fathers were*, the drift of it is to desire, that as God had taken pity of them, and helped them, because they were strangers, so he would likewise deal with him.

Verf. 13. *O spare me, that I may recover strength before I goe hence and be no more.*] That is, I have but a little while to live here, and therefore let me have a little breathing time, some small recovery of strength, that I may have a little ease and refreshing before I die; see the Notes Job 14. 6: or, either ease me, or I am a dead man; I cannot continue long in this misery, and therefore withdraw thine hand a little before I be irrecoverably gone; see the Notes Job 7. 8, 9. For indeed this seems to be spoken with some heat of passion. Yet some conceive that David doth hereby desire some mitigation at least of his misery, that he might by faith be strengthened in spirit, and being freed from his terrours, he might depart in peace, and finish his course with joy.

P S A L M XL.

Verf. 1. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he enclined unto me, and heard my crie.*] Those words in this Psalm verf. 6, 7, 8. *sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, &c.* are clearly alledged by the Apostle as the words of Christ Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7. Yet because in other places of the Psalm it is as clear, that David speaks of himself, most probable it is that he doth so throughout the Psalm; only in some places he speaks what properly belonged only to Christ, as being a type of Christ, and as concerning the flesh the father of Christ: see also the Note Psal. 16. 1. As for these first words, David doth therein from his former experience encourage himself to present to God those following requests, verf. 11, &c. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he enclined unto me*; that is, he bowed himself to me, or he bowed his ear to me, as in Psal. 17. 6, and 31. 2. (for he seems to represent God, as hearkning from on high to hear one crying out of a deep pit, as he speaks of himself in the next verse) or he enclined in his will to hear me. They

that understand the whole Psalm of Christ, hold that this is spoken of Christs waiting upon God in the time of his agony and passion, and of Gods hearing his cries; as when he prayed in his agony, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me, &c. and there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him*, Luk. 22. 42, 43; and so likewise at other times in his passion, Heb. 5. 7. *when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.*

Vers. 2. *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, &c.*] That is, out of terrible and desperate dangers, from which there seemed to be no hope that I should ever have been freed. For to expresse this, he compares himself to one that was taken *out of an horrible pit*, that is, a deep pit, which by reason of its danger and darknesse, and the lamentable noises therein, must needs strike those that are there with terrour and horreur; or, as it is in the Hebrew, *a pit of noise*, so called, because of waters that falling into it with great violence, make a roaring dreadfull noise; or because of the struglings and outcries they make that are in it, or because when any thing is cast into deep pits, it will alwaies make a great noise: and where he stuck fast in *miry clay*, without a seeming possibility of getting out. And some refer this to the greatnesse of Christs terrours and sufferings, and his deliverance from them both. *And set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings;* that is, hath brought me into a sure and safe condition, where I might walk in my place without incumbrance or danger.

Vers. 3. *And he hath put a new song into my mouth, &c.*] To wit, both by affording me this new mercy, which occasioned the composing of this new song of praise; and by suggesting this Psalm by the inspiration of his holy spirit, for the use of his people, *even praise unto our God*: see also the Note Psal. 33. 3. *Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord*; that is, Many shall take notice of the exceeding danger whereinto I was brought by the afflicting hand of God, and how wonderfully he did upon my prayers deliver me, to wit, either as being eye-witnesses of it, or by reading or hearing these things in my song (for seeing is sometimes put for hearing, as Exod. 20. 18. *and all the people saw the thunderings*) and hereby they shall be brought, both to reverence thee with a filiall fear, and likewise to trust in thee in all their dangers. Yet some apply this also to Christ, to wit, that many seeing what Christ suffered for sin, should learn to fear sin, and seeing how God delivered him, should encourage themselves by his example to trust in God; and especially, that believing his suffering for them, they should assure themselves of salvation thereby.

Vers. 4. *Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust; and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.*] That is, that respects not men proud of their wisdom, power or greatnesse, so as to trust in them, or to fear them more then God: or rather, that when he sees wicked men, that cared not by what evil waies they advanced themselves, proudly exalting themselves in their flourishing estate and prosperity, and putting their confidence therein, yet doth not so far like or affect, or make account of, or mind and admire such men, as to approve of their way, and follow their example. For by *such as turn aside to lies* is meant, such as forsaking God,

God, as it were, do put their confidence in lies, that is, in outward things, or in their own wisdom or power, or any sinfull courses, or vain imagination, or whatever else which may seem to promise fair, but will deceive those that rely on them: see the Note Psal. 4. 2. But they that take these also to be the words of Christ, by *the proud and such as turn aside to lies*, understand Pharisaicall Justiciaries, and false teachers.

Verf. 5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderfull works which thou hast done, &c.*] This proves what he said in the foregoing verse, concerning the blessednesse of the man that trusteth in the Lord: or it may be alledged as an argument to stir up himself and others to trust in God; to wit, because the many wonderfull works which God hath done throughout the world, do manifestly declare his almighty power and goodnesse and providence, even as did that deliverance which God had now afforded him in his particular; so that men may well be stirred up thereby to trust in God, and may count them happy that doe so: but especially those which he hath done for his people, which is expressed in the following clause, *and thy thoughts which are to us-ward*; wherein the word *thoughts* implyes Gods sollicitous care for them: *they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee*; as if he had said, though men might think they had made a full recitall of them, with thee it would be found far short of what is in thy works.

Verf. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, &c.*] They that hold this whole Psalm is only to be understood of Christ, say, that having spoken of the many wonderfull works which God had done for his people, here he mentions one particular, as the most wonderfull of them all, to wit, his sending him to expiate the sins of his elect people. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*; to wit, as things that were in themselves of any avail to satisfy thy justice for the sins of thy people, but only as they were types and shadows of that sacrifice which I was to offer for this end: *for* (saith the Apostle Heb. 10. 4.) *it is not possible, that the bloud of buls and of goats should take away sins*. And hence it is, that in that place also the Apostle from these words proves, that the ceremoniall sacrifices were then abolished, and that God desired them not any longer; to wit, because having required them only as figures of a better sacrifice, when that was once offered, the other were to cease; *He taketh away the first* (saith he) *that he may establish the second*. But now if we understand these words as spoken by David concerning himself, yet chiefly with reference to Christ, and as spoken also in the person of Christ, who was to be of the seed of David, & of whom David was a type; then accordingly these words may be here inserted either 1. by way of tending him ready to obey the will of God in all things, who had done so much for him; *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, as if he had said, for all these great things that thou hast done for thy people, thou didst not desire sacrifices & offerings, to wit, chiefly or of themselves, as being things wherein, as considered in themselves, thou couldst take no delight, but only as they were means appointed to stir us up to faith & repentance & new obedience (& indeed so the like expressions are often used, as Pl. 51. 16. *thou desirest not sacrifice--thou delightest not in burnt-offering*, & Jer. 7. 22, 23. *I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices*;

but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, &c. see also Hof. 6. 6. and Esa. 1. 11.) no, the sacrifice that thou desirest is that of new obedience, without which all externall sacrifices are with thee of no esteem; which is intended in those following words, *mine ears hast thou opened*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *boared or digged*: for hereby he means, either that he had given up himself, and that God had accepted him to be his servant for ever; (alluding to that law of boaring the ear of him that was to be a servant for ever, Exod. 21. 5, 6.) or that God had made him most ready to hear and obey the commandments of God; whereas men are naturally like deaf men, for the hearing and obeying of the will of God, God had given him a hearing obedient ear, according to that Esa. 50. 5. *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious* &c; or particularly, that God had caused him to understand the spirituall meaning of the sacrifices, and so he did not rest in them, but was carefull to consecrate himself unto the Lord. Or 2. by way of opposing Christs offering up himself as a sacrifice for his people, to his own inability to return any thing to the Lord, proportionable to the mercies he had received from him; which he doth by speaking thus, as in the person of Christ, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened*, to wit, by making me most willing to doe what thou enjoynest me. The Apostle, following the translation of the Septuagint, cites these words thus, *but a body hast thou prepared me*, Heb. 10. 5: which is indeed all one in effect with this of Davids, *mine ears hast thou opened*: for ears opened, and fitted for hearing and obeying the will of God, do necessarily imply a body that must be imployed in Gods service; and so the ears may be here figuratively put for the whole body; and the rather in this place, because by the hearing of the ears a man is prepared to give up himself to the service of God, and the very end why Christ had a humane body was, that he might obey the will of his Father in dying for his elect people.

Verf. 7. *Then said I, Loe, I come, &c.*] This may be understood of David, *Then said I, Loe, I come, &c.* that is, when thou hadst thus wonderfully delivered me, and that I understood thou didst not require sacrifice in comparison of new obedience, or when thou hadst given me a hearing ear and a desire to obey thee, then did I most readily engage my self thereto. For the following words, *in the volume of the book it is written of me*, though some understand this of the book of Gods eternall decree (which, they say, in regard of the secrecy of that which is contained therein, may well be tearmed a book rolled up, as the Hebrew word translated *volume* doth indeed signify) yet because there is no probable reason, why this secret book should be here alledged, I doubt not but it is meant of the book of the old Testament, as is clear also by that which follows verf. 8. *yea thy law is within my heart*. Nor is there any cause to question, why David should say it was there particularly written of him, that he should delight to doe Gods will, &c. (for so that which was written in this book is expressed in the following verse,) 1. because what is there enjoined in common to all Gods people, believers are wont to apply to themselves, as if it were written particularly of them; and 2. because it is there written of all the elect and regenerate children of God, that they shall thus readily and chearfully obey Gods will. But principally doubtlesse
this

this was spoken by David in the person of Christ, tending himself to perform the will of God concerning mans redemption; *Then said I, Loe, I come*, that is, when thou hadst decreed, that not legall sacrifices, but my offering of my self as a sacrifice, should satisfy for the sins of thy people, then did I willingly undertake to come unto Jerusalem to suffer there what was appointed: or rather thus, when thou hadst opened mine ears, when thou hadst prepared me a body, then did I willingly enter upon this service: for indeed the Apostle doth clearly apply this to Christs coming in the flesh, Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7. *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, &c.* *Then said I, Loe, I come, &c.* and then also that which follows, *in the volume of the book it is written of me*, must be understood of the predictions that were both in the promises and the types of the old Testament concerning the work of our Redemption by Christ, no particular place being cited, because Christ is indeed the main scope and summe of the whole Scriptures: whence is that which is said of Christ, Luk. 24. 27. *that beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scripture the things concerning himself;* and that Joh. 5. 39.

Verf. 8. *I delight to doe thy will, O my God, &c.*] This David might truly say of himself; but chiefly it was spoken doubtlesse of Christs readinesse to doe that will of God, of which the Apostle saith, Heb. 10. 10. *by the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Iesus Christ once for all*, according to that Luk. 12. 50. *I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished!* And indeed in others this disposition to doe the will of God can never be found, but as they are members of Christ, and by grace derived unto them from him. As for the next clause, *yea thy law is within my heart*, see the Note Psal. 37. 31.

Verf. 9. *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 22. 25, and 31. It may be meant either of Davids founding forth the praises of God for his faithfulness, &c. and so may be alledged here as an argument to move God to hear his following requests, because God is the readier to doe good to men, when they are carefull to give God the glory thereof: or rather, of Christs preaching the Gospel, by himself and his Ministers. Yea and some would include too his teaching men Gods righteous laws; which indeed he came not to make void, but pressed evangelicall obedience thereto.

Verf. 10. *I have not hid thy righteousness, &c.*] To wit, through fear or neglect.

Verf. 11. *Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord, &c.*] This doth clearly referre to that which went before. He had said verf. 9. *I have not refrained (or withheld) my lips from publishing thy praise;* and hereupon he infers, therefore *withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me*: and so verf. 10. he had said, *I have not concealed thy loving kindnesse and thy truth;* & with reference thereto therefore he adds here, *let thy loving kindnesse and thy truth continually preserve me.* Thus David prayeth to be delivered from his danger. Yet many take both this, and the requests that follow, to be spoken in the person of Christ, praying to be freed from his terrours, or from his sufferings, by a glorious resurrection.

Verf. 12. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 38. 4, and 31. 10, and Deut. 28. 15. *so that I am not able to look up;* that is, I am not able

to lift up my face, implying how sorely he was overburthened with his miseries, or with grief, discouragement and astonishment of spirit thereby. Yet they that apply the whole Psalm to Christ, understand this of the iniquities of the elect imputed to Christ. *They are more then the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me:* that is, my life faileth me, I am ready to die; or my wisdom, courage, confidence and strength faileth me.

Verf. 14. *Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul, &c.*] To wit, as men brought into so grievous and miserable a condition, that they are even ashamed of themselves. See also the Notes Psal. 35. 26. *Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil:* see the Notes Psal. 6. 10, and 35. 4.

Verf. 15. *Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame, &c.*] That is, of their filthy and shamefull life; or rather, of the shame which they sought to bring upon me: let that shame which they endeavoured to cast upon me, befall themselves, as a just recompence of their evil intentions against me.

Verf. 16. *Let all those that seek thee, &c.*] (See the Notes Chro. 16. 11, and Psal. 9. 10. *rejoyce and be glad in thee:* see the Note Psal. 35. 27. *Let such as love thy salvation,* that is, that neither hope for nor desire salvation from any other way, but only from thee, *say continually, The Lord be magnified;* see Psal. 35. 27.

Verf. 17. *But I am poor and needy, &c.*] That is, destitute and afflicted. See the Note Psal. 34. 6.

P S A L M XLI.

Verf. 1. **B**lessed is he that considereth the poor, &c.] or, *the sick or weak:* and indeed there are many passages in the Psalm, as verf. 3, 4, 5, &c. that make this interpretation very probable. But if it be translated as it is in our Bible, by *the poor* is meant in generall the man that is in any distresse or affliction; *Blessed is he that considereth the poor,* that is, that so thinks of and weighs with himself the miseries that he undergoes, that he is thereby brought from his heart to pity him, and out of compassion to comfort, help and relieve him; or rather, that so considers of the man and his condition, as not to passe any harsh and uncharitable censures upon him, as to judge him a wicked man, and hated of God, because he is so afflicted, as Jobs friends dealt with him. And this David doubtlesse spake with reference to himself, yea and, as some think too, with reference to Christ, because of that which is said afterwards verf. 9. which Joh. 13. 18. is applied to Christ. Because when David was in any great distresse, his enemies were ready to conclude, that he was cast off and forsaken of God, therefore he doth here pronounce them blessed, that did better judge of those that were afflicted; yea and covertly he doth in effect desire a blessing from God upon those, that had carried themselves more friendly or comfortably to him in the time of his distresse, then others had done. As for the following words, *the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble,* and so on to the end of the third verse, I conceive they are meant of him *that considereth the poor*, and are added to make good what he had said concerning the blisse of such a man, and to shew how abundantly God would

would reward him: yet they may be understood of the poor afflicted man; and so indeed they are understood by the most of our best Expositours, namely, that they are added as by way of confuting the unjust censures that are usually passed upon such a poor man; the world is ready to judge him accursed of God; but there is no ground for this, for on the contrary, *the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble, &c.*

Verf. 3. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, &c.*] That is, The Lord will comfort and support him in his sicknesse; and at length restore his strength again: *thou wilt make all his bed in his sicknesse*; that is, thou wilt give him ease and rest, and afford him all things requisite for his refreshing, as is done for a sick man when his bed is made soft by turning it (for it is in the Hebrew, *thou wilt turn his bed*) and by stirring and tumbling the feathers up and down, bolster, pillow, head, feet, every where, that there may not be a hard place left in it. But yet many Expositours understand this more generally, as a figurative expression of the comfort and support which God affords such a man in any distresse whatsoever. Because men in great distresse and heavinesse of spirit are wont to cast themselves down upon their beds, and there to lye like men half dead, hence are these expressions, *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing*; that is, when he is cast down under any sore affliction, the Lord will support and help him, and not suffer him to sink under that pressure: *thou wilt make all his bed in his sicknesse*; that is, thou wilt allay and assuage his sorrows, thou wilt comfort his conscience, and give him inward quiet of mind; as when one gives ease to a sick man by making and turning his bed. Yea some take it thus too, that God would turn his bed of sicknesse to a condition of strength and health.

Verf. 4. *I said, Lord be mercifull unto me, heal my soul, &c.*] As if he had said, I have provoked thee by my sins to bring this misery upon me; therefore be mercifull and be reconciled unto me, and *heal my soul*, that is, heal me; see the Notes Psal. 6. 2, 4, and 16. 10: preserve my life, and save me from this distresse I am in; for I have sinned against thee: as if he had said, Seeing I acknowledge my sin, have mercy upon me, and heal me; or, Seeing thou only hast brought this upon me because I have sinned against thee, whether should I goe but to thee only to be healed? Or it may be understood of a spirituall healing; *Heal my soul*, to wit, of the sorrows wherewith it is wounded for my sins; or, *Heal my soul* by pardoning me; for so this expression is used, 2 Chron. 30. 20, and so also in that clause Esa. 6. 10. *lest they see with their eyes, &c. and convert and be healed*; which is expressed by our Saviour thus, Mark 4. 12. *lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them*. However the drift of inserting these words here I conceive is this; Intending to shew, as he doth in the following verses, how far his enemies were from considering of his condition as they ought to have done, he premiseth this, that he did not flatter himself in his sicknesse or distresse, but acknowledging his sin, craved mercy at Gods hands; but yet his enemies dealt most unmercifully with him.

Verf. 5. *Mine enemies speak evil of me, &c.*] To wit, such as hated him, and were his professed enemies; because they were curbed by the strictnesse

of his government: *When shall he die, and his name perish?* See the Note Psal. 9. 5.

Verf. 6. *And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity, &c.*] That is, When mine enemy cometh to visit me in my sicknesse or distresse, he speaks nothing but falshood and flatteries, (see the Note Job 31. 5.) to wit, in that he pretends to be sorry for me, and to comfort me, and to tender me his advice, and to doe for me any office of love in a friendly manner: *his beere gathereth iniquity to it self*, to wit, either 1. by adding sin to sin, in that he covers over his malice with such horrid hypocrisie; or 2. by inventing and contriving all the severall waies he can to ensnare me, or doe me some mischief, thereby seeking to satisfy and please his corrupt lusts and affections; or 3. (which I like the best) by observing all he can in me, and drawing what he can from me, and so laying all up together in his mind, as the ground of his unjust surmises and censures concerning me, or of encouraging himself with hope of my ruine, or of plotting some mischief against me: *when he goeth abroad he telleth it*; that is, he acquaints his companions, for their encouragement, with all that he had observed in me, or with that iniquity, those unjust surmises, he had gathered concerning me, or the wickednesse he had plotted against me.

Verf. 7. *All that hate me whisper together against me.*] That is, Both mine open and secret enemies; or, both he that came thus to visit me, and his companions, to whom he imparts his counsels.

Verf. 8. *An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him, &c.*] That is, an incurable disease, or an irrecoverable mischief hath so seized on him, that he can never be rid of it. Yea, because it is in the Hebrew, *a thing of Belial cleaveth fast unto him*, many Expositours hold, that hereby is meant some disease or mischief, that God had brought upon David in a way of vengeance for some horrid wickednesse he was guilty of; as if he had said, An evil disease or mischief with a vengeance doth now cleave fast unto him.

Verf. 9. *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me.*] That is, hath insolently and ungratefully, and in a most reproachfull and contemptuous manner risen up against me, and abused me, when I was in an afflicted and dejected condition. For in this phrase of lifting up his heel against him, he seems to allude to a beasts kicking at his master by whom he is fed, or the custome of mens spurning at or trampling upon those that are cast down on the ground, in a way of despight and contempt. It is probable that David meant this of Ahithophel, or of some other that was in special favour with him; yea it may be meant of many, the singular number being put for the plurall. But yet because David was a type of Christ, and Christ in his sufferings was a pattern of all the faithfull, and doth indeed suffer in all his members, our Saviour affirms that these words were fulfilled in Judas his betraying him, Joh. 13. 18. *that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.* And though some conceive that Christ did omit the first words, *mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted*, purposely because Christ did from the beginning know that Judas would betray him, Joh. 6. 64. and could not therefore trust in him; yet I do not see but that the whole verse was applicable

ble to Judas, and was intended by our Saviour, though he only mentioned the last words; and that because Christ chose him to be one of his disciples, his constant household attendants, whom he tearmed his friends Joh. 15. 15. and did alwaies carry himself friendly to him, as to the rest, washing his feet amongst others, and tearming him friend, even when he came to betray him, Matth. 26. 50. *friend, wherefore art thou come?* (as indeed his kissing of our Saviour did also carry an outward semblance of friendship on his part) and because it was indeed a matter of trust, at least in the judgement of others, that the word of reconciliation and power to work miracles should be committed to him, that he should be admitted to such a familiar converse with Christ, and that he should be peculiarly trusted with the bag, Joh. 12. 6.

Verf. 10. *But thou, O Lord, be mercifull unto me, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though so many do either openly or by secret treachery seek my ruine, and though they now confidently conclude I shall rise up no more; yet do thou, Lord, shew me mercy: *and raise me up that I may requite them*; that is, that I may punish them according to their demerits, as by turning them out of his court, or by some such publick dishonour. But however this he desired, not out of any thirst after private revenge, but out of zeal for Gods glory, and the welfare of the godly in the land; and as knowing that by his place, being the supreme magistrate, he was bound to punish all evil doers.

Verf. 11. *By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.*] This may be understood as an expression of Davids in the time of his sicknesse or distresse; as if he had said, By this I know well that thou favourest me, because mine enemies I am assured shall not prevail over me. But rather I conceive that it is added by way of rejoycing for his deliverance, (the Psalm being composed by him when God had recovered him, or at least when he was in a way of recovery) professing that hereby he was confirmed in the assurance of Gods love to him, or more particularly of Gods good will in appointing him to govern his people, because he had not suffered his enemies to triumph in his ruine.

Verf. 12. *And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, &c.*] Some understand this of the safety and prosperity of his outward condition, which the word *integrity* in our Translation will not well bear. It is meant therefore of the integrity of his heart and spirit; *thou upholdest me in mine integrity*, that is, because of the justice of my cause, and because of mine uprightness; or rather, in the midst of all these tryals, thou hast kept my heart sincere towards thee, and hast not suffered me to turn aside out of the right way. *And settest me before thy face for ever*; that is, thou hast taken me to be one of those whom thou dost singularly favour (and hast therefore chosen me to attend and serve thee in that Regal power thou hast conferred upon me; see 1 Kings 10. 8.) whom thou wilt have in continuall remembrance, over whom thou wilt still keep a watchfull eye, that as thou hast at present, so thou mayest still upon all occasions deliver me and preserve me, and whom thou wilt admit to enjoy thy blessed presence for ever in heaven.

Verf. 13. *Blessed be the Lord, &c. Amen and Amen.*] This word Amen, subjoy-
ned in the close of any prayer, signifies both an earnest desire that what is prayed
for may be, and a firm believing that so it shall be. And whereas the Hebrews di-
vide the Psalms into five books, (which yet Luke speaks of as one intire book,
rearranging it *the book of Psalms*, Act. 1. 20.) here they end the first book. And in-
deed with the like close of *Amen and Amen*, and *Hallelujah*, all the other do likewise
end; as may be seen in the end of Psal. 72, 89, 106, and 150.

P S A L M XLII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, *Maschil*, &c.] See the Notes upon the Titles of
the 4. and 32. Psalms: *for the sons of Korah*, who were singers in the
Tabernacle and Temple, 1 Chro. 6. 22, 31, and 2 Chro. 20. 19.
and so this Psalm was composed for them, and delivered to the master of their
quire, and that in Davids daies was Heman, 1 Chro. 6. 33. It may indeed be read
also *Maschil of the sons of Korah*: and therefore some conceive that the eleven Psalms
which have this Title, were composed by some of the sons of Korah, either in the
Babylonian captivity, or at some other time, perhaps in Davids daies; which some
judge the more probable, because they conceive it to be that Heman of the stock
of Korah, who is mentioned 1 Kings 4. 31. amongst those men of eminent note
whom Solomon excelled in wisdom; and that Solomon is the rather compared
with him, because Solomon also excelled in poetry, and composed many Songs,
as this Heman also did. But for that, see the Note there. I rather conceive it was
composed by David *for the sons of Korah*: and because he complains of so long ab-
sence from the house of God, some think it more probable that his exile in Sauls
daies, then when Absalom drave him from Jerusalem, was the occasion of compo-
sing this Psalm. But for this, see the Note Psal. 43. 1.

Verf. 1. *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O
God,*] Not being so much grieved for the losse of his goods, honours, or other
outward contentments, as for his absence from Gods house, he compares his ear-
nest desire to enjoy Gods presence in his Ordinances, to a harts panting or bray-
ing *after the water-brooks*; because the hart being of a very hot and dry consti-
tution, is usually exceeding thirsty, especially in summer, or when she is hunted,
and dwelling in the desarts where there is little water, doth therefore the more
earnestly pant and bray after the water-brooks to quench her thirst; and (say
some) to save her self also from the hounds that pursue her.

Verf. 2. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, &c.*] Who is the fountain of
life, Psal. 36. 9. *the fountain of living waters*, Jer. 2. 13. abundantly refreshing those
that come to him. *When shall I come and appear before God?* to wit, in his Sanctuary.
And this implyeth also his hope, that in due time God would bring him thither.

Verf. 3. *My tears have been my meat day and night, &c.*] To wit, either 1. be-
cause with abundance of tears, gliding down his cheeks, his mouth was so filled,
that he might swallow them like meat; or at least because God gave him, as I may
say, his belly full of weeping; and therefore elsewhere in a like expression there
is

is expresse mention made of the plenty of tears, Psal. 80. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure:* or 2. because he did as duely weep as he did eat his meat, yea his tears were usually mingled with his meat, according to a like expression Psal. 102. 9. *I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping:* or 3. because forsaking his meat he gave himself wholly to weeping, that was in stead of his food: or 4. because it was pleasing and delightfull to him, and did strengthen and revive him, as meat doth a hungry man. *While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?* as if they should have said, Hath not that God whom you served so zealously, and on whom you relied with such confidence, forsaken you at last? And thus, which grieved David most, the name of God was dishonoured.

Verf. 4. *When I remember these things, I powre out my soul in me, &c.*] That is, Giving the reins to my grief, I powre out my sorrow in tears and complaints, &c. see the Note 1 Sam. 1. 15: or rather, I die and faint away with grief; see the Note Job 30. 16. As for those words, *when I remember these things*, though some would have them referred to that which follows, concerning his former resorting freely to the house of God; yet I conceive they must necessarily be referred to what he had said before, both concerning his absence from and his longing after Gods presence in his Sanctuary, verf. 1, 2. and likewise concerning his enemies upbraiding him therewith, verf. 3. Only indeed in the following words, he makes his former liberty the reason why the remembrance of those things was so bitter to him; for, saith he, *I had gone with the multitude, &c.*

Verf. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, &c?*] To wit, with grief? for *heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop*, Prov. 12. 25. *Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance*, that is, the help afforded me by his gracious presence, or by his looking favourably upon me; implying that if God would but shew himself, or look favourably upon him, it would be enough. Yea I conceive that this expression he the rather useth, because as by his being driven from Gods Sanctuary, the place of Gods speciall presence, the Lord did as it were hide his face from him; so by bringing him back thither, he hoped the Lord would again look favourably upon him. And this he opposeth to that bitter taunt of his enemies, *where is now thy God?*

Verf. 6. *O my God, my soul is cast down within me, &c.*] See the former Note: *therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan*, that is, the land beyond Jordan; *and of the Hermonites*, that is, the people inhabiting by Hermon, a mount in the utmost North-east bounds of the land of Canaan (yet because Hermon was a long track of hills, some conceive that those hills are here called the *Hermonites* (as those mountains that divide Germany and France from Italy are called the Alps) and that they are mentioned thus in the plurall number, because David at severall times hid himself sometimes in one of these hills, and sometimes in another:) *from the hill Mizar*; which might be some hill in those parts not mentioned elsewhere in the Scripture; or, if we read it, *from the little hill*, as it is translated in the margin of our Bibles, it may be meant of the hills in the South of Judea, which were little hills in comparison of Libanus and Hermon on

the North and Northeast (and so the utmost bounds of the land of Judea are mentioned both on the East, North and South) or of mount Hermon, and that he calleth it, though a great mountain, *a little hill*, in respect of Sion, which he so greatly magnified for its spirituall dignity, or with relation to the farthest part of Hermon, where the hills are but little. However the meaning is doubtlesse this, that being cast down for his forced exile from Gods Sanctuary, to cheer himself herein, even where he was farthest distant from it, from the farthest parts of the land, whither he was glad to retire, he would remember God, to wit, either 1. as looking towards the Tabernacle, and by faith in spirit representing to himself Gods gracious presence there, whilst he was absent in body; or 2. as remembering the great things that God did for his people, when he first brought them into the land of Canaan, in those places without Jordan, where he then wandred up and down and hid himself; as namely their victories over Sihon and Og, &c. or 3. as remembering Gods power, faithfulness, goodnesse and promises.

Verf. 7. *Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts.*] As if he had said, When thou dost with great terrour break forth in displeasure against me, divers and many overwhelming calamities do fall upon me, as if they did call and invite one another to come, that they might all together violently rush in upon me, or that they might follow thick and close one in the neck of another; even as when great flouds or showres of rain do break in upon men, and are in danger to overwhelm them: and therefore he adds, *all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.* By Gods *water-spouts* are meant the showres of rain, which come pouring down from heaven, see the Note Job 38. 25. (whereto comparing his troubles, he covertly acknowledgeth that they came all from God) and the noise of these *water-spouts* is the noise that these showres of rain make, when they fall down upon the earth, or the claps of thunder that are with and before these showres. And as for that first clause, *Deep calleth unto deep*, either he alludes therein to the mighty flouds of rain powring down from the clouds above, and the streams breaking forth from the fountains of the great deep beneath, one calling upon the other as it were, that they might together overwhelm a poor creature; or to the overflowing of severall rivers, after such rains, whose waters by that means come together, as if they had called upon one another that they might meet in one; or rather to the waves of the sea, that come tumbling in together, or follow close one upon the neck of another, as if each wave invited another; or else to the many mighty breaches that will be in the sea in a tempest, whereinto one after another the ships seem to sink, as if they should never rise up again, as if one of them called to the other to come in to the swallowing up of such poor weather-beaten vessels, according to that of the Psalmist Psal. 107. 26. *they mount up to the heaven, they goe down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of troubles.*

Verf. 8. *Yet the Lord will command his loving kindnesse in the day time, &c.*] That is, He will effectually assure my heart of his love; or rather, He will with authority and power send deliverance and blessings, the fruits and manifestations of his loving kindnesse to me. The like expression we have Deut. 28. 8, and Psal. 44. 4. and

and the ground of it is, because if God wills any thing to be done, it is enough and because both the angels and all other creatures are ready as it were at Gods command to help his servants: *and in the night his song shall be with me*; see the Note Job 35. 10: *and my prayer unto the God of my life*; to wit, either by way of praising God for that his mercy, or by way of seeking farther to God upon the encouragement of that he had already done for him. Yet some understand this last clause to be added in this sense, that till God did *command his loving kindnesse in the day time*, &c. he would follow God with his prayers, the known means of obtaining mercies from him.

Verf. 9. *I will say unto God, my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me?*] See the Notes Deut. 32. 4, and Psal. 13. 1.

Verf. 11. *I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance.*] Thus he calls God, either 1. because God was ever his present and apparent help, whom by the eye of faith he did still behold, and by experience did find ready at hand to help him, and to cause him to see his salvation; or 2. because to him only he was to look in expectation of help; or 3. because the help that he knew God would afford him would chear up his countenance, and clear it from shame and weeping, and enable him to hold up his head, and shew his face amongst men, with courage and comfort.

P S A L M XLIII.

Verf. 1. *Judge me, O God, and plead my cause, &c.*] That is, Clear mine innocency, and deliver me from mine enemies; see the Notes Deut. 32. 36, and Pl. 35. 1. *against an ungodly nation*, to wit, Saul and his wicked crew, or rather Absalom and his conspirators. And accordingly we must understand the following clause, *O deliver me from the deceitfull and unjust man*, either indefinitely, as spoken of all his unjust and treacherous enemies, or particularly of Saul, who often pretended fair to him, when he sought his ruine; or rather of Abithophel, a man of noted subtilty, or Absalom, who had cunningly stolen the hearts of the people from him, and pretended a sacrifice at Hebron, when he meant to rise up in rebellion against him: For this seems most probable, because he speaks verf. 3. of going to Gods holy hill, to wit, mount Sion, where the Ark was not in Sauls time: unlesse we will say, that though David penned this Psalm with reference to his exile in Sauls daies, yet he used that expression, because he penned it after he was settled in the throne, and had removed the Ark to Sion; which seems not so probable. However, doubtlesse he mentions the ungodlineffe, injustice and deceitfulnesse of his enemies, thereby to move God to pity and help him.

Verf. 2. *For thou art the God of my strength.*] That is, the God that givest me strength, and art my strength. See the Note Exod. 15. 2.

Verf. 3. *Open thou thy light and thy truth, &c.*] That is, Manifest thy loving kindnesse and favour to me to the chearing of my heart, by sending me help, and directing me what to doe, that so I may come again to thy house, where I may enjoy the light of thy presence, Word and Ordinances, and the truth of thy promises.

misses may be made good unto me. See the Notes 2 Sam. 22:29. Esth. 8. 16. Job 29. 3. and Psal. 27. 1. Yet some would have the accomplishment of Gods promises to be all that is desired in these words; *O send out thy light and thy truth*, that is, By doing what thou hast spoken, cause the light of thy promises to shine forth clearly, which now seem to be obscured and overclouded. As for the following clause, *let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles*, though some hold this is meant of the hill whereon Kiriath-jearim stood, whether the Ark was removed in the daies of Samuel, 2 Sam. 7. 1. yet I rather take it to be meant of mount Sion, for which see the Note above vers. 1. and that he speaks of Gods *tabernacles* in the plurall number, either 1. because the Ark was removed to severall places before it came to be settled in the Temple; or 2. because the tent or tabernacle which David pitched for the Ark, and the tabernacle which Moses built, were in two severall places all Davids time, see 1 Chro. 16. 37, 38, 39; or 3. because the tabernacle consisted of two parts, to wit, the holy place and the most holy.

Vers. 4. *Vpon the harp will I praise thee.*] See the Note Psal. 33. 2.

Vers. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 42. 5, 11.

P S A L M XLIV.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, *Maschil.*] See the Note upon the Title Psal. 42. By many passages of this Psalm it seems probable, that it was not composed by David (because the people of Israel were never in his daies in so sad a condition as is here described) but that rather it sets forth their condition in the Babylonian captivity, or afterwards under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes in the daies of the Maccabees, and was therefore composed by some of Korahs posterity, or some other holy man of God that lived in those times. Yet there are some learned men that do rather think it was composed by David, and that to represent the calamitous condition of Gods people by reason of the oppression of the Philistines, and other neighbouring nations, even from the daies of Samson unto his time: which indeed is very likely, if not most probable.

Vers. 1. *We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their daies, &c.*] In the name of the whole Church the prophet here mentions what had been by tradition from their fathers reported to them, to wit, *what work* he did in their daies: where the singular number is put for the plurall, *what work*, that is, what great and glorious works he did in those times; or else it is meant of that great work particularly, of putting the Israelites into possession of the land of Canaan, of which he speaks in the following verse, *How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them, &c.* see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 10.

Vers. 3. *Thine arm and the light of thy countenance.*] That is, thy favour. See the Notes Numb. 6. 25, 26, and Psal. 4. 6.

Vers. 4. *Thou art my king, O God, &c.*] That is, *Thou*, who hast formerly done such great things for thy people, *art my king*; (it is the people of Israel that here speaks

speaks as one man, as being all united in body) therefore as a king *command deliverances for Iacob*; for which see the Notes Psal. 42. 8, and 20. 1, and 24. 6.

Verf. 5. *Through thee will we push down our enemies, &c.*] See the Notes Deut. 33. 17: *through thy Name*, that is, through thy help, see the Notes, Psal. 20. 5, 7. *will we tread them under that rise up against us*; that is, we should subdue them with ease, and use them with contempt, if thou wouldst assist us.

Verf. 7. *And hast put them to shame that hated us.*] See the Note Psal. 40. 14.

Verf. 9. *But thou hast cast us off, &c. and goest not forth with our armies.*] To wit, as our Captain, to help us against our enemies. He may seem herein to allude to that ancient custome of carrying out the Ark with them in their wars.

Verf. 11. *Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat, &c.*] And not reserved for breeding or for wooll. The meaning of this expression is, that God had brought them into such a condition, that they were in the power of their enemies, as sheep are in the hands of the butcher, being no way able to resist them, slaughtered every day, or in imminent danger to be slaughtered, no man making any conscience of taking away their lives; and as if God esteemed them a people good for nothing, but to be devoured with delight by their enemies: *and hast scattered us among the heathen*; and so those that were not slain, were sold for slaves.

Verf. 12. *Thou sellest thy people for nought, &c.*] What is meant by Gods selling his people, see in the Note Deut. 32. 30: But by selling them *for nought* here is meant, either that they were sold amongst the heathens at a poor, base price, for little or nothing as we use to say; or that they were given up to their enemies, as a thing of no value; or that, whereas when men sell any thing, they use to receive a valuable price for it, God had parted with his people, and received nothing for them; which some think is also intended in the following words, *and dost not encrease thy wealth by their price*: as if they had said, Thou gettest nothing, but only loosest by the bargain, in that thou hast lost the people that were thy portion and inheritance, and hast not taken any other people in their stead; yea in that the people to whom they were sold, did not yield him any acknowledgement, nor did him any homage, as a recompence for his losse. But indeed others understand this last clause, *and dost not encrease thy wealth by their price*, either 1. as intimating at what a low rate they were sold; God did not doe as men use to doe, that seek to enhaunce the price of what they sell, making what tryall they can to see who will give most: or 2. as implying, that God had not done it with expectation of some greater benefit, that might redound to him hereafter; as those that when they sell not for present money, do sell at the dearer rate: or 3. that God suffered their enemies to have them upon what price and condition they pleased, in that he made them not pay dear for their conquest, but suffered them to subdue them so easily, without any considerable losse or dammage to themselves. But however, observable it is, that whilst they call themselves still Gods people, *Thou sellest thy people for nought*, there is therein an intimation of their hope, that yet for all this God would at last remember the interest he had in them.

Verf. 14. *Thou makest us a by-word among the heathen, &c.*] See the Note
K k k Deuter.

Deuter. 28. 37: *a shaking of the head among the people*; see the Note Job 16. 4.

Verf. 15. *My confusion is continually before me, &c.*] That is, It is ever in my mind, that I can never forget it; or, I am continually an eye and ear-witnesse of that which overwhelms me with confusion, to wit, the reproaches of their enemies: *and the shame of my face hath covered me*; that is, my face is full of shame and blushing; or, I am so ashamed, that I dare not look up, and am loth men should see me.

Verf. 16. *For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth, &c.*] To wit, not us only, but even our God also: *by reason of the enemy and avenger*; see the Note Psal. 8. 2.

Verf. 17. *Yet have we not forgotten thee, &c.*] To wit, by forsaking the true Religion to please our enemies: and this is alledged as another argument to move God to help them.

Verf. 19. *Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, &c.*] That is, though thou hast sorely afflicted us, in a place of horrid terrours & desperate dangers, being continually in the power of men, fierce and cruell as dragons. He alludes to those dens and wildernesses, which were usually the habitation of dragons, as was *that great and terrible wilderness* Deut. 8. 15. which the Israelites went through, *wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions*; and to the same purpose also is the following clause, for even therein likewise there may be an allusion to the dreadfull darknesse of those dragons dens: *and covered us with the shadow of death*, concerning which see the Notes Job 3. 5, and Psal. 23. 4.

Verf. 20. *If we have forgotten the name of our God, &c.*] That is, if we have forgotten our God, to wit, by any defection to their Idol-Gods; see the Note Psal. 5. 11.

Verf. 21. *Shall not he search this out? &c.*] That is, If this we had done, it could not have been hid from God; and he therefore knows that it is not so; to him we appeal. Or, If we had done this, God would have known it, and would have called us to an account for it; the temptation of Gods seeming to have forsaken us would not have excused us, and therefore we durst not doe it. *For he knoweth the secrets of the heart*; and much more such open defections to Idolatry.

Verf. 22. *Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long, &c.*] That is, So far are we from any such apostatizing from thee, that for thy sake, and the constant profession of thy truth, are we continually afflicted and martyred: (and this he alledgeth also to move God thereby to plead their cause.) And indeed the sufferings of the faithfull, both in Babylon and in the daies of the Maccabees, were for their constancy in the true Religion; and therefore doth the Apostle urge this place to encourage Christians in their sufferings, Rom. 8. 36. *we are counted as sheep for the slaughter*: see above verf. 11.

Verf. 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction, &c.?* To wit, notwithstanding *we have not forgotten thee*, as they had said before verf. 17. see the Note Psal. 13. 1.

Verf. 25. *For our soul is bowed down to the dust, &c.*] That is, Through the heavy weight of our afflictions, we are brought down to the lowest degree of misery;

or

or we are as dead men ready to drop into the grave: see the Notes Psal. 6. 5, and 22. 15. *Our belly cleaveth unto the earth*, that is, we are no better then dead men; or, we are irrecoverably cast down and trodden under foot. Yet some would have this understood of their falling down on the ground, and lying there till their bellies seemed as it were to be glued to the earth, by way of humbling themselves before the Lord.

Verf. 26. *Redeem us for thy mercies sake.*] That is, thereby to manifest and magnify thy mercy; or, because thou art mercifull. And thus though they had before alledged their integrity, verf. 17, 18, 19; yet now for the procuring of help, they plead nothing but Gods mercy.

P S A L M XLV.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil. *A Song of loves.*] See the Note upon the Title Psal. 42. The last words, *a song of loves*, shew that the Psalmist, whoever it was, composed this Psalm, as an Epithalamium or marriage-song. Now though the Apostles testimony Heb. 1. 8, 9. that what is said here verf. 6, 7. is spoken of the Messiah, be a sufficient proof, that the main scope of this Psalm is to set forth the love of Christ and his Church, Christ the Bridegroom, and the Church his spouse and bride, as they are called Joh. 3. 29. (and therefore indeed there are some passages in the Psalm, as in verf. 2, 6, and 16, which cannot properly be applied to any but Christ) yet I hold it most probable, that it was also written with respect unto Solomon, (as a type) and his marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh (of which see the Note 1 Kings 3. 1.) and that because there are many passages, that seem clearly to allude at least thereto, as is evident verf. 2, 9, 10, &c. and because it is much like the Canticles or the Song of Solomon, and as it were an Epitome of that. So that I conceive it is called *A song of loves*, not as some would have it, because it sets forth the love of God to his Jedidiah, (of which see the Note 2 Sam. 12. 25.) but because it celebrates how lovely Solomon and his bride were to be to each other; but especially the spirituall love of Christ and his spouse the Church. As for that word *Shoshannim*, *To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim*, thereby doubtlesse is meant, either some song that began with this word, to the tune whereof this Psalm was to be sung; or some musicall instrument that was to be used in the singing of it. And because the word seems clearly to be formed of an Hebrew word that signifyeth *fix*, it is most probable that thereby is meant six-stringed instruments; or, as some would have it, instruments whereon were many engravings of lillies, which are six-leaved flowers. And indeed some Interpreters, because of that derivation of the word, do thus translate it, upon *Shoshannim*, that is, upon lillies: and that either as in reference to their wedding garlands, that were made much of lillies; or as intending by these lillies, Christ and his Church, who are indeed often for their sweet and beautifull graces, and for their flagrant love one to another, compared to lillies, as Cant. 2. 1, 2. *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lilly of the valleys, As the lilly among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*

Verſ. 1. *My heart is enditing a good matter, &c.*] That is, matter of ſingular excellency, pleaſure and delight. The drift of this preface was to ſhew, that the argument of this Psalm was concerning great and high myſteries; it was not meant merely of an earthly mortall prince, but of a perſon of far greater excellency, and contained thoſe things, which being read with underſtanding muſt needs be pleaſant and delightfull, aſſwaging the ſorrows and chearing the hearts of thoſe that read them. It is in the Hebrew, *My heart boyleth or bubbleth up a good matter*, and this expreſſion ſeems to intimate, that his heart being enflamed by the ſpirit with the love and admiration of Chriſt and his kingdome, and even leaping for joy at the conſideration thereof, he was ſtirred up with ſuch a fervent deſire to declare theſe things, that he could not forbear to powre them forth with plenty of words. *I ſpeak of the things which I have made*, that is, the verſes which I have made, or rather, the things which I have expreſſed in this my poem, *concerning the king*, to wit, Solomon, but chiefly the King of kings, the promiſed Meſſiah. As for thoſe laſt words, *my tongue is the pen of a ready writer*, that is, a quick writer, or a ſhort-hand writer, or a ready expounder of the law, ſee Ezra 7. 6. they ſeem to imply, 1. that he ſhould write and ſpeak nothing, but what came from his heart; 2. that his pen and tongue were guided by the Holy Ghoſt, as the pen is by the hand of the writer; 3. that he did with much alacrity and readineſſe of mind write and utter what the ſpirit did dictate to him; and 4. that he did it not after much ſtudy and meditation, but by the preſent and ſpeedy prompting of Gods ſpirit. Yea ſome would have it alſo imply the elegancy of his ſpeech, becauſe thoſe that write moſt neatly do not ſtay long upon the drawing of their letters, but write with a ready and a nimble ſtroke.

Verſ. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men, &c.*] Here the Bridegroom is extolled 1. for his beauty; this being one thing which makes a man amiable in the eyes of his ſpouſe, and which uſually procures a prince favour amongſt his people. If we refer it to Solomon, it muſt be taken as a poetick expreſſion of his ſurpaſſing comelineſſe, namely, that he was fairer then any other perſon. But underſtanding it of Chriſt, whom doubtleſſe the Psalmiſt did chiefly intend, it muſt be referred to that ſpirituall beauty, whereof the prophet ſpeaks Iſa. 33. 17. *Thine eyes ſhall ſee the king in his beauty*: for herein Chriſt, though true and very man (which is here implied) did ſurpaſſe all the children of men; 1^{ſt}, in that he was alſo true and very God; 2^{ly}, in that he was free from the leaſt ſtain & blemiſh of ſin, *holy, harmleſſe, undefiled, ſeparated from ſinners*, Heb. 7. 26; 3^{ly}, in that he was adorned with the gifts and graces of Gods ſpirit in all excellency and perfection, far above all other men whatſoever, for in him were hid *all the treaſures of wiſedome and knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. he was *full of grace and truth*, Joh. 1. 14. neither did God give the ſpirit by meaſure unto him, Joh. 4. 34; and 4^{ly}, in that his life was ſo tranſcendently juſt and holy. And therefore though in other reſpects, namely in regard of his humbled and low eſtate and paſſion, that was true which the prophet ſpoke Iſa. 53. 2. *he hath no form nor comelineſſe; and when we ſhall ſee him there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him*; yet in regard of this ſpirituall beauty, he excelled all the children of men. And 2. for his eloquence, *grace is poured into thy lips*. For by *grace in the lips* is meant ſpeech or power.

power of speaking so, as may procure grace and favour amongst men, which we call speaking with a grace, according to that Eccles. 10. 12. *The words of a wise mans mouth are gracious*, that is, procure great favour and acceptance: or, that may work grace in others, *that may minister grace unto the hearers*, as the Apostle speaks Eph. 4. 29. and then this phrase of powring forth this grace into his lips doth imply, both that it was plentifully powred forth upon him, & that it did abundantly flow forth from him. Now though this was indeed eminent in Solomon, in so much that *all the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom*, 1 Kings 10. 14. yet was it far more clearly accomplished in Christ, both in regard of the matter of his teaching, the glad tidings of salvation in the sweet and precious promises of the Gospels; and also in regard of its mighty efficacy in working upon the consciences of men, especially in his own personall teaching; whence it is said, *that all bare him witnesse, and wonder'd at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth*, Luk. 4. 22. *that he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*, Mat. 7. 29. and *that never man spake like him*, Job. 7. 46. As for the last clause, *therefore God hath blessed thee for ever*, some conceive that it holds forth the effect of those glorious endowments he had before spoken of, namely, that upon those two grounds, because of his beauty and the grace of his lips, therefore God had blessed him for ever, by conferring upon him an everlasting kingdome, according to that Joh. 10. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, &c.* and that Phil. 2. 8, 9. *He humbled himself, &c. wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c.* But others (and I think better) take this to be added, as the cause of those endowments formerly mentioned; *therefore*, that is, in conferring these excellent gifts upon thee, *God hath blessed thee for ever*, Gods blessing being the cause of conferring them upon thee for the perpetuall good of thy people; or, *therefore*, that thou mightest excell all others in thy beauty and the grace of thy lips, and mightest work these things in others, *God hath blessed thee for ever*.

Vers. 3. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, &c.*] Here the Bridegroom is extolled for his regall dignity, or for his prowesse and power in military affairs, which is a great ornament to kings, that are exalted of God for the preservation of their kingdomes. Only it is expressed in a poetick manner, as by way of encouraging him to make use of, and to shew forth his power; *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh*, that is, Take unto thee thy royall authority; or, shew forth thy prowess and royall power, and arm thy self, for the subduing of the elect, the defence of thy people, and the vanquishing of thine and their enemies. For the *sword* is here mentioned, as the ensign of regall power, as it is Rom. 13. 4. or, as the arms whereby he should vanquish his enemies: and hereby, as we refer it to Christ, is meant the word of God, that sharp two-edged sword which comes out of the mouth of Christ, Rev. 1. 16. As for the last words, *with thy glory and thy majesty*, they import as much as if it had been said, as becomes thy glorious estate and majesty; or, whereby, as the ensigns of thy prowesse and regall power, thou maiest appear glorious and full of majesty, and so become renowned and famous, not only amongst thine own subjects, but even amongst thine enemies also, and maiest defend thy majesty and dignity against all principalities and powers whatsoever.

Verf. 4. *And in thy majesty ride prosperously, &c.*] That is, Go on successfefully in the exercise of thy regall power, and in conquering and subduing all thine enemies. And indeed because Solomon lived in so great peace, it is evident that this was principally meant of one greater then Solomon, even of Christ, and so implied a prophesie, that he should proceed on with wonderfull speed and success, and that for a long time together (for so much that word *ride prosperously* doth import) in vanquishing Satan, and in conquering and subduing the world by the ministry of the Gospel. As for the following words, *because of truth and meeknesse and righteousness*, some conceive that these are spoken of, as the chariot whereon he should ride in triumph, and become glorious and renowned in the world. However I conceive they do clearly affirm, that as by these Solomon should prosper in the exercise of his regall power, and become a glorious King, (and not only by outward pomp, much lesse by violence, injustice and oppression, as many other princes sought to doe) according to that Prov. 20. 28. *Mercy & truth preserve the King*, and 16. 12. *the throne is established by righteousness*: so also much more that Christ should prosper and prevail, first, by *truth*, that is, his faithfulness in making good his word to all that rely thereon, and by the *truth* of the Gospel revealed wholly by him; secondly, by *meeknesse*, causing him not to disregard the meanest, and to spare & pardon his bitterest enemies, when they submit themselves to him, see Za. 9. 9; and thirdly, by *righteousnesse*, both in being exactly just to all in the administration of his regall power, and also by bringing in that *everlasting righteousness* Dan. 9. 24, whereby sinners are justified before God, yea and by making his subjects also inherently righteous. Yet some hold that *truth and meeknesse and righteousness* are here mentioned, not as the means whereby he should prevail, but as those things for the maintenance whereof his power should be employed.

And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.] That is, By thine own almighty power, without any help from others, thou shalt accomplish those things wherein thou shalt be terrible to thine enemies. For this expression, that his right hand should teach him terrible things, seems only used to imply, either that by his power he should be enabled to doe terrible things, because teaching enables men to doe what they are taught; or that by his almighty power he should experimentally see what great and terrible things should be done by him.

Verf. 5. *Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the kings enemies, &c.*] That is, in the heart of thine enemies, O king; which is added to intimate the reason of his prevailing, namely, because God had appointed him to be king over Sion. Now by his *arrows* are meant both first, the words of the Gospel, and the preaching thereof, which with great efficacy do pierce the hearts of men, (and it may well be, which some adde, that it is said *in the heart of the kings enemies*, because the words of Christ, when they enter the hearts of men, are wont to stick and remain there) whence also is the like expression concerning Christ Isa. 49. 2. *in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft, &c.* and secondly, the judgements wherewith he strikes his obstinate enemies. And accordingly we must understand the following clause, *whereby the people fall under thee*: to wit, either that

that by his judgements Christ should slay them; or that by his Gospel they should either be brought to fall down and adore him, and submit themselves to him, being thenceforth dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, or else should be wounded mortally: for indeed to some they are the favour of life unto life, and to others the favour of death unto death, 2 Cor. 2. 16.

Verf. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, &c.*] These words of the Psalmist in this and the following verse are alledged by the Apostle Heb. 1. 8, 9. to prove the Godhead of Christ. And indeed though Princes are sometimes called Gods, (of which see the Note Exod. 22. 28.) yet because no mortall man is any where in the Scripture called *God* absolutely, it must needs be that the Psalmist did intend this principally of Christ. And the like may be gathered also from that which is said here concerning the eternity of his kingdome, and the exact righteousness of his kingdome; seeing Solomon sat not long on his throne, and towards the later end of his reign swerved strangely from his former righteousness. Yea because Solomons kingdome was so soon shatter'd in his son Rehoboam, lest the faith of Gods righteous servants, that had heard of the promise made to David concerning the perpetuity of his kingdome, should be stagger'd hereby, it is most probable that the Psalmist did here purposely seek to stablish their hearts, by putting them upon the expectation of a king that was to come out of that stock, but greater then he, whose throne was to continue indeed for ever and ever.

Verf. 7. *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickednesse, &c.*] As Christ hath alwaies manifested this in the righteous exercise of his regall power; so especially in his suffering the wickednesse of his people (so much he hated it) to be punished in his own body, that so he might also satisfy Gods justice, and present his people pure and spotlesse before him: *therefore*, that is, to this end, that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate iniquity, see the Note above verf. 2. *God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladnesse above thy fellows.* Now for the understanding of this, we must know that there may be herein an allusion, either to the ointment wherewith Solomon was anointed on his wedding day *above his fellows*, above his companions and Bride-men, as being far more precious then theirs; and which therefore may be called *the oyl of gladnesse*, because it was used on a day of such gladnesse: or else to the oyl wherewith he was anointed at his Coronation; called *the oyl of gladnesse*, because it made glad not Solomon only, but the people also over whom he was to reign, see 1 Kings 1. 39, 40; and wherewith it may be said that he was anointed above his fellows, both because he was exalted thereby above all his brethren, and because through the unction of Gods spirit, which was signified thereby, he excelled all the Princes of the earth in wisdom, as is largely expressed 1 Kings 4. 30, 31. &c. But however, principally no doubt this is meant of Christ, and his anointing with the Holy Ghost, according to that Act. 10. 38. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power*; and that either with respect to his outward inauguration to his office at his Baptisme, when the Holy Ghost came down upon him in the likeness of a dove, Matth. 3. 16. or to the superabundant pouring forth of the gifts of the Holy

Holy Ghost upon his humane nature. And then this is called *the oyl of gladnesse*, because as in the sign, oyl was accounted an emblem of gladnesse, being much used in times of feasting and gladnesse, Psal. 23. 5. *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, thou anointest my head with oyl, my cup runneth over*, and not only good to make the face to shine, but also to cheare the heart, Ps. 104. 15, whence it is that the oyl of joy is opposed to mourning Esa. 61. 3 : so in the thing signified thereby, the anointing of Christ with the Holy Ghost, was in Christ the cause of all the blisse & comfort procured by him for his Church, and being derived from him to the faithfull, it is the spring of all their comfort and joy. As for those words, *above thy fellows*, they may be meant of Christ severall wayes : as that he was anointed with the oyl of gladnesse, first, above all men partakers of the same flesh and bloud with him; or secondly, above all Christians, who are *made partakers of Christ*, Heb. 3. 14, and with him are partakers of the same holy unction, and of all the priviledges he hath purchased for them, being made the sons of God, joynt-heirs with Christ, Rom. 8. 17, *yea kings and priests unto God*, as he is, Rev. 1. 6; or thirdly, above all that were set apart by speciall calling to the regall power, as Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, or any others. And indeed, considering that he was both God and man, that there was never man advanced to such an eminency of dignity, as to be both king, priest and prophet, and to have the preeminence therein above all, the King of kings, the chief priest and the chief prophet, and that he had such a fulnesse of the spirit, even without measure, so that all that have grace received it of his fulnesse, and so was superabundantly replenished with all the gifts and graces of the spirit in all perfection, it may well be said that he was anointed with this oyl of gladnesse above his fellows.

Vers. 8. *All thy garments smell of myrrhe, and aloes and cassia, &c.*] This may be meant of the ordinary royall attire of Solomon, which we may see was very gorgeous, by that which Christ saith concerning the lillies of the field, Matth. 6. 29. to wit, that *even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these* : or else of his nuptiall attire, when indeed men were wont to be in their greatest bravery; see the Note Psal. 19. 5. And then for the smell of these garments, either it may be intended to have been from that sweet and precious ointment, wherewith he was anointed king; or else rather from those perfumes made of myrrhe and aloes and cassia, and such like aromaticks, wherewith they were wont in those countries very much to perfume their garments; of which see the Note Gen. 27. 27. As for the following words, *out of the ivory palaces, &c.* the meaning must needs be, that when Solomon came out of his palaces adorned with ivory, his garments smelt of myrrhe, &c. or that those his garments were brought to him out of his ivory palaces or wardrobes, where they had been laid in such spices and perfumes. For that the kings of Judah had such rich wardrobes, and treasuries for spicery and perfumes, is evident 2 Kings 20. 13 : and though we read in the story of Solomon only of a throne of ivory which he had, whereto the like was not made in any kingdome, 1 Kings 10. 18, 20; yet because it was so usuall in those times to adorn their houses with ivory, see 1 Kings 22. 39. and Amos 3. 15, it may well be thought that it was so also in Solomons magnificent buildings.

And

And then those last words, *whereby they have made thee glad*, are meant either of these palaces so sumptuously built; or rather of his perfumed garments; or of the spiceries, oyls and perfumes wherewith they were sweetned: and hereby *they*, that is, those that gave these things, or used them for Solomons service, are said to have made him glad, either because they were brought as honourable presents chiefly from forreign countries; or because there is a vertue in such odoriferous things to chear and revive the spirits of men, *Ointment and perfume*, saith Solomon himself, *rejoyce the heart*, Prov. 27.9. But now for Christ, of whom these things are principally meant, first, by his *garments* smelling of *myrrhe, aloes and cassia* are meant, either the humanity, the body and soul, wherewith his Godhead was veiled and covered as with a garment, (as indeed the soul also of man is in that respect said to be clothed with the body, 2 Cor. 5. 2.) or else rather those royall and precious gifts and graces of Gods spirit wherewith he was adorned, and the most perfect holinesse and righteousnesse of his person and life; and wherewith also he is clothed in his members, both as his righteousnesse is imputed to them, and as from that fulnesse of grace that is in him there is grace derived unto them according to their measure, to make them also inherently holy and righteous: for these may be well said to yield a sweet smelling savour, either with respect to the sweetnesse of the doctrine of the Gospel, that bringeth the glad tidings of this righteousnesse for the salvation of men, refreshing afflicted consciences, and being the savour of life unto life to those that believe it, 2 Cor. 2. 16; or else with respect to that amiable sweetnesse that was in his words & deeds, favouring of heaven, and of his royall dignity and riches, & which also is in some proportion in the graces and holinesse of all his members, their prayers and praises, &c. or with respect to the fame of Christ, procured by his holinesse, and the great things that he hath done for his people, whereby his very name is become sweet and delightfull to those that hear it, Cant. 1. 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment powred forth; therefore do the virgins love thee; or to the good esteem which the holinesse of the Saints and members of Christ procures, a good name being better then precious ointment*, Eccles. 7. 1. Secondly, by the ivory palaces of Christ may be meant, 1. those out of which his sweet smelling garments of righteousnesse were brought, to wit, the pure and spotlesse humanity of Christ; which may be judged the more probable, because the body of man is frequently compared to a house or tabernacle, as in 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2. and because Christ himself called his body a temple, Joh. 2. 19; or 2. those out of which are brought the righteousnesse wherewith Christ is clothed in his members, to wit, the pure and holy Churches of Christ, or the holy, gracious and precious souls of the faithfull; or 3. rather those out of which Christ the bridegroom came, to wit, out of heaven, and the bosome of his Father, Joh. 1. 18. from whence he brought the Gospel to us. And thirdly, as that last clause, *whereby they have made thee glad*, respects Christ, it must needs be meant either of the delight he takes in the sweet conversation of his members, that by their piety and amiable walking, as Christians, they do even make glad the heart of Christ; or of the joy he takes in the sweet savour of the Gospel for the salvation of men,

and the glory wherewith he is made glad in heaven upon his accomplishment of the will of his father.

Verf. 9. *Kings daughters were amongst thy honourable women*, &c.] Because it is said that Solomon had so many wives and concubines, 1 Kings 11. 3, many expositours conceive that these are his *honourable women* here spoken of; yet withall they adde, that by mentioning this, or by shadowing forth the conversion of the Gentiles hereby, the Spirit of God doth not approve this polygamy of Solomons; but that only it is mentioned to set forth his exceeding state and magnificence, that amongst these he should have so many that were kings daughters; yea though by kings we mean only such petty kings, and presidents of countries and cities, as were in many places in those dayes. But I rather conceive that by these *honourable women* are meant his maids of honour, that he had to attend upon his Queen, or his Bride-maids, the friends of the Bride, invited to be of the solemn train of those that attended her on her wedding day; and that they were indeed of royall and Princely descent, and not called *kings daughters* (as some would have it) only because their carriage was so stately, and their attire was so gorgeous and princelike, that they shewed as if they had been so many *kings daughters*.

Vpon thy right hand did stand the Queen in gold of Ophir.] That is, in cloth of gold, and that made of the purest gold; or so richly adorned with chaines, bracelets, jewels of gold, together with a crown of gold upon her head, as if she had been all over covered with gold. And this is meant of Pharaohs daughter, that was beloved and honoured by Solomon above all his wives, and therefore is said to stand at his right hand; see the Note Gen. 35. 18. But now as these passages must be applyed to Christ, 1. some hold that by his Queen is meant the Israelites that did first believe; and by his *honourable women*, the Gentiles that were afterwards converted, and as it were married unto Christ: 2. others by his Queen understand those that have wholly renounced the world, and given up themselves to Christ; and by his *honourable women*, those that being outward visible members of the Church, do know Christ better, and have some kind of affection to him, more then others that are not within the pale of the Church; but yet are not truly united to Christ, only they follow the Queen, till they attain a greater perfection with her: but 3. others, and I think upon best grounds, conceive that by these *honourable women* is meant the multitude of believers of severall kingdomes and nations, who all have their honour from Christ, and do all honour the catholick Church; and that it is mentioned to the glory of Christ, that many of noble and royall descent should be of this number; and that by his Queen is meant the Church in generall, the spouse of Christ: who is said 1. to stand at Christs *right hand*, both because of the great love that Christ bears her, and because he hath imparted of his power and authority to her, and doth rule in and by the Church; and likewise because she is made a sharer with him in his kingdome and glory, Job 17. 24. and shall be there exalted to the next degree of dignity to himself, even above the angels, (to which some adde also, that her standing at Christs right hand implyes, her continuing constant to Christ;) and 2. to be in *gold of Ophir*, with respect to her rich attire of grace and good works here, and of glory in heaven.

Verf. 10.

Verf. 10. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and encline thine ear, &c.*] That is, hearken diligently to what thy husband shall say; or rather, to what I shall now say unto thee. Some conceive that this is spoken in the person of him that was to lead the Bride, and to give her to the Bridegroom, because such were wont to give advice to the Bride as they went along with her; and that by calling her *daughter* he intended no more, then if he called her young maid or virgin. But most take these to be the words of the prophet; and why he calls her *daughter*, see in the Note Psal. 34. 11. *Forget also thine own people, and thy fathers house;* that is, 1. never be troubled for parting with thy parents, friends, countrey and people, being honoured with such a husband as thou art now to be married to; 2^{ly}, preferre him before all relations whatsoever, according to the law of marriage, Gen. 2. 24; and 3^{ly}, abandon wholly that idolatrous and false religion wherein thou wert brought up, as if thou hadst never known it, and learn and embrace the true Religion professed amongst the people of God, to whom thou art now joyned. And the pressing of this with so many words, *Hearken, consider, and encline thine ear*, is, because it is so hard to get men off from those corruptions and evil waies, which they have sucked in as it were with their first milk, and whereto they have been long inured. But now understanding this as spoken to the Church, these words, *Hearken, O daughter, &c.* may be understood as an admonition, that she should carefully attend the preaching of the Gospel, and be instructed thereby: and by forgetting her own people and her fathers house is meant, that all that give up their names to Christ, must 1. utterly renounce the devil, whose children all men are, by nature; 2. abandon all those corruptions which they had brought into the world with them from the loins of their parents; 3. forsake all those evil courses and errors in religion, whereto they had been inured by corrupt education, and society with the men of this world, out of which they were taken; yea and as it respects the Jews, the forsaking of that legall worship formerly enjoyned them; and 4. be willing to forsake all that is dear to them in this world, that they may cleave unto Christ, as wives do to their husbands, see Mat. 10. 37. and Luk. 14. 26. *If any man come unto me, and have not his father and mother, &c. he cannot be my disciple.*

Verf. 11. *So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, &c.*] And thus his love shall abundantly recompense the losse of thy father and former friends: *for he is thy Lord*, that is, thy husband and head, yea and thy Sovereign too; *and worship thou him*, that is, reverence and serve him, and yield him all due obedience. But now understanding this of Christ and his Church, her beauty is both the imputed righteousness of Christ, and that inherent holiness and righteousness wherein she is renewed after the image of God; and in the worship she is required to yield to him, even that divine worship is included, which is due only to God: the word (*him*) is emphaticall, *and worship thou him*, that is, him and him only.

Verf. 12. *And the daughter of Tyre, &c.*] That is, the inhabitants of Tyre, see the Note 2 Kings 19. 21. *shall be there with a gift*, that is, shall come to thy marriage, or to thy husbands court with great presents. And Tyre is here particularly mentioned, because it was the nearest and the most famous of all the cities of the

Gentiles, a city most renowned in those times for navigation and traffick, and for her mighty wealth, and therefore likely to bring the most choice & curious presents; whence it is said of her, that *she heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets*, Zac. 9. 3. & she is called Isa. 23. 8. *the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth*; see also Ezek. 28: & so this must needs be a great honour to Solomon, that so great and famous a city should bring presents to him, as by way of homage; and the alledging of it a strong argument to move his Bride to forget her fathers house. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour*: for if it must not be limited to the rich amongst the Tyrians, as some would have it, yet however it must be understood of seeking the favour of Solomon and his wife by presents and otherwise; and that this should be done by the rich and great ones of divers nations, even the Jews Solomons own people being also included. And indeed we read of great presents that were brought to Solomon by the kings round about him far and near, see 1 Kin. 10. 24, 25, though especially by the king of Tyre, 1 Kin. 5. 1, &c. Now hereby, as it refers to Christ, is also intended, 1. that the Gentiles of every nation should submit themselves to Christ: for though this was literally accomplished in the conversion of many even of the inhabitants of Tyre, see Mar. 3. 8. Act. 21. 3, 4; yet here under this one particular all other nations of the Gentiles are comprehended. And 2. that amongst others many princes & nobles, & of the great & rich ones amongst the people, should seek to be admitted to be members of the Church; & that many more should protect & favour the Church, & many waies do her good, though they did not by a true faith submit themselves to Christ.

Verf. 13. *The kings daughter is all glorious within, &c.*] I see not why Solomons Bride may not be called here *the kings daughter* with respect to her father the king of Egypt: yet in a manner all Expositours hold that this title is given her in reference to Solomon, and that his spouse is called his daughter, either because she was by him as it were begotten unto God; or rather with respect to the tender love he bare her. And then for this, that she is said to be *all glorious within*, the meaning of that is, either 1. that her chief glory consisted in this, that she was admitted to such a familiar privacy with the king; or 2. that when she sat in the inmost rooms of the kings palace, she was there in her greatest glory, because those rooms were most gorgeously set forth with all kind of bravery and glorious furniture; or 3. that she used to be gloriously attired, not only when she went abroad in publick, but also when she stayed within, as being indeed adorned (which may be implied) only for the delight of the king, and not that others might gaze upon her; or 4. (which I like the best) that the inward vertues and endowments of her mind were her greatest ornament & glory. However, as it is spoken of the Church, who is both the spouse and daughter of Christ, the great king of the Church, by whom she is begotten again, and therefore called *princes daughter* Cant. 7. 1, the meaning must needs be, that she is not glorious in the outward pomp and bravery of the world, the outward face of the Church being usually very miserable and afflicted; but only in the spirituall ornaments of the inner man, which are not apparent

rent to the outward eye of men; being herein like a Bride within doors, whose beauty is not seen till she goeth forth to meet her husband: *it doth not yet appear what we shall be*, saith John, 1 Joh. 3. 2. As for the last clause, *her clothing is of wrought gold*, see the Note above vers. 9.

Verf. 14. *She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work, &c.*] In these words, *she shall be brought unto the king*, some think the Prophet alludes to a custome in those times, to wit, that queens used not to come to their husbands unlesse they were sent for; see Esth. 4. 11, and 5. 2. But rather it is spoken in reference to the custome of leading the Bride to the Bridegrooms house: and accordingly in the next clause, *the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee*, by those virgins are meant, not her handmaids, as some would have it, called *her companions*, only because they were alwaies in her company attending upon her; but her bride-maids, that to honour her attended her on her wedding day, and are therefore called *her companions*, the same that were before vers. 9. called her *honourable women*: As concerning the spirituall meaning hereof, see the Note there. Only this I must adde, 1st, that by their being brought unto the king may be meant, 1. the bringing of the Church in generall in to Christ, or the bringing of particuar Christians into the communion of the Church by the ministry of the Gospel; & 2. the translating of them to be with Christ in his kingdome and glory, when both the living and the dead *shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*, 1 Thes. 4. 17: & 2^{ly}, by the *raiment of needle-work*, or the embroider'd garment, wherewith the Church is adorned, is meant that variety of gifts and graces which Christ hath conferred upon his Church; because such garments use to be wrought with silks of divers colours and divers kinds of works: and 3^{ly}, that particular Christians are here called *virgins* following the Church, the Bride, that is, treading in the steps of the faithfull in all ages that have gone before them, not so much because he speaks of the Gentiles, elect but not yet called, not yet brought unto Christ, but afterwards admitted into fellowship and communion with the Church of the Jews (which is the reason that some give for it;) as with reference to their purity and sincerity, and the uncorrupt profession they make of the faith of Christ, according to that of the Apostle 2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

Verf. 15. *With gladnesse and rejoycing shall they be brought, &c.*] As is wont to be at weddings. Now though herein may be comprehended the rejoycing of God and Christ, & the holy angels for the conversion & salvation of the elect; yet I conceive it is chiefly meant of the spirituall rejoycing of all true believers both here and hereafter, Joh. 16. 22. *They shall enter into the kings palace*: which may be spiritually meant both of the Church and heaven.

Verf. 16. *In stead of thy fathers shall be thy children, &c.*] To wit, in as great glory & renown as ever thy fathers were. Because these words in the Hebrew are in the masculine gender, Expositours for the most part take them to be spoken to the Bridegroom: yet considering that in other places tearms of the masculine gender are used, where the Scripture speaks of women, as Nu. 27. 7. & elsewhere, & especially that these words seem so clearly to have reference to that which was before said to the Bride, v. 10. *forget also thine own people & thy fathers house*, it must, I conceive, needs be

yielded, that though we should take it, that the prophet here directs his speech to the Bridegroom, yet he meant that the Bride should take this which was spoken to him, as spoken intentionally to both joyntly together; namely, that their children and posterity should become as great and glorious, as either of their Progenitours had been: which is more fully expressed in the following clause, *whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth*; implying, that his dominions should be so far enlarged, that he might give severall kingdomes to his children to inherit. It is true indeed that this promise, (which had a condition of obedience covertly annexed, as all temporall promises have) was not made good to Solomon and his Bride, because by their fines they forfeited this mercy: for besides that we read not that ever Solomon had any children by Pharaohs daughter, he had not any son that was a king but only Rehoboam, that succeeded him in the kingdome of Israel, and he through his own folly had soon the greatest part of his kingdome torn away from him. But hereby therefore it is evident, that this was principally spoken of Christ and his Church. Of Christ it may be understood thus: *In stead of thy fathers shall be thy children*, &c. as if he had said, In stead of thy Progenitours, O Christ, of the Jewish nation, of whom thou art descended, thou shalt have the Christian Church for thy children, being begotten again by thy word and spirit, according to that Heb. 2. 13. *Behold, I and the children which God hath given me*, and that title given thee of old, *the everlasting Father*, Isa. 9. 6. And then of the Church, who is tearmed the mother of all believers, Gal. 4. 25. it may be understood thus: *In stead of thy fathers*, meaning their fathers after the flesh, or the Patriarchs, into whose stock the Gentiles being ingrafted are become the seed of Abraham; *shall be thy children*, those believers whom thou shalt bring forth unto Christ in great abundance: see Isa. 49. 18. And then for the following clause, *whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth*, as it implyes the large extent of Christs kingdome, so also the great dignity that Christ should conferre upon his; first the twelve Apostles and their successours in stead of the twelve Patriarchs, whom Christ calls *children* Joh. 13. 33. and by whom he subdued the world, and gave laws unto all the nations of the world; and then also all other Christians whatsoever, who are made *kings and priests unto God*, Rev. 1. 6. Not that Christ hath conferred upon them any civil power, (for even those that rule in the Church are as servants rather then Lords) but that in Christ their head they are admitted to some participation of his spirituall and eternall kingdome; and by his Gospel, the scepter of his kingdome, which he hath left with them, they do, as it were, by his power and authority, subdue and govern the world, and shall one day judge it: see Matth. 19. 28. Luk. 22. 29. 1 Cor. 6. 3.

Verf. 17. *I will make thy name to be remembred in all generations*, &c.] As if the prophet had said, By these things which I have made concerning thee, O king, as it is verf. 1. *I will cause thy name to be remembred in all generations*; which must needs be meant of Christ. And thus he foretells the constant preservation of the Psalms in the Church; and under the perpetuity of Christs name, the stability and perpetuity of the Church is implied.

P S A L M XLVI.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, &c.] See the Note upon the Title Psalm 42. *A Song upon Alamoth*; see the Note I Chron. 15. 20.

Verf. 1. *God is our refuge and strength, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 15. 2. Ours, who are his people: for this Psalm seems to have been composed, by way of praising God for delivering Jerusalem out of the hands of many violent and mighty enemies, that sought her ruine.

Verf. 2. *Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*] That is, though there should be never such terrible alterations, confusions and desolations in all the kingdoms throughout the world, so that the whole world should seem to be turned upside down, and there should be no likelihood of any place of rest for the Church. But see the Note Psal. 23. 4.

Verf. 3. *Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, &c.*] That is, swell and rage; or be muddy and foul. However the meaning is this: though all the nations of the world do raise great combustions, even to the terrour and endangering of many kingdoms and great ones in the world (for that may be intimated in the following clause, *though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof*) and though they tumultuously assemble themselves together for the ruine of the Church, *foaming out their own shame* Jude 13. *like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt*, Isa. 57. 20. For by many waters in the Scriptures is often meant many people: see the Note Numb. 24. 7.

Verf. 4. *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God &c.*] To wit, Zion; so called, because it was, as is added in the next words, *the holy place of the Tabernacles of the most high*, that is, the holy city, where the Arke was placed in a Tabernacle: see the Note Pl. 43. 3. many Expositours hold that this is meant of the river Kidron, 2 Sam. 15. 23, or of the the streames of Gihon or Shiloah, 2 Chron. 32. 30, which flowed into that river, and then compassed half the city of Ierusalem: and accordingly that which is here said they understand thus; that whilst the whole world seemed to be in an uproar round about them, the inhabitants of Ierusalem, knowing themselves to be under the protection of the Almighty, did quietly reioyce in the pleasures which that little river yielded them, both by its watering the place & making it fruitfull, & in the defence which it was to the city. And thus, they say, this little river is opposed to the raging waters, of which the prophet had before spoken, to wit, the tumult of their enemies round about them; and the delight they quietly took in the one, to the terrors that were threatned by the other: which they seek to make good by comparing this with a like place Isa. 8. 6. where the Iewes are blamed, for being discouraged with their seeming weak condition, desiring to strengthen themselves by the ayd and power of the kings of Israel and Syria, as not thinking themselves safe under Gods protection, under the expression of *refusing the waters*

waters of Shiloah that goe softly, and rejoycing in Rezin and Remaliahs sonne. But though there may be in these words an allusion to these brooks that watered Jerusalem; yet I doubt not but *the river* here directly intended, *the streames whereof shall make glad the city of God*, is the presence of God amongst them, who is the fountain of all good, and by whose beneficence just matter of gladness and ioy was continually derived to them: and so in the following verse that which is here figuratively expressed, is clearly explained, *There is a river, the streames whereof shall make glad the city of God &c. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved &c.* for which see the Notes Psal. 16. 8, and 21. 7. Yea and because the ministry of the word, and the operations of Gods spirit, are the chief evidences of Gods gracious presence amongst his people; it may be figuratively applyed to either of these, that they are *the river, the streames whereof make glad the city of God*: see Joh. 7. 38.

Verf. 6. *The heathens raged, the kingdomes were moved, &c.*] Though some understand this last clause of the shaking of those kingdomes, by the avenging hand of God, that raged against his people; yet I rather take it, that both these clauses intend one and the same thing, to wit, that many nations of the heathens did in a rage rise up in a tumultuous manner against Gods people. And then by way of opposition it follows, *he uttered his voice*: that is, the Lord thundered from heaven; or, the Lord promised deliverance to his people; or, he gave some manifest tokens of his indignation against them, and miraculously helped his people without any humane meanes (for to this purpose the like expressions are used 2 Sam. 22. 8. &c.) or, his will and command was that it should so be: and then, *the earth melted*, that is, the inhabitants of the earth, or the enemies that had as it were overspread the face of the earth, fainted and perished, and were gone in an instant. Now though this may be generally understood, as that which hath and doth befall the Church in all ages: yet more probable it is, that the prophet here speaks of some particular deliverance, which was the occasion of penning this Psalm.

Verf. 7. *The Lord of hosts is with us, &c.*] See the Note Gen. 2. 1: *the God of Jacob is our refuge*; see the Note Psal. 20. 1.

Verf. 8. *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.*] To wit, by the mighty havock he hath made amongst the enemies, that from severall countries were gathered together against his people. Now this also may be understood, either of the great works that God hath done for his Church in all ages; or of that particular, upon which this Psalm was composed.

Verf. 9. *He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow &c.*] As if he should have said, By this which God hath done, you may see, that he can and doth, when he is pleased, put a full end to all the wars throughout the world. The expression is much like that Esa. 2. 4. *they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their speares into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Verf. 10. *Be still, &c.*] This is here inserted to shew, that by those judgements fore-mentioned, which God had executed, he did in effect say to men, as is here expref-

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expressed, *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen*, to wit, either by their submission to me, or by their confusion. And it may be spoken either to his own people, that they should quietly wait upon God without fear or murmuring, or troubling themselves to seek help elsewhere: or rather to his enemies, who worshipped false Gods, that they should give over their rage against Gods people; or that without any tumultuous disturbance of affections, they should seriously consider what God had done, and thereby know that the God of Israel was the only true God, against whom there was no contending: see the Note Psal. 4. 4.

P S A L M XLVII.

Verf. 1. **O** *Clap your hands (all ye people) &c.*] That is, all ye tribes of Israel (for so this expression is sometimes used, see Psal. 66. 8. and Zach. 11. 10.) or all ye nations of the world. For because of those words verf. 5. *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet*, it is probably conceived, that the solemn removing of the Ark, either by David or Solomon, which was done with much joy, *with shouting and with the sound of a trumpet*, 2 Sam. 6. 14, 15. 1 Kings 8. 3, &c. was the occasion of composing this Psalm: and because that was a shadow and type of the ascension of Christ into heaven, it must be principally understood of the joy of all nations therein.

Verf. 2. *For the Lord most high is terrible, &c.*] To wit, to all that are his and his peoples enemies. And this also is meant of Christ, whom God hath made King over all the earth; as is expressed in the following words, *he is a great King over all the earth*: see the Note Psal. 2. 8.

Verf. 3. *He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.*] This may be meant of the nations round about, that were subdued by the people of God in the daies of David, But especially it must be understood of the calling of the Gentiles: of whom the Israelites might say, that they were subdued unto them, and brought under their feet, either with reference to Christ, who was of the stock of Israel, and is the head of the Church; or because they were brought in by the Gospel preached by the primitive Church of the Jews, the Apostles and others, and so being joyned to them were brought under the government of Christ amongst them, *the branches of the wild olive-tree being grafted in amongst them*, Rom. 11. 17. for which see Isa. 2. 2, 3, 4. And that this must be understood of this spirituall subduing of the Gentiles is evident, because the Psalmist speaks of such a subduing, as was to be matter of such exceeding great joy to the people that were subdued, as is expressed before verf. 1. *O clap your hands, all ye people, &c.*

Verf. 4. *He shall chuse our inheritance for us, &c.*] That is, Having taken us for his adopted sons and daughters, he will set apart for us that inheritance that he hath promised us. Now as this is spoken in reference to the Israelites, the inheritance here intended was partly the land of Canaan, which was never conferred upon them in the full extent as it was at first promised, till the daies of David and Solomon (see the Notes Gen. 15. 18.) but principally the kingdome of hea-

ven, whereof Canaan was a type : But as it refers to the Church of Christ, both of Jews and Gentiles, it is only meant of heaven, that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance, 1 Pet. 1. 4. unlesse we also include, that God will provide a place of habitation for his Church even here in this world. As for the following words, *the excellency of Jacob whom he loved*, we must know 1. that by *Jacob* may be meant either the Patriarch Jacob himself, (and the drift of the words is then to shew, that the excellency that God did at first confer upon Jacob in the covenant that God made with him, was from him derived to the whole Israel of God) or else the seed of Jacob, see the Note Psal. 24. 6. 2^{ly}, that it is either the land of Canaan which is here called *the excellency of Jacob*; and that not so much because it was a land flowing with milk and honey, as because of Jerusalem, and the Sanctuary therein, in which God was present amongst them in his word and worship; for this is often termed the excellency of the Israelites, as Ezek. 24. 21. *Behold, I will profane my Sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, and the desire of your eyes, &c.* Amos 6. 8. *I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces*; see also chap. 8. 7. and Nahum 2. 2 : or else, the glorious condition that is prepared for Gods people in heaven: or, more generally, all those glorious things which were promised to the Israel of God; as that they should be Gods peculiar people, and that to them appertained the kingdome and priesthood and Temple, with all the glorious priviledges of the Church. And 3. that those last words, *whom he loved*, are purposely added to shew, that it was of Gods free grace and love, that there were such excellent things designed for Jacob, according to that Rom. 9. 13. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

Verf. 5. *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.*] Some conceive that this is spoken in reference to that ancient manner of calling the people together in the time of the law, by the sound of trumpets; at which times it might be said, that God was *gone up with a shout*, &c. because thereby they were stirred up to honour God, and there God was present and entertained, as it were, amongst his people with joyfull acclamations, as their Lord and King. But I rather take it to be meant, as is before noted verf. 1. of the removall of the Ark (for which also see the Note Numb. 10. 35.) and under that type, of the Ascension of Christ by his own power into heaven. For having spoken in the foregoing verse of the inheritance of the Saints in heaven, *He shall chuse our inheritance for us*, he takes occasion from thence to speak of Christs ascending thither in triumph, as a conquerour, having vanquished Satan, sin and death, and sent forth his servants to subdue the nations by the word of his Gospel. Yea and this of his being *gone up with a shout*, and *with the sound of a trumpet*, some understand of the solemn attendance and joy of the angels when he ascended into heaven; and that the rather, because it is said 1 Thess. 4. 16. that *the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God*, and Act. 1. 11. it was said to them that were eye-witnesses of Christs ascension, *This same Iesus which was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

Verf. 7. *For God is the king of all the earth, &c.*] See the Note verf. 2. *Sing ye praises*

ses with understanding; that is, understanding and attending what ye sing; which indeed they only doe, that are spiritually enlightened with the saving knowledge of God and of Christ. Yet some understand it of singing skilfully, and therefore render it, as it is in the margin, *sing ye praises every one that hath understanding*. However observable it is, that these words, *sing praises*, are five severall times repeated in this and the foregoing verse; to signify how vehemently desirous he was that this should be done, and that men should doe it with all possible fervency, and that too constantly, and without ceasing.

Verf. 8. *God reigneth over the heathen &c.*] To wit, as having all nations under his power; see the Note also verf. 2. *God sitteth upon the throne of his holinesse*, that is, his holy throne; which may be the Ark, or mercy-seat that covered it, according to that Psal. 99. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble, he sitteth between the cherubims &c.*; or else heaven, which Christ calleth *Gods throne* Matth. 5. 34. and where he sitteth at the right hand of God, having all power given him both in heaven and in earth.

Verf. 9. *The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham, &c.*] Some understand this of the heads of the Tribes, and the Nobles of the people, assembling together when the ark was to be remooved by David or Solomon: see 2 Sam. 6. 1. 1 Kings 8. 1. But doubtlesse, as the Psalm was intended as a prediction of Christs ascension, these words must be understood of the coming in of many Princes of the Gentiles upon the preaching of the Gospel, to joyn themselves to the Church of the Jewes, accounting it their greatest honour, not that they were princes, but that they were of the number of Gods people; as indeed all that became Christians, were thereby incorporated into the Church of the Jewes, as the Apostle speaks Ephe. 3. 6: *who are the rather here called the people of the God of Abraham*, because that very name *Abraham* signifieth *the father of many nations*, see the Notes Gen. 17. 4, 5. and to him that promise was made, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, Gen. 22. 18. Only we must withall note, that the words in the Hebrew may be translated, as they are in the margin of our Bibles, *The voluntary of the people are gathered unto the people of the God of Abraham*, and so they must be understood of the voluntary coming in of the Gentiles, to joyn themselves to the Church of the Jewes, according to that, Psal. 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*. As for the following clause, *for the shields of the earth belong unto God &c.* Some take it thus, that all the Princes of the earth are under the disposing power of God, and so no wonder though even their hearts are swayed by him to submit to Christs scepter, whereby *he is greatly exalted*: for, say they, princes and magistrates are called *the shields of the earth*, because they are for the defence and protection of the people; as we see Hos. 4. 18. *her rulers with shame do love, Give ye*, which is in the originall, *her shields with shame do love, Give ye*. But others take it thus, *for the shields of the earth belong unto God*, that is, by Gods providence the inhabitants of the earth are many waies defended, as by so many shields. And so they take this to be added, as that whereby the Gentiles should be mooved to joyn themselves to the people of God, namely, that they

might be under his protection, wherein God is greatly exalted.

P S A L M XLVIII.

Verf. 1. **G**reat is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, &c.] To wit, Because though God hath manifested his transcendent greatness throughout the world, yet above all he hath done this in Jerusalem, and in his Church, whereof Jerusalem was a type, as being *the citie of God, and the mountain of holinesse*; of which see the Note Psal. 2. 6: and though the men of the world would not see nor magnify this greatness of God, yet his people have alwaies done it. Now from that which is said afterwards, verf. 3, &c. *God is known in her palaces for a refuge; for loe the kings were assembled, &c.* it is generally held, that this Psalm was composed upon occasion of some notable deliverance, which God had afforded the city Jerusalem, when the neighbouring kings had conspired against her.

Verf. 2. *Beautifull for situation, &c.*] Mount Sion is here said to be 1. *beautifull for situation*, not only because it had so pleasant a prospect, and was a place that yielded such delight in every regard, but also especially with respect to its beauty from the Temple, Gods dwelling-place: and 2. *the joy of the whole earth*, not so much because those that resorted thither from far countries, were so much delighted with the goodly sight of the city and Temple; as because those that resorted thither to worship from all parts of the earth, as the Ethiopian Eunuch did Act. 8. 27, were so exceedingly cheared thereby, and especially because the Gospel, that went *out of Zion* Isa. 2. 3. was indeed *the joy of the whole earth*: 3. *on the sides of the North*; which is so diversly expounded, that some hold the meaning is, that it was in the South of the city, by the side of the North, or opposite to the North; and others, which seems more agreeable with the words, that it was on the North side of Jerusalem, whence is that vaunting speech of the Assyrian, Isa. 14. 13. *I will sit also upon the mount of the Congregation in the sides of the North*: and 4. *the city of the great king*, meaning *the city of David*, as it is called 2 Sam. 5. 7, or rather the city of God, the great king of the world.

Verf. 3. *God is known in her palaces for a refuge.*] That is, In the houses of this city built like palaces for the stateliness of them, God, as is well known, is the refuge of his people; they are not secured so much by their forts and bulwarks, as in other cities, as by the presence of God amongst them. Or by *her palaces* may be meant her very forts and bulwarks, which for their sightlinesse and beauty are called palaces, and so the words may imply, that God was the defence even of their fortresses and defended places.

Verf. 4. *For lo, the kings were assembled, &c.*] That is, They have severall times combined together against Jerusalem: as when the Philistine Princes, upon Davids taking the fort of Zion, came up against him, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim, 2 Sam. 5. 17, 18; and when the Ethiopians came against Asa, 2 Chron. 14. 7; and when the Moabites and Ammonites and others invaded the land in Jehoshaphats daies, 2 Chron. 20. 1, 2; and when the kings of Syria
and

and Israel besieged Ahaz in Jerusalem, 2 Kings 16. 5; and when Sennacherib sought to take the city in Hezekiahs time, who doubtlesse had many petty kings in his army, 2 Kings 18. 17. Or it may be meant of some one of these in particular, which was the occasion of composing this Psalm. *They passed by together*, that is, they altogether vanished on a sudden; or rather, they marched on together to surprize Ierusalem.

Vers. 5. *They saw it, &c.*] That is, They saw the city, and so were amazed; or, they saw how wonderfully God appeared for the city, *and so they marvelled, &c.* that is, by this means they were astonished, and perplexed, and fled away.

Vers. 6. *Fear took hold upon them there, &c.*] That is, even whilst they were before Ierusalem, and so were even ready to besiege it, flattering themselves with assurance that they should take it, and striking the inhabitants with great terrour, suddenly they themselves were surprized with fear; or, when they began to turn their backs to escape away, fear took hold of them, and marred their flying: *and pain as of a woman in travail*; that is, 1. suddenly, 2. in greatest extremity, 3. irresistably, and 4. with a continuall succession of griefs, even as throes come upon a woman in travail.

Vers. 7. *Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an East-wind.*] That is, with a tempestuous wind; see the Note Job 38. 24. And what is meant by *the ships of Tarshish*, see in the Note 1 Kings 10. 22. Some would have them so called from Tarsus, a chief haven-town in Cilicia, Aët. 21. 34: which cannot be, for it could not be three years voyage going thither and coming back, as it was with Solomons navy that went to Tarshish, 2 Chron. 9. 21. However, this here, I conceive, is spoken as by way of similitude, as if it had been thus; As thou breakest often the strongest ships that sail in the sea by some violent wind, so dost thou break in pieces the combined forces of thy peoples enemies. Yet because there is expresse mention in 2 Chron. 20. 2. that of that great army that invaded the land of Iudah in Iehoshaphats daies, some came *from beyond the sea*, some conceive that this was spoken particularly with reference to the breaking of those ships. But the first exposition is the best; though I yield that it may be taken generally, that when ever Gods people are invaded by sea, there, as well as by land, God appears for them, and doth often with his tempests break their ships in pieces.

Vers. 8. *As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord, &c.*] That is, What we have heard promised in thy word and by thy prophets, we have seen fully made good to thy people; and what we have heard thou hast done for our fathers, the same we have seen done for our selves.

Vers. 9. *We have thought of thy loving kindnesse, O God, in the midst of thy temple.*] This may be referred to the time after the deliverance, which God had afforded Ierusalem, whereof he had spoken before vers. 3, 4, &c. and then the meaning is, that they had remembred the loving kindnesse of God, and had praised his name for it. But most Expositours refer it to the time before that deliverance, as if he had said, Being in great streights and fears, *we thought of thy loving kindnesse*, and trusting therein, we waited patiently, and thou hast not failed our expectation.

As for those last words, *in the midst of thy temple*, they are added, not to limit their thinking of Gods loving kindnesse only to that place, as if they thought not of it any where but there: but 1. because that was the sign of Gods dwelling amongst them as his people, and so hereby he would imply, that they thought of that love he bare them as his peculiar people, whereof the temple was a token and pledge; and 2. because there they heard out of his word of the tender love he bare them, and were by these thoughts stirred up and encouraged to pray unto him. But this, as the rest, must be especially applyed to the Church, the true Temple of God.

Verf. 10. *According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth, &c.*] Some make this a parallel place with that verf. 1. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised*, and so understand it thus; that as Gods Name is above all names, God infinitely excelling all the great ones of the world, so is his Name accordingly exalted with transcendent praise throughout the world. Others give the sense of the words thus; Thou art known, and accordingly praised unto the ends of the earth; or, wherever thy Name shall be heard, thou shalt be praised for thy wonderfull works; or, wherever the fame of this great deliverance afforded thy people shall be spread, or generally the fame of all thy noble acts, accordingly shalt thou be praised throughout all the earth; or, which to me seems the best, that which thou hast revealed of thy self, thou dost indeed make good by thy glorious works, and so givest all the earth occasion to praise thee. *Thy right hand is full of righteousness*; to wit, in regard of the many and many proofs thou givest of thy righteousness, by preserving thy people, and destroying their enemies; yea in regard that thou art holy and righteous in all that thou doest.

Verf. 11. *Let mount Sion rejoyce, let the daughters of Iudah be glad.*] That is, the people of Judah, to wit, because of Gods judgements on their enemies; see the Note 2 Kings 19. 21: or the lesser cities, towns and villages of Iudah, which were as daughters to the mother city Ierusalem; see the Note 2 Sam. 20. 19.

Verf. 12, *Walk about Sion, &c.*] This is a poetick description of the continued splendour, stateliness and strength of the city Ierusalem; and so also under that figure, of the spirituall magnificence, the large extent and strength of the Church in the daies of the Gospel. For this calling men to view her round about, was to imply either 1. that they should not find that there was the least breach made in her walls, or that her towers, bulwarks, or palaces were any way defaced, notwithstanding the late engagement of her enemies against her, see verf. 4, 5, &c. or 2. how beautifull, spacious, and for strength impregnable that city was. Yet is not this city thus represented, as if her outward fortifications could make her invincible, but as appearing in these glorious signs of Gods love and care and blessing upon her, to be the city God had chosen to dwell in, and thereby impregnable, as he had said before verf. 3.

Verf. 13. *Consider her palaces, &c.*] Some render it, *Raise up her palaces*, that is, highly esteem and commend them: but the translation in our Bibles best agreeth with the former expressions, *Consider her palaces*, to wit, how they stand still in their full beauty, or, how beautifull and strong they are: *that ye may tell it to the gene-*

generation following, to wit, how miraculously God hath preserved them; or how many and how splendid they are. And herein also (as some learned men observe) is covertly implied, that there was a time coming, when the beauty of that earthly Jerusalem should not be to be seen; that so we might expect, that what is spoken here of the beauty and perpetuity of that earthly Jerusalem, must be chiefly made good in that spirituall Ierusalem, the Church of Christ.

Verf. 14. *For this God is our God for ever and ever, &c.*] As if he had said, This God, whom we assuredly know to be the only true God, who hath chosen Ierusalem to be his dwelling-place, and thereupon hath thus beautified and protected it, is our God, and so will be for ever and ever: see Isa. 25. 9.

P S A L M XLIX.

Verf. 1. **H**ear this, all ye people, &c.] The scope of this Psalm being to shew, that neither wicked men had any cause to glory in their prosperity, nor the righteous to be dejected with their adversity, because it concerned all men to know this, that they might not stumble at this seeming strange dispensation of Gods Providence, as all naturally are prone to doe, therefore he calls upon all to hear; and urgeth diligent attendance, that they should *bear and give ear*, to imply the excellency of what is here taught, and mens backwardnesse to learn it. Yea and there may be a prediction covertly hinted, that this Psalm should be preserved for the use of Gods people of all nations.

Verf. 3. *My mouth shall speak of wisdom, &c.*] This he adds to stir up attention; the rather calling those things he meant to deliver *wisdom* and *understanding*, either to assure them, that however some things he should speak of might seem common and triviall, as that which he delivers here concerning the necessity of every mans dying, &c. yet in truth it was a great point of wisdom seriously to lay these things to heart; or else by way of opposing the judgement of worldly men, who count it the only wisdom to gather riches by any means whatsoever, whereas indeed (as here is shewed) true wisdom teacheth to slight and vilify these transitory things: *and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding*; that is, I will utter nothing rashly, but what after serious meditation I shall find very usefull to make men truly wise and understanding.

Verf. 4. *I will encline mine eare to a parable; &c.*] What is meant by a parable, see in the Note Numb. 23. 7. And by saying *I will encline mine eare to a parable*, he implies two things: 1. that he would deliver nothing but what God by his spirit did reveal to him, & so nothing but what was weighty and right; for he would hearken to the spirit instructing him, before he would undertake to instruct others; according to that Isa. 50. 4. *The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine eare to hear as the learned:* and 2. that he would himself hearken to those instructions which he gave to others in this Psalm; for in this expression *I will incline mine eare*, he seems to allude to musicians, that are wont to bow their eares to their Instruments, to mark whether

ther they be exactly tuned or no. *I will open my dark saying upon the harp*; meaning in this Psalm, which he intended should be sung with a harp. And here he calls that which he had to deliver a *dark saying*, not because of the obscurity of the expressions, wherein he meant to deliver it, as is evident by that expression he useth, *I will open my dark saying*; but to imply, that the things he meant to speak of were deep and profound mysteries, and such as to naturall men would be dark riddles: such as is that which followes in the next verse, that a good man hath no cause to be afraid in the day of distresse and trouble &c. So that the drift of the whole verse is, to shew how deep and weighty the things were, of which he intended to speak.

Verf. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the dayes of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compasse me about?*] This is that *parable* and *dark saying* which in the foregoing verse he promised to entreat of in this Psalm: and because he had said, that he would encline his own eare to hear what he delivered for the instruction of others, he propounds that which he meant to deliver in his own person, though he intended it should be received as a common truth, which might likewise be applyed to any other of Gods faithfull servants; *wherefore should I fear in the dayes of evil &c.* 1. By fearing here may be meant a mans being terrified at the apprehension of any approaching evil, or a mans being dismayed or discouraged at any thing that seems strange or unreasonable to him, according to that verf. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich &c.* 2. By the *daies of evil* may be meant, either the daies of any affliction or distresse or persecution, or the time of old age or death, or, as some would have it, the day of judgement. 3. By the *iniquity of his heels* is meant, either the iniquity of his own waies and works, the sinfull courses wherein he had walked, (and some limit it also, to those unjust waies whereby he had supplanted others, and caused them to fall, according to that Joh. 13. 18. *He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me,*) and consequently the punishments which his evil deeds would bring upon him; or else the iniquity of his adversaries, in persecuting and pursuing him close at his heels, or in laying snares to intangle him. Now accordingly may these words be severall waies expounded; *Wherefore should I fear in the dayes of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compasse me about?* that is, Wherefore should I doe any thing to make my self rich and great in the world, or to help my self in any streights I fall into, which should afterwards overwhelm me with fear in the dayes of Gods wrath, when the punishment of the evil I have done shall encompassse and insnare me, or pursue and overtake me? or 2. Wherefore should I suffer my heart to sink with fear in the dayes of any distresse that befalls me, or when sicknesse and death shall surprize me, which I may well look upon as the fruits of mine own iniquities? as if he should have said, There is no cause why I should fear in such times of calamity and distresse, yea though they were mine own iniquities that brought me to be insnared and compassed herewith. And the reason of this is given afterwards verf. 15. to wit, because he was assured of Gods love to him, and that God would in due time deliver him from all his troubles, yea even from the power of death it self, which wicked ungodly men could not expect; *But God,*

God, saith he, *will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me* Or 3. thus, (which I like the best) *wherefore should I fear in the daies of evil, &c?* that is, when wickednesse reigns, and ungodly men rage, seeking to insnare me, and pursue me at the heels, when I am pressed or compassed about with afflictions and calamities, publick or private, there is no cause why I should be dejected with fear; and that because (as is expressed in the following part of the Psalm) whilst mine enemies trust in outward perishing things, I trust in the Lord, who though he may suffer wicked men to persecute his righteous servants for a time, and that perhaps by way of correcting them for their iniquities, yet in due time he will not fail to deliver them, and to break the pride of their great enemies. This I conceive is the best exposition of the words: only I may adde, that some conceive it is death which he tearms here the iniquity of his heels, and that because to Christ and his members death is indeed no more, but the bruising of their heel, Gen. 3. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 55, 57.

Vers. 6. *They that trust in their wealth, and boast, &c.*] This is added as a reason of that which was implied in the foregoing verse, why the children of God should not doe any thing to enrich themselves, that should afterwards expose them to the fears which usually follow a guilty conscience in the daies of evil; or why they ought not to be dismayed and troubled at the prosperity of wicked men, or to be afraid in the daies of adversity, when ungodly great men do persecute and oppresse them; namely, because riches are such vain things, and so unable to help those that have them in greatest abundance in the daies of evil. *They that trust in their wealth*, to wit, as thinking themselves sufficiently defended thereby, and so securely despising the judgements of God, and undertaking in a manner whatever they please in the confidence of their great wealth; and so they that *boast themselves in the multitude of their riches*, that is, that are puffed up with their great estates, as if they had gotten all by their own policies and labour, &c. and so live in all pomp, pride and excess, despising and wronging others; alas, they trust and glory in a vain shadow, that can doe them no good in an evil day, and they that fear their greatnesse are indeed afraid of a shadow, as is expressed in the following verses.

Vers. 7. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, &c.*] To wit, from dying, as is expressed vers. 9; or from the power of death, when he is dead, by procuring that he may be restored to life again. And if a man cannot doe this for his brother, much lesse can he doe it for himself.

Vers. 8. *(For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.)* That is, Their soul is so precious, that nothing can be given of sufficient value for the ransom of it, and therefore there can never be any way found to redeem it.

Vers. 10. *For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, &c.*] Some by *wise men* here understand those that have so much understanding, as to make use of their wealth; and by the *fool and the brutish person*, such as defraud themselves of the comfort they might take in their riches, and only hord up wealth that they may leave it to others: others understand by *wise men*, those that are spiritually wise and godly; and by the *fool and the brutish man*, such

as are carnall wicked men; and thence they conceive are those different expressions, that the wise are said to *die*, but the fool and the brutish person to *perish*. But I understand the words rather in the most generall sense, and conceive that the drift of them is to *shew*, that death is the end of all men whatsoever; and that when that hour comes, they must all part with the wealth of this world, and leave it to others. And yet some understand that last clause, *and leave their wealth to others*, of leaving it to strangers, and not to their own posterity or family; according to that which is said elsewhere, Eccles. 6. 1, 2. Luke 12. 19. and Psal. 39. 7.

Vers. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, &c.*] That is, They verily think within themselves, that they shall dwell in their houses for ever; or that their posterity shall continue for ever, see the Note Exod. 1. 21. or that the houses they build shall remain for ever, which the following words *and their dwelling places to all generations* make the more probable. All these waies the words may be understood: and accordingly the drift and scope thereof may be, either 1. that these mighty men do carry themselves so, as if they thought they should live for ever, yea though by daily experience they see the contrary; (for this aggravation of their brutishnesse is implied by subjoyning this upon that which went before vers. 10.) or 2. that at least they expect, that their memory shall in their posterity and in their stately dwellings and great revenues be continued for ever, and therefore they set their hearts upon these outward things: in stead of seeking to assure themselves that their names are written in heaven, they are only sollicitous to make their names famous upon earth; and therefore *they call their lands after their own names*, to wit, to perpetuate the memory of their names; as Alexandria was called of Alexander, and Cæsarea of Cæsar, &c.

Vers. 12. *Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not, &c.*] That is, The man that is in honourable condition, but is brutish & wicked, *and understandeth not*, as is expressed afterwards vers. 20, continueth not in his honourable estate; if God doth not whilst he lives strip him of his worldly dignities, yet at least death will surely pull him down: *he is like the beasts that perish*; that is, in regard of the present life, which such men only mind, dying he passeth away as the brute beasts do; and then they are forgotten, as the beast is when it dies, and there is no more reckoning made of them then of beasts, that dying of themselves are left in the field as carrion to rot and putrify. The first clause, *man being in honour abideth not*, was commonly by the ancients understood of the sudden fall of our first parents from that estate of honour wherein God at first created them. But the whole context shews that this cannot be here intended: the most that can be said herein is, that there may be a secret allusion to Adams fall, to wit, that as he continued not in his glorious condition, so neither do these wicked men abide long in their pomp and outward prosperity.

Vers. 13. *This their way is their folly, &c.*] That is, This their constant practise, to wit, in pursuing worldly riches and greatnesse, and seeking to perpetuate the memory of their names by their stately dwellings, &c. (for this refers to that he had

had said before vers. 11.) is no better then meer folly, or discovers their folly, however they account it a high point of wisdom: Or it may be referred to that which was said in the foregoing verse; *This their way*, that is, this which is the issue and event of their way, to wit, that they abide not in honour, but perish as the beast doth, *is their folly*, that is, manifests their folly. *Yet their posterity approve their sayings*: that is, though they by experience see the vanity and folly of these waies of their fathers, who after all their dreams of living here for ever, and of the perpetuity of their names, die as others, and are buried in oblivion; yet they approve of their counsell and commands, whereby they advised them to mind these things chiefly (these are the sayings of their fathers which some conceive are here meant): or, they *approve of their sayings*, that is, in that they think and speak and doe the same things, treading exactly in the steps of their fathers. For even the deeds of their fathers do proclaim what their judgements are, and therefore even with respect thereto it may be said, that their children do approve their sayings.

Vers. 14. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them &c.*] That is, As the silly sheep are by flocks driven into a narrow pin-fold or into the shambles, that they may be killed and eaten, being no way able to make any resistance, nor ever fearing any danger they are in: so shall these great ones, whom the whole world could hardly satisfy, be brought thick and threefold in great numbers, and lodged together in the narrow compasse of a grave, under the power and tyranny of death; where, for all their former greatnesse and bravery, they shall be made worms meat, yea meat for the worm that never dies; *death both temporall and eternall shall feed on them*, and that for ever, the wicked in hell being as the grasse is to the beast, that still growing continueth still to be meat for it: *And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning*; that is, though they die as well as others, yet at the last day, the day of the generall resurrection, which is as it were the morning, the dawning of that new day of eternall life which shall never have end, when all that sleep in the dust Dan. 12. 2. shall awake and rise, and the darknesse of the ignorance and afflictions of this life coming to an end, the Saints shall behold Christ the sun of righteousness appearing in his glory face to face, they shall have dominion over these great ones, that had before in this life tyrannized over them, to wit, in and by Christ their head, whose footstool they must be made, according to that 1 Cor. 6. 2. *Do ye not know that the Saints shall judge the world?* This I conceive is the meaning of this clause. Yet some understand it otherwise; *and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning*, that is, they shall soon get the better of them, and be in a better condition then their great oppressors. As for the last clause, *and their beauty (or strength) shall consume in the grave from their dwelling*, the meaning is, that from their magnificent dwellings, where they had lived in so great pomp and state, they should be brought to the grave, where their glory and strength together with themselves should rot and consume away, their great wealth being no way sufficient to secure them. Yet some would have it to be understood thus, that the glory they had gotten from their stately dwellings should

consume away; or that whilst they consume in the grave, their very dwellings by degrees do lose their names. But the first exposition is the best.

Vers. 15. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, &c.*] As if he had said, Though riches cannot redeem the rich, yet God will redeem me from the power of death, and from the grave, see the Note Psal. 16. 10: *for he shall receive me*; that is, of his own free grace he will receive me to himself, my soul at my death, my body at the resurrection. And thus David applyeth that to himself, which in the foregoing verse he had affirmed of the righteous in generall, *and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.*

Vers. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, &c.*] That is, Be not dismayed nor overcome with fear, because of the power which such have to oppress the righteous; or, Be not dejected nor discouraged, as fearing whether God doth not favour such rather than thy self, because God prospers them whilst thou art afflicted.

Vers. 17. *For when he dyeth, he shall carry nothing away, &c.*] And therefore 1. such a one is no way to be envied, since his blisse and life do perish together; and 2. there will be no longer any cause to fear them, because they will not in another world have any power to hurt, as here they had.

Vers. 18. *Though whilst he lived, he blessed his soul, &c.*] To wit, in that 1. he applauded himself for his happinesse in his wealth and outward greatnesse, 2. he flattered himself with vain conceits of Gods favour, and that he should still continue in his prosperous estate, and gave himself all the content and delight he could in the enjoyment of his plenty: *and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself*; that is, though others also extoll thy blisse, and flattering thee do uphold thee in this folly, and confirm thee in these vain conceits, when thou makest much of and pamperest thy self. But now all this is supposed to be *whiles he lived*, implying, that when death came, that would soon confute all these vain conceits of the rich man, and that then his flatterers would praise him no longer.

Vers. 19. *He shall go to the generation of his fathers, &c.*] That is, He shall be gathered to the grave and Hell, whether his wicked progenitours are gone before him: *they shall never see light*; that is, they shall never more see the light of the living here, nor shall ever see the joys and life eternall of the Saints in heaven, but shall remain for ever in outer darknesse.

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remoniall service, which himself had appointed, unlesse it were accompanied with that spirituall service of faith and new obedience, which was signified thereby; and so thereby to reprove that grosse and destructive conceit, which prevailed so much in all ages amongst the Jews, that God would be pleased with his outward ceremoniall service, without the other of obedience to his morall law: all which is evident by that passage wherewith the prophet doth close this Psalm, vers. 23. *who so offereth praise, glorifyeth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.* Now to this end, in the beginning of this Psalm the prophet, as it were in the person of a Crier or Herald sent from God, doth proclaim and make known, that God, (whom for their greater terrour herein he tearms *The mighty God*) would enter into a controversy with his own people about this, and not only plead this cause against them, but also as a judge from his tribunall pronounce sentence against them, and punish them even before all the world for this their grosse hypocrisy. *The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken;* that is, he hath determined and made known, to wit, that which follows vers. 7, &c. that he would give sentence in this controversy, and judge his people for thinking to please him with the outward pomp only of externall rites and sacrifices, *Hear O my people, and I will speak,* &c. and so this may have reference to the Lords making known his mind herein by the Psalmist, that so what he delivers here might be received as an oracle from heaven: *the Lord hath spoken,* to wit, by me his messenger; *and called the earth from the rising of the Sun unto the going down thereof,* that is, all the inhabitants of the earth, or all the creatures on the earth, to wit, to be witnesses of this solemn judgement; which is added, to shew the weightiness of the cause wherein God intended to give sentence, and for the greater confusion of his people, as implying that God would discover their hypocrisy before all the world. The expression used is much like those Deut. 4. 26. and 32. 1. *Give ear O ye heavens, and I will speak,* &c. concerning which see the Notes there. I know that some Expositours take this to be a prediction of the last judgement: and very many have taken it as a prophesy of the abrogation of the ceremoniall law by Christ. *The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken,* that is, Christ hath spoken by the word of the Gospel, *and called the earth from the rising of the Sun,* &c. that is, hath invited all mankind to the faith and obedience of that word of salvation. But I take the former exposition to be clearly the best; namely, that the words contain, rather an exhortation with the people of God in those times about the worship of God then enjoyned, then a prophesy of the future kingdome of Christ. Because the most wicked amongst them were so prone to think, that they had done as much as needed to be done, if they had observed the rites of the ceremoniall law, he not only tels them, that these without faith & purity of heart were nothing worth, but also assures them, that God would judge them for this, and would discover their hypocrisy before all the world.

Vers. 2. *Out of Sion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*] They that apply this 1st part of the Psalm to the 1st or 2^d coming of Christ, do accordingly understand these words, either of the Lords glorious manifesting himself in the Church of the new Testament, the spiritual Sion, of w^{ch} see the Note Ps. 2. 6. & of the Gospels coming

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forth at first, out of Jerusalem, and then passing forth throughout the world; or of Gods appearing from his heavenly Sion in great glory to judge the world. But I rather take it to be a description of the Lords coming forth as a Judge, to pronounce sentence in that great controversy amongst his people, concerning the right performance of that service which he had required of them in the sacrifices and other externall rites of the ceremoniall law. And for the better understanding hereof we must note, 1. that because Sion was the place God had chosen for this service, therefore is God here described as coming forth out of Sion to give sentence in this cause; thereby to imply, that the judgement here passed tended not to the overthrow of the ceremoniall law enjoyned by Moses, but rather to its establishment in the right use of it, according as God here declares the true ends of those externall rites to have been: and that whereas the carnall worshippers amongst his people would be ready to object, We know that God hath shined to us out of Sion, there he hath given us a law, and therefore nothing ought to be imposed upon us that is not there prescribed; this would no way help them, since by the very rule of that law God would judge them, according to that which our Saviour in a like case said to the Jews Joh. 5. 45. *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust*: 2. that by that expression, *Out of Sion God hath shined*, the prophet intended, either to set forth the glorious majesty wherewith God would manifest himself in judging those that had corrupted his worship, alluding therein to the custome of Judges, that are wont to cloth themselves with glorious robes, when they are to sit in the judgement-seat; or else to imply, how clearly God would explain this doctrine concerning the ceremoniall worship, so that there should be no obscurity in it, but every one should clearly see how they ought therein to worship God: and 3. that Sion is here called *the perfection of beauty*, because there God had revealed himself to his people, and was worshipped by them, whilst all the world besides lay in dismal darknesse.

Verf. 3. *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 14. 14. As if he had said, Though God may a while forbear wicked men amongst his people, that think to delude him with mere formalities of outward services and sacrifices, yet in due time he will certainly appear, and will with great severity judge those that doe this, for their grosse perverting of his law; even with the same terrour wherewith at first he delivered the law at Sinai, will he judge these men for their grosse abuse of his law; which is clearly implied in the following words, *A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him*. As for those words, *Our God*, in the first clause, either the prophet doth therein joyn himself with the true worshippers of God, implying thereby, that however the profaner sort derided those few that worshipped God in spirit and truth, yet their God would appear as a just judge to the terrour of those that pretended themselves to be his people, but worshipped him not as his people were appointed to doe: or else he speaks it in the name of the whole people of Israel, to assure them that even that God, whose people they professed themselves to be, and who had given them the law by the hand of Moses, would certainly judge them for

corrupting his worship. How they apply these words that understand them of the first or second coming of Christ, as is before noted, we may easily conceive: for either they must be referred to Christs proceeding against carnall hypocritical worshippers by the powerfull efficacy of the Gospel, according to that the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 10. 3, 6; or else to that flaming fire wherein he shall appear when he comes again to judge the world.

Vers. 4. *He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.*] That is, He will call both heaven and earth, and all the creatures therein, to bear witness to his proceedings in the judgement he would pronounce against his people; intimating, that he would discover their cause so clearly, that if his people should not be convinced, the very heavens and earth and all the creatures therein should bear witness against them: see the Note above vers. 1. I know that some understand this, of Gods calling the heaven and the earth to give up their dead at the last judgement, that they may be brought to stand before Gods tribunall; or of their being called to bear witness to his majesty, when he should come in glory to judge his people; alluding still, as before, to the glory wherein God appeared at the giving of the law on mount Sinai: and others understand it of the creatures being subservient to Christ for the saving of his elect people, when he should come in the flesh, and abolish the ceremoniall law. But the first exposition is far the best.

Vers. 5. *Gather my Saints together unto me.*] Here the Lord cites as it were the parties before him, between whom there was a controversy concerning sacrifices and other outward rites of his worship. For by his *Saints* he means the whole people of Israel: and this title he gives them, either because they were all such by calling and outward profession (and so in regard of the wicked amongst them there may be a kind of Irony in the words, covertly taxing them for not being such as they professed themselves to be;) or because there were some holy ones amongst them, that did sincerely worship him, and so, for their sakes, though but a few, this honourable title is given to them; the denomination being taken from the better part, as when the Church with us, though a mixed company, is called holy. And then for that clause which is added, *those that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice*, either it is spoken with reference to that solemn ratifying of the Covenant betwixt God and the people of Israel by sacrifices at mount Sinai, whereof we read Exod. 24. 4, 8; or else rather more generally in relation to all the sacrifices they offered at all times, they being all seals of the Covenant betwixt God and them; according to the custome of those times, that when men made a Covenant one with another, they offered sacrifices to confirm their Covenant; and so this is added, to shew the true end of sacrifices, which was to be seals of the Covenant which God had made with that people, and so thereby covertly to tax those, who minded not the Covenant, whereby they were bound every way to carry themselves to the Lord as became his people, but only contented themselves with the mere outward service of offering sacrifices. I know that some Expositours, that limit the word *Saints* to the holy ones amongst Gods people, do accordingly also expound this clause, *those that have made a cove-*

nant with me by sacrifice, that is, those that have not rested in the meer outward service of sacrifices, but have also minded the covenant, whereof the sacrifices were a signe: and that others conceive it is added, with reference to the wicked hypocrites amongst them, *those that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice*, that is, those that thought the covenant betwixt me and them was only about sacrifices; which therefore having given me, they concluded they had done enough, and that for this I was bound as by covenant to them. And so likewise for the first clause, *Gather my Saints together unto me*, some hold that the Jewes, who had made a covenant with God that they would serve him with sacrifices, are here called to appear before Christ, determining the abrogation of the ceremoniall law: and then others take it to be spoken to the angels, who at the day of the last judgement are to gather the elect together, Matth. 24. 31. But the first exposition suits best with the scope of the Psalm.

Verf. 6. *And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though now this people carry it away with a great deal of confidence, as if they had fulfilled all righteousness in giving him the sacrifices he required of them, and so do obscure his righteousness by the mists of these frivolous pretences; yet when he shall appear to judge them, he will from heaven discover his righteousness, and make it manifest before all the world, that he was not satisfied with such externall shews of service, whilst their hearts were profane and wicked. This phrase therefore of the heavens declaring his righteousness, doth either only imply the heavens bearing witness against this people, concerning the righteous sentence which God should pronounce against them, according to that which is said in the foregoing Notes verf. 1. and 4; or else it is used to imply (which is much to the same effect) how clearly the righteousness of God, in proceeding so against them, should be discovered. For because the light of the heavens discovers things to men, and that which from heaven is manifested all the inhabitants of the earth must needs see; therefore that which is made most clear and manifest is said to be revealed from heaven. Yet, I say, some too understand this of the clear revealing of the righteousness of God in the daies of the Gospell; and others of the angels executing judgement upon wicked men at the last day, Matth. 13. 39, 41. As for that last clause, *for God is judge himself*, it may imply 1. that it is no wonder therefore though the heavens be ready to serve him; and 2. rather, that whereas they had hated and despised the godly, when they had testified against their contenting themselves with the bare formalities of sacrifices, now they should not be able any longer thus to flatter themselves, because God himself would now decide this controversy by his sentence, who is the only just judge, from whom nothing can be hidden, who will not be corrupted, nor can judge unjustly.

Verf. 7. *Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against thee.*] See the Note Deut. 4. 26. Hereby the Lord implies, that his controversy with them was, because having by covenant taken the Lord to be their God, they had not carried themselves towards him as became his people; and that the main thing he alwaies required of them was, that they should hear and obey his voice, according to that Jer. 7. 22, 23.

Verf. 8.

Verf. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me.*] To wit, in that they were appointed to be offered every day. See the Note Psal. 40. 6.

Verf. 11. *I know all the fowls of the mountains, &c.*] That is, They are mine, and provided for me; and therefore I can make use of them as I please.

Verf. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, &c.*] As if he had said, If this could be, I need not require a sacrifice of thee; since all the creatures in heaven and earth are at my command.

Verf. 14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving, &c.*] As if he had said, Let that be the constant sacrifice thou offerest to God, without which indeed other sacrifices are nothing worth. And observable it is, that though these are expressed as the words of God to his people, yet he doth not say, *Offer unto me thanksgiving*, but, *Offer unto God thanksgiving*; which is to imply, that upon this ground, because he was God, an infinite almighty spirit, it must needs be no better then grosse folly to think, that he should be delighted with outward sacrifices. *And pay thy vows unto the most High*; that is, thy vows of thanksgiving and obedience. See also the following Note.

Verf. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble, &c.*] Thus to the duty of praising God, he adds that of prayer also: and under these are comprehended also all the inward worship we owe to God, as faith in God, the knowledge, love and fear of God, &c. without which we cannot either praise God, or pray to God as we ought to doe. And he expresseth particularly calling upon God *in the day of trouble*, either because then men are wont to pray most fervently; or to shew, that in our greatest troubles we must still put our trust and confidence in God. Nor needs it seem strange, that praising God is in the foregoing verse set before prayer here, both because even when we come first into the world, we owe God a sacrifice of praise, were we able to give it, even for the mercies conferred upon us from our first conception, before any day of trouble can put us upon prayer; and likewise especially, because the acknowledgement of that glory which is due to God, as the fountain of all the good we can expect from God, is the very first spring of prayer: and therefore some understand the following clause, of glorifying God by prayer. But I rather take it thus; *I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*, to wit, by thanksgiving, and a holy life.

Verf. 16. *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to doe to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?*] To wit, by pretending thy self to be one of my people, or by talking of my laws and covenant. And thus the Lord rejects not only sacrifices, but even the more spirituall services of praise and prayer, when the men that perform them are wicked. Some, I know, understand this of teachers and magistrates, and their urging Gods laws and covenant upon others. But though this may be included, yet I do not think that the words are to be limited hereto.

Verf. 18. *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, &c.*] To wit, by joyning with him therein; or at least by approving the evil of his waies: *and hast been partaker with adulterers*; to wit, by living in the same uncleanness with

them, or at least by conversing familiarly with such lewd persons. Some learned Expositours do, I know, understand both these peculiarly of those priests and judges amongst the Israelites, who for bribes were wont to justify thieves and adulterers that were brought before them, and so were partakers with them, according to that Isa. 1. 23. *Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, &c.*: and accordingly they also expound the following verse, *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit*, of the false and cunning pretences, wherewith they sought to hide and palliate their wickednesse, when they proceeded so unjustly in judgement. But though these may be included amongst others, yet I see no reason why the words should be limited to these only.

Verf. 20. *Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, &c.*] Those words *thou sittest* some refer to those that sit in the place of judgement, and there passe false and unjust sentences against their brethren; and others to the custome of idle persons, that when on their ale-benches or elsewhere they sit chatting together, are wont to slander their brethren. However it seems to imply, that when they spake evil of their brethren, they did it not out of sudden passion, but deliberately, and for a long time together.

Verf. 21. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 3. *thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self*; that is, one that could not know sins committed in secret, no more then thou canst; or rather, that I did approve of thy wickednesse, and so consequently am as bad as thy self: *but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes*; that is, I will openly and clearly discover all thy sins particularly, and to thy confusion and shame will fully convince thee of them, and so make thy self to see that which now thou wouldest hide from me. The phrase that is here used, of setting his sins in order before his eyes, seems to imply, either that they should be as clearly discovered to him, as if he should see them fairly written in a rolle or catalogue before his eyes; or that they should be presented to his conscience, as witnesses to accuse him, or as souldiers to fight against him.

Verf. 22. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, &c.*] Thus God speaks of himself in a third person, purposely to put them in mind what a dangerous thing it was to despise God: and then in the following words, *lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*, there is an intimation given, 1. that if they did not repent & turn to God betimes, it might be ere long too late; and 2. that such was Gods power, that if he once began to take vengeance on them, none could deliver them.

Verf. 23. *To him that ordereth his conversation aright, &c.*] To wit, as one that truly fears me, and doth not only in an outward ceremoniall service make a shew of worshipping me, *will I shew the salvation of God*, that is, the salvation promised shall be made good to him; I will save him both here, and eternally hereafter: and so it shall appear that he hath sought me in a right manner. Here again God speaks of himself in a third person, to expresse what he saith with the greater emphasis; *To him will I shew the salvation of God*: as if he should have said, He shall

shall find by proof, that it is not in vain to trust in me the great God of heaven, and to approve himself to me.

P S A L M L I.

The Title. **A** *Psalm of David &c.*] See the Note upon the Title of the 6. Psalm: *when Nathan the prophet came unto him*; one prophet to another, as when a physician is sick, and not able to prescribe physick for himself, other physicians come to visit him: *after he had gone in to Bathsheba*; which was well-nigh a year, if not more, after his sin was committed with her; see the Note 2 Sam. 12. 1. So that this is thus expressed, 1. to aggravate his wickedness, in continuing impenitent so long after he had fallen into such grosse sins; 2. to magnify the Lords mercy, in seeking to recover him out of his sin, that was so regardlesse of the Lord and his own soul; and 3. that hereby he might publicly acknowledge his sin to all the Church of God, that had been scandalized thereby.

Verf. 1. *According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*] To wit, out of thy debt-book. And observable it is, 1. that it was not the putting by or removall of those grievous calamities, which Nathan had threatned should come upon him, 2 Sam. 12. 10, 11, 12, that he so earnestly begs of God; but the pardon of his sins: and 2. that he pleads the multitude of Gods tender mercies in reference to the multitude and the greatnesse of his sins, in regard whereof he could only comfort himself in the superabundance of Gods grace. But why is David so earnest herein, since Nathan had already assured him, that God had pardoned him, 2 Sam. 12. 13. ? I answer, 1. because even where sin is pardoned, yet repentance is a duty on our part required; and 2. because it was necessary for the farther strengthening and the comforting of his grieved soul.

Verf. 2. *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity &c.*] That is, from the guilt of mine iniquity. For still he begges here, I conceive, for pardon, and not for purging and sanctifying grace, as some would have it. And by that expression, *wash me thoroughly*, (wherein doubtlesse he alludes to the ceremoniall washings enjoyned by the law) he again implyes how exceeding filthy he judged his sins, and how dangerously he was defiled thereby.

Verf. 3. *For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.*] That is, it comes upon every occasion into my thoughts, to the continuall wounding of my soul: see the Note Psal. 50. 21. Now this David alledgeth as a motive to move God to pardon him, and that upon two grounds: 1. because God had promised to pardon those that did thus acknowledge and confesse their sins with truly broken and grieved hearts; and seeing therefore he openly registred his sin, to be read by all men, in this Psalm he desires that God would blot it out of his book: and 2. because this discovered that he did now heartily begge pardon of God, in that it proceeded from a soul continually afflicted and terrified with the remembrance of his sins, and all the aggravating circumstances thereof.

Verf. 4. *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, &c.*] These

These last words *in thy sight* are added, either 1. to imply that God judged it evil, according to that usuall phrase in the Scripture, of doing that which was *evil in the sight of the Lord*: or 2. to intimate, that it was a wickednesse very displeasing to God, there being in the phrase used an allusion to men, that are wont to discover their displeasure in their countenances when they are angry; which agreeth well with that which is said of this very sin of Davids with the wife of Urijah, 2 Sam. 11. 27. *the thing which David had done displeased the Lord*: or rather 3. hereby to aggravate his wickednesse, that he had not feared to doe that in the sight of the Lord, which he was very carefull to hide from the eye of man. The greatest difficulty in these words is, why David should say, that he had sinned only against God, seeing the wrong that he had done to many by his sins was so notorious, as to Bathsheba, and Urijah, and those that were slain with him, and to all that he had drawn in to be instrumentall to him in his sins, and that thereby took occasion to blaspheme, yea to the whole kingdome, who were by these foul sins exposed to Gods wrath, and actually indeed involved in the miseries of a civill war, when Absalom and Sheba rebelled against him. Now though to this some answer, that Davids meaning was, that God was the only Judge that could punish him for the evil he had done, and that because kings have no other tribunal above them, by which they can be tryed and condemned; so that though when subjects sin, they may be said to sin against God and the king, yet when kings sin, it may be said of them in regard of their subjection to punishment, that they only sin against God: and others, that his meaning was, that God only knew the evil he had done; and so they would make this expression, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned*, parallel with that Matth. 18. 15. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, &c.* that is, by a private offence, which thou only knowest: Yet I conceive the true answer is this; that these words, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*, are to be taken as spoken not simply, but comparatively; as if he had said, Though I have many waies sinned against men, yet the wrong I have done to man is nothing in comparison of the wrong and dishonour and contempt I have done unto thee, O Lord; and so consequently my grief for the injury I have done to men, is nothing in comparison of the anguish I find in my soul for the offence I have committed against thy Majesty, and for despising thine eye that was upon me. And indeed by the like phrase the captivity of the Jews in Babylon is called *an evil, an only evil*, Ezek. 7. 5. that is, the greatest evil that ever befell that nation. And this agrees fully with that acknowledgement David made of his sinne, when Nathan charged him with it, *I have sinned*, saith he, *against the Lord*. Neither could any thing be spoken, if we thus understand the words, that could tend more clearly to the aggravating of his sinnes, and the discovery of the danger of his condition, and consequently to make way to pardon, then this doth, to wit, that he had sinned against the great God of heaven and earth, that had done so great things for him: because this is indeed the greatest aggravation of all sinne whatsoever, that it is an offence against God; and because from hence he could not but inferre, that however his sinnes might be hidden from men,

men, yet they could not be hidden from God; though man had no power to punish him, yet that could not free him from Gods judgements; though men should excuse or extenuate his sinnes, yea though all the world should acquit and absolve him, yet enough it would be for ever to wound his soul, that his own conscience told him he had sinned against God.

That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.] 1. Some referre this to the first words of the Psalm, ver. 1, 2. *Have mercy upon me, O God, &c. that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, &c.* that is, that it may be clearly seen, that thou art faithfull and just in making good thy promises, (which may be referred either to the generall promises made in the Word concerning Gods pardoning penitent sinners, as that Deuter. 30. 1, 2, &c. or to that particular promise God had made to David, of a perpetuall kingdome, that should be settled on his seed) *and be clear when thou judgest*, that is, that men may not say when thou correctest thy servants, that thou dost not stand to thy promises. Again, 2. some referre these words to the clause immediately going before, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, &c. that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest*: for the clearing whereof they say, that this particule (*that*) *that thou mightest be justified, &c.* doth not imply that this was the end of Davids sinning, but that this was a supernaturall event that followed thereupon; David doth not say, that he sinned purposely that God might be justified, but that this event did through the all-ruling providence of God follow upon his sinning against God, that God was justified in what he had spoken, and cleared when he judged. And if it be questioned, wherein God was justified and cleared by occasion of Davids sinne: to this they answer 1. that Gods faithfulness was hereby singularly approved, in that notwithstanding David had provoked the Lord to displeasure, by committing such grosse sinnes, yet God continued faithfull in making good his promises to him, both those generall promises of being mercifull to him in his justification and salvation, and that more speciall promise of giving him a seed, that should have an eternall kingdome settled upon him, which was made good to him, yea and that too by Bathsheba, with whom he had sinned: or, 2. that Gods justice and faithfulness was hereby manifestly set forth, in that though God failed not to make good his promises to him, yet withall he did also make good the evil he had threatned against him by the prophet Nathan, and was most just in bringing that evil upon him. So that whereas when David fell so foully, with whom God had made a covenant, that of his seed he would raise a Saviour to his Church, some might be ready to cavill, that now there was no likelyhood, that from a man thus fallen from the state of holiness a seed should be raised, by whom Gods elect should be saved, and thus some blame might be charged upon God, for suffering one whom he had so highly honoured, thus to fall; David here on the contrary professeth, that his sinne was so farre from being

being any just ground of the least aspersiō that could be cast upon God, that rather by his sin the justice and faithfulness of God was the more clearly discovered. And that thus these words must be understood, they labour farther to prove, by Pauls alledging this Text Rom. 3. 4. to prove that God was so farre from being any way liable to be charged with failing in his promises made to the Jews, when he suffered the greatest part of them through their unbelief to fall short of the grace that had been promised them, that on the contrary his faithfulness was render'd the more conspicuous thereby; in that though the Jews had broken covenant with God, yet God was faithfull in making good his promises to them, in that remnant which he reserved to himself, who did by faith embrace the grace that was tender'd them in Christ. For hereby it appeared that God was so true and faithfull, that the wickednesse of men could not make void his faithfulness; and on the other side, that man was so false, that no faithfulness in Gods dealings with him could keep him faithfull to God. *What (saith the Apostle) if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid; yea let God be true, but every man a liar: as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.* Where we must note, that though the last clause is render'd otherwise then it is here in the Psalm, because the Apostle cites it as it is in the Septuagint, *and mightest overcome when thou art judged*, yet the sense is the same: for the meaning is, that if any men should foolishly charge God about this sin of David, God would be cleared, and they would be condemned, and so God would have the better of them. But 3. others (which I like the best, because it is not so intricate an exposition as the former is) refer this last clause, *that thou mightest be justified*, to the words in the foregoing verse, *I acknowledge my transgression, &c. that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest*: as if he had said, I confesse the evil I have done, not so much for mine own sake, as for thy glory, *that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest*, that is, in all which thou spakest by Nathan, when he reprov'd me, and denounced the sore afflictions which should come upon me, *and be clear when thou judgest*, that is, when thou dost bring the judgments upon me which thou hast threatned.

Verf. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*] That is, I was born guilty of Adams sin, which I committed in his loins, yea in my very conception in my mothers womb I was all-over tainted and defiled with originall sin. Now this he mentioneth for his farther humiliation before God; as if he had said, I have not only sinned in this matter of the wife of Urijah, but I am indeed of a cursed sinfull nature, and so have been prone to sin all my daies: no sooner was that substance whereof I was made warmed in my mothers womb, but I was overspread with sinne, and so I was born into the world with a very spring and fountain of all sinne within me; and this is that which abaseth me most of all.

Verf. 6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts, &c.*] Though some limit the truth here mentioned to the sincerity of a poor penitent in laying open his sin before God, and so hold that David, by affirming here that God loved inward sincerity

sincerity in the confession of sin, did covertly imply, that he had with a true and sincere heart confessed his sin before God, and therefore hoped that God would pardon him: yet I rather understand thereby all uprightness of heart in generall; *thou desirest truth in the inward parts*; as if he had said, Thou that art a God of truth, desirest integrity and sincerity in the heart, not only an outward conformity to thy will, but also that the inward man be free from all deceit and falshood: and that the aim of David in mentioning this was, thereby to intimate either his hope, that therefore God would not cast him off in displeasure, because however he had sinned greatly, yet he trusted he might safely say, that his heart notwithstanding was sincere towards God; or else rather, how odious his impurity must needs make him in the sight of God, to wit, both that naturall sinfulness and impurity, wherein he had in the foregoing verse acknowledged himself to have been conceived and born, and also that falseness and deceitfulness of his heart, which was discovered in his late sins, especially in that he had used such a deal of fraud and guile in seeking to hide them. As for the next clause, *and in the hidden parts thou shalt make me to know wisdom*, almost all Expositours read it, *and in the hidden part thou hadst made me to know wisdom*; and accordingly they hold, that as in the foregoing clause David aggravated his sins from the consideration of that purity and sincerity which God desired and loved in his children, compared with his own sinfulness and falseness of heart, so here he aggravates his sin from the consideration of that measure of saving knowledge and grace, which God had wrought in him before he fell into those grosse sins: *in the hidden part*, that is, inwardly in my heart, which the Apostle calls *the hidden man of the heart*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. *thou hadst made me to know wisdom*, that is, thou hadst not only taught me to see and understand the true way of salvation, but also with my heart and affections to approve and like of it, to know it feelingly, experimentally and effectually; and this it is that makes my sins out of measure sinfull, that after thou hadst so savingly enlightened me, I should yet fall so foully. But now if we read it, according to our translation, *and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom*, then it is clear that herein he declares his hope, that God would yet be mercifull to him, in furnishing his heart with all necessary knowledge.

Verf. 7. *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, &c.* In these words David alludes clearly to the legall rites of cleansing those that were legally unclean by leprosy or otherwise, by the sprinkling of the blood of their sacrifices and the water of expiation upon them with a sprinkle of hyssop: and so likewise to other legall sprinklings; for which see Heb. 9. 13, 19. compared with Lev. 14. 4, 5, &c. Numb. 19. 6. and Exod. 24. 8. with the Notes on these places. So that his desire is, that the Lord would doe that for him, which was signified by those legall sprinklings with hyssop, (and without which those outward sprinklings were indeed nothing worth) namely, that God would, by applying the blood of Christ to him, thoroughly cleanse his leprous soul, and make him pure and acceptable in his sight. And so likewise in the next clause he alludes to the legall washings, *wash me, and I shall be whiter then snow*.

Verf. 8.

Verf. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladnesse &c.*] That is, By the immediate voice of thy spirit, assuring my heart that thou hast pardoned my sins, and likewise in the ministry of thy word particularly, by causing me with joy to imbrace thy promises of pardon, and to apply them to mine own soul. To which some adde also, that he desired hereby, that Nathan, or some other prophet, might be sent to him with those joyfull tidings, that God had pardoned his sins: & therefore, they say, it may well be, that Nathan did not return that answer, *The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die*, so soon as David upon Nathans reproof had acknowledged his sin; (though they be all related together 2 Sam. 12. 13, as elsewhere things done at severall times are joyned together in the scriptures recording of them) but that after David had some time mourned for his sins, Nathan came again with that joyfull message. But of this there is no certainty at all.

Verf. 9. *Hide thy face from my sins.*] As if he had said, Seeing *my sin is ever before me*, as he had said before verf. 3. let it not be before thee, but do thou *hide thy face*, not from me, but *from my sins*.

Verf. 10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, &c.*] As with respect to what he had said before concerning the corruption of his nature, verf. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, &c.* and as apprehending himself deprived in a manner of that holy disposition and power of godlinesse, which God had formerly wrought in him, as before he begged for pardon, so here for the sanctification of Gods spirit. And because for the work of regeneration there is no disposition of nature that tends thereto, nothing in nature out of which the spirit can produce such an effect, therefore he tearms it a creating of a clean heart in him. *And renew a right spirit within me*; that is, a disposition and inclination of nature, not crooked and perverse, as all mens are naturally, but just and right, according to the streight rule of Gods law, and which might carry him on, to doe that only which was right in Gods sight. As for the word *renew*, though it may have reference to that uprightnesse wherein man was at first created; yet I rather conceive it hath reference to his former piety, which he now found greatly decayed in him, wherewith he desires to be established again: and therefore some render it, *a constant spirit*.

Verf. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence, &c.*] That is, Cast me not out of thy favour: yea and consequently it may well be, which some hold, that this also implyes a desire that he might not be deprived of the evidences of his favour formerly enjoyed; to wit, 1. that he might not be cast out from the presence of God in his sanctuary, as Cain was, for shedding blood, see the Note Gen. 4. 16; and 2. that he might not be cast off from serving God in the regall office, as Saul had been: *and take not thy holy spirit from me*; whereby he means both those sanctifying and saving graces, wherewith God by his spirit had endued him; (which are indeed often greatly impaired by the sins of the faithfull, and of themselves are in danger to be utterly lost, though through Gods mercy, which David here begges, they are continued in them) and likewise those gifts of Gods spirit, wherewith God had furnished him for his regall office.

Verf. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, &c.*] That is, of thy saving
my

my soul eternally in heaven, and of thy providence over me for my preservation here from temporall dangers: *and uphold me with thy free spirit*; that is, keep up my heart in the assurance of thy love, the hope of life eternall, and a firm resolution of yielding thee sincere obedience in all things; and that by *thy free spirit*, that is, by that free disposition of spirit which thou art wont to work in thy children, or (which is much to the same purpose) by that spirit of thine, whereby thou art wont to work in thy children a true freedom from the bondage of sin, according to that of the Apostle 2 Cor. 3. 17. *where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, a readinesse of mind, freely and chearfully and sincerely, without any by-respects, in all things to obey thy laws, and a holy magnanimity, boldly and freely to professe themselves thy children, Rom. 8. 15.

Verf. 13. *Then will I teach transgressours thy waies.*] That is, By mine example I will cause them to see how infinitely mercifull thou art to poor penitent sinners, and withall how in all things thou requirest them to carry themselves if they desire thy favour. And to this some adde also his declaring how severely God often afflicts his own children, when they sinne against him. But however Davids main drift in these words was to imply, that he would endeavour that as his sin had been an occasion of much hurt to others, so his repentance should likewise be improved for the good of others.

Verf. 14. *Deliver me from bloud-guiltinesse, &c.*] Some understand this thus; that David desired here that God would pardon those sins whereby he had deserved that God should cut him off, and have his bloud for the bloud he had shed; or for which he had threatned that the sword should never depart from his house. But according to our translation, it is clearly meant of that guilt he had drawn upon himself by shedding the bloud of Urijah and others: the pardon whereof David here again desires, because men that lye in their sins are not fit to praise God, which in the next clause he was to promise to God. *And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness*; that is, thy faithfulness in performing thy promises, (which may be also particularly referred to that promise made by Nathan 2 Sam. 12. 13.) or that righteousness whereby thou dost justify sinners: see the Notes Psal. 5. 8, and 22. 31.

Verf. 15. *O Lord, open thou my lips, &c.*] Herein he desires of God, 1. that by Gods mercy to him he might have occasion to shew forth his praise; see the Note Psal. 40. 3: 2^{ly}, that he would free him from the guilt of his sins, which otherwise might well stop his mouth, and must needs make him unfit for this service; see Psal. 50. 16: and 3^{ly}, that God would give him a will and desire to praise him, a prepared heart and quickned affections, and all other abilities requisite for this service.

Verf. 16. *For thou desirest not sacrifice, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 40. 6.

Verf. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.*] That is, This is the sacrifice which is all in all with God, in stead of all, better and more pleasing to God then all other sacrifices. And this is here inserted, because David is here speaking of the sacrifice of praise, which a penitent sinner promiseth to God upon pardon of sinne obtained; whose praise is therefore the more acceptable to God,

because it proceeds from a heart that hath been so broken.

Verf. 18. *Doe good in thy good pleasure unto Sion, &c.*] That is, Of thine own free grace and good will, and according as thou shalt be pleased and shalt see fit, doe good to thy Church and people (for by *Sion* here is meant the whole people of God, that met together to worship God in Sion; and figuratively also the whole Church of Christ, see the Note Psal. 2. 6.) *build thou the walls of Ierusalem;* that is, maintain, defend and strengthen thy Church, and that city in particular which is the chief glory of the kingdome. Because 1. David by his sin had already done much hurt among the people, (for many of them had been slain by the sword together with Urijah; many had been scandalized, the faithfull grieved, and the profession of godlinesse stained;) 2. he knew that God might haply (as he often did) punish the whole land for the sins of their king; yea and 3. being anointed king, that he might be a type of Christ, the Head of the Church, and he out of whose loyns the Messiah was to come, by his sins he had done as much as in him lay to ruine the whole kingdome of Christ: therefore he praies here for Sions welfare, as well as for the pardon of his own sins, *Doe good in thy good pleasure unto Sion:* and as if by his sins he had made a breach in Ieruselems walls, he desires God to repair the hurt that he had done, and make up the breach, *build thou the walls of Ierusalem.* When David succeeded Saul, he found the kingdome in a very bad case: Now fearing lest upon his grievous sins God should break forth in displeasure against him, as he had done against Saul, and should by letting loose some enemy upon them, or by any other judgement, interrupt the peace and prosperity of the people, and so the perfecting of Ieruselems building should be hindered, (the main part whereof, which was the building of the Temple, was not yet begun,) the reformation intended and begun should be frustrated, and the settling and ordering of the way of Gods worship should fall to the ground, and God should as it were retract what he had so graciously spoken concerning Sion, Psal. 132. 14, &c. *the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it: I will abundantly blesse her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread; I will also cloath her priests with salvation, and her Saints shall shout aloud for joy, &c.* I say, out of the fear of these evils, he closeth this Psalm with this prayer for the welfare of Ierusalem.

Verf. 19. *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, &c.*] See the Notes Deut. 33. 19, and Psal. 5. 4. *with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering;* some of which were of birds and beasts that were all burnt upon the altar, and some were things without life, such as flowre, oyl, &c. and were sometimes wholly burnt, as in every meat-offering for the priest, Levit. 6. 23. However, that which David saith here is this, *Then shalt thou be pleased, &c.* that is, When the Temple is built in Ierusalem, the place which thou hast chosen; or rather, when thou art reconciled unto me, and so thereupon, when thou shalt also be favourable unto thy people, then shalt thou graciously accept, not only of the sacrifices which I shall offer for my self, which whilst I should lye under the guilt of the sins I have committed, I know thou wouldest never regard, but also of the peoples sacrifices, which with much forwardnesse and chearfulnesse they shall then bring

bring to thine altar; Then, saith he, shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

P S A L M LII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, Maschil, &c.] For this word Maschil, see the Note upon the Title of the 32. Psalm. A Psalm of David when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, &c. and so thereupon at Sauls command had slain Abimelech with fourscore and five priests besides, and had destroyed the city Nob and all that was therein. For that this Psalm was composed after that bloody massacre of Doeg, those words do evidence vers. 4. *Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitfull tongue*: see also the Note 1 Sam. 22. 9.

Vers. 1. *Why boastest thou thy self in mischief, O mighty man? &c.*] Doegs boasting might be, either of the evil he had done, or of farther mischief he intended to doe, or of the successe of the false tale he had told to Saul; whether in regard of the evil he had thereby brought upon the Priests of the Lord, or of the favour he had thereby obtained with Saul, and the preferment perhaps and rewards he had thereupon conferred on him: and accordingly the drift of this interrogation, *Why boastest thou thy self in mischief?* is either to imply, that it was a high degree of wickednesse to boast of such a villany, in stead of fearing vengeance from God; as if he had said, How darest thou thus to boast thy self? or else to signify that there was no just cause for his boasting, both in regard there was nothing worthy of such triumphing in that which he had done, and because in the conclusion it would be found there was nothing gotten by it. And so those words, *O mighty man*, may be added also, either by way of Irony, as if he had said, A great deal of valour and prowesse you have shewn in slaying a company of unarmed men, the Priests of the Lord, yea women and children, no way able to resist you; or else to imply the ground of his vain boasting, to wit, either his present greatnesse, as being a man in great place, and of great power with Saul, 1 Sam. 22. 9. or the great preferments he expected from Saul. And then for the last words, *the goodnesse of God endureth continually*, they are opposed to Doegs boasting; and import as much as if David had said, God is ever good to his, and hereon I rely against all thy vaunts and threatnings; neither thy might nor wickednesse can frustrate Gods goodnesse; though God may afflict his servants for a time, yet he will deliver them again as oft as he afflicts them, and will never be weary of helping them: yea he is good to them even when he suffers wicked men to prevail over them.

Vers. 2. *Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs, &c.*] That is, it utters those things where-with thou hast devised to doe mischief: and thus Doeg is charged, that he did not rashly and unadvisedly utter those things to Saul, that had brought so much mischief upon the Priests of the Lord, but that he had plotted it before-hand: *like a sharp rasour, working deceitfully*; to wit, when in stead of cutting off the hair, it cutteth a mans throat. I know some would have those last words, *working deceitfully*, to be only spoken of Doegs tongue, and that with reference to the shares that were laid thereby for the ruine of Gods faithfull servants. But I rather

think that these words are to be referred both to Doegs tongue, and likewise to the rasour whereto his tongue is compared: for as his tongue is compared to a *sharp rasour*, because as a sharp rasour doth sodainly and easily, as it were, with a touch, take off all the hair to the very roots, yea and may wound deeply in stead of shaving, if it goes awry; so Doegs tongue had sodainly, with a few words speaking, caused not only fourscore and five of the Priests to be cut off, but also all the inhabitants of Nob, yea even their children and sucklings, 1 Sam. 22. 19: so it is also compared to a sharp rasour, *working deceitfully*, because as a rasour may be said to work deceitfully, when in stead of trimming a man, it doth, as in a trice, when no such thing is feared, cut a mans throat; so it might be said also of Doegs tongue, that it did work *deceitfully*, because being created for Gods glory and the good of men, he had therewith deceived Saul, making him believe that Ahimelech had conspired with David against him, when there was no such thing, and thereby had also brought ruine upon Ahimelech and his family, to whom he had carried himself with all fairnesse a little before, when he was with him in the Tabernacle.

Verf. 3. *Thou lovest evil more then good, &c.*] See the Note 1 Sam. 22. 10.

Verf. 4. *Thou lovest all devouring words, &c.*] This is spoken with reference to that horrid massacre of the Priests and the inhabitants of Nob, 1. Sam. 22. 18, 19. wherein such multitudes were on a sudden swallowed up, and all by means of Doegs wicked tongue; to which he the rather ascribes this act of devouring, in allusion to the naturall use of the tongue in drawing in the meat to the throat, which is to be swallowed down.

Verf. 5. *God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, &c.*] To wit, as thou hast destroyed the Priests of the Lord: *he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place*; though being become great through Sauls favour thou mayest judge thy self unmoveable: *and root thee out of the land of the living*; that is, and cut off thee and all thy posterity, as thou didst destroy not the priests only, but their children too: see also the Note Psal. 27. 13.

Verf. 6. *The righteous also shall see, and fear.*] That is, Though wicked men may close their eyes, and refuse to take notice of it; yet the righteous shall observe it; and finding hereby how sure God is to take part with his servants against those that oppresse them, it will not only make them afraid of doing any such evil as Doeg hath done, but will also cause them every way to fear God the more, not abandoning the profession or waies of godlinesse, when they see the wicked triumph.

Verf. 7. *Loe, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, &c.*] As was evident in that he was not afraid to offend God, that he might enrich himself: *and strengthened himself in his wickednesse*; that is, encouraged himself in the wickednesse he had committed, or sought to advance himself, and to make himself great and mighty by that his wickednesse.

Verf. 8. *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God, &c.*] As if he had said, Though I be now in a poor despised condition, and banished from the Church
and

and people of God; yet I doubt not but that I shall therein continue in a flourishing estate, enjoying with others the comfort of Gods Tabernacle, and yielding fruit delightfull and profitable both to God and man: see the Note Psal. 23. 6. Now the ground of this his hope he adds in the next words, *I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.*

Verf. 9. *I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it, &c.*] That is, thou hast destroyed Doeg; or, thou hast made me like a green olive-tree; or, thou hast caused me to trust in thy mercy. For it may be referred either to any of those things which God had already done for him, when he composed this Psalm, as his delivering him from the plots of Doeg and others, who might often have ruined him, encouraged by the successe of Doeg in the evil he had brought upon the priests of the Lord, had not God wonderfully preserved him; or to those things which he knew God would doe, as the destruction of Doeg, and the reducing of him to a flourishing estate amongst the people of God, of which he speaks, through the assurance of faith, as if it were done already, *I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it*: as if he had said, What others are too often wont to ascribe to chance or to themselves, I ascribe wholly to thy providence over me. *And I will wait on thy name*; that is, being encouraged by this experience, I will wait on thee, thy power, grace and favour; or thy word and promises; see the Notes Psa. 5. 11, & 20. 1. Yea some limit it to that particular promise made to David concerning the kingdome. As for that last clause, *for it is good before thy saints*, either it may be referred to that waiting upon God which he had promised, *it is good before thy saints* to wait upon thy name, that is, it will be good and profitable to stir up them to wait likewise upon God in the like cases; or, *it is good before thy saints*, that is, thy saints will account it good to wait upon thee: or else it may be referred to the Name of God, *I will wait upon thy name, for it is good before thy saints*; that is, thy name is good before thy saints. However wicked men, though God doth never so much good for them, are not sensible of it, but rather thy name is hatetull and dreadfull to them; yet to thy saints it is good, they know it to be so, and have had experience of it, and therefore to them it is amiable and delightfull, they hope in it, and call upon it; and the rather it will be such to them, when they shall hear of this mercy afforded me.

P S A L M LIII.

The Title. **T***O the chief Musician upon Mahalath.*] It is generally held; that this was the name of some musicall Instrument, or some known song, to the tune whereof this Psalm was to be sung.

Verf. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, &c.*] This Psalm is the same almost with Psalm 14; only in some few places there is some little difference: and therefore for this see the Notes there. Some say that, because that which is here delivered is so necessary to be often thought on, therefore David left it upon record in two severall Psalms.

Verf. 5. *There were they in great fear, where no fear was, &c.*] As if he had

said, And so those that are now such a terrour to others, shall come to be terrified themselves; those desperate men that feared not God, and called not on his name, shall be in great fear, where no fear was; that is, God shall strike them with terrour on a sudden when they are altogether fearless; or, when there is indeed, in regard of that which they feare, no cause at all of fear. As for the following words, they are spoken to every faithfull man that had been in danger of such Atheisticall oppressours: *for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee*; that is, he hath broken their power; or, he hath slain them, tearing them, as it were, in pieces, as a lion doth his prey: *thou hast put them to shame*, to wit, by overcoming them, God also thereby manifesting his displeasure against them; whence it is that he adds, *because God hath despised them*.

P S A L M LIV.

The Title. **T**O the chief musician on Neginoth, &c.] For this word Neginoth, see the Note on the title Psal. 4. *A Psalm of David, when the Ziphims came, &c.* of which see the Note 1 Sam. 23. 19. For though the Ziphims did a second time also endeavour to betray David into Sauls hands, 1 Sam. 26. 1, 2, and both times David was brought thereby into very great danger, which might give just occasion for composing this Psalm; yet the words here in the Title, *Doth not David hide himself with us?* seem rather to point out that first discovery of the Ziphims, 1 Sam. 23. 19.

Verf. 1. *Save me, O God, by thy name, &c.*] As if he should have said, Seeing all outward means fail, save me by thy self, even by thine own immediate power; see the Note Psal. 20. 1: *and judge me by thy strength*; see the Note Psal. 26. 1.

Verf. 3. *For strangers are risen up against me.*] So he terms his persecutours, as elsewhere also *strange children*, Psal. 144. 7: either because they were in their minds alienated from God, and estranged from the faithfull servants of God; or because they were mere strangers to that piety and goodnesse which should be in the people of God; and so also consequently because though they professed themselves Israelites, yet they were not such indeed, but were in Gods account no better then heathens, aliens and strangers from the common-wealth of Israel, 1 Joh. 2. 19. for which see the Note Psal. 10. 16; or else because they carried themselves most inhumanely to him, more like Barbarians, Philistines or Babylonians, then like Israelites, and such as were his brethren of the same tribe with him. However, observable it is, that David in these words seems to comfort himself with this, that God would surely take part with his own servant, rather then with those that were mere strangers to him.

Verf. 4. *The Lord is with them that uphold my soul.*] That is, with my friends and followers, that doe what they can to preserve my life; and so though they be but few and weak, yet God being with them, I need not fear.

Verf. 5. *He shall reward evil unto mine enemies, &c.*] To wit, by bringing that upon them, which they intended to bring upon me. It is in the Hebrew, *He shall reward evil unto those that observe me*; that is, that watch for an opportunity to ruine

ine me: which might indeed most fitly be said of the Ziphims, whose work enjoined them by Saul was, to observe and mark all the lurking-places where David hid himself, and then to acquaint him with it: see 1 Sam. 23. 22, 23. *Cut them off in thy truth*, that is, in thy justice; or, according to thy promise; which some also restrain to the promise made to David concerning the kingdom.

Verf. 6. *I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good.*] See the Note Psal. 52. 9.

P S A L M LV.

Verf. 1. **G***Ive ear to my prayer, O God, &c.*] Some conceive, it was the distresse David was in, when the men of Keilah were like to have betrayed him into the hands of Saul, 1 Sam. 23. that occasioned the composing of this Psalm; others, that it was the rebellion of Absalom. And indeed though nothing can be concluded herein, yet many passages in this Psalm, (as those especially verf. 9, 10, 12, 13.) do seem much to favour this last opinion.

Verf. 2. *I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.*] The drift of these words is to imply, that his distresse and sorrow was so great, that when he came to make his complaint to God, he could not doe it without a dolefull noise of weeping, sighing and sobbing, yea sometimes not without breaking forth into piteous outcries.

Verf. 3. *Because of the voice of the enemy, &c.*] That is, their threatnings, vaunts and insultations, or the false slanders they raised against him: as we know Sauls courtiers accused him of seeking to get the kingdom from Saul; and Absalom and his party accused him of neglecting the government of the people, 2 Sam. 15. 3. Yet some conceive, that it is the clamours and shoutings of the forces raised to pursue him, when they were so near at hand, that they were even ready to assault and surprize him, that David here means by *the voice of the enemy*. As for the next clause, he therein terms these his enemies wicked men, *because of the oppression of the wicked*, chiefly in reference to his own innocency, and the injustice of their oppressing him. And so likewise by the next words, *for they cast iniquity upon me*, either he means that they falsly charged much iniquity upon him, whereof he was no way guilty; or, that in their counsels they determined to deal most injuriously with him; or, that they did actually bring many unjust troubles upon him, even whatever their wicked and malicious hearts could devise against him; and that because they did not only hate him in their hearts, but were also transported with rage and fury: which is implied in the last words, *and in wrath they hate me*.

Verf. 4. *And the terrours of death are fallen upon me.*] That is, deadly terrours; see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 5, 6: or the fear of death frequently striking me with terrour.

Verf. 6. *And I said, O that I had wings like a dove, &c.*] In this wish of Davids, that he could suddenly fly away out of the reach of his enemies, he seeks to imply both how sad his condition was, in that he could chuse to live in some desolate
late:

late solitary place, which is contrary to nature, that desires the society of men, yea to live amongst wild beasts in a wildernesse, as he expresseth himself vers. 7. *Lo then would I wander farre off, and remain in the wildernesse*, rather then be in such continuall perplexity by reason of the malice of his enemies against him; and withall how desperate his dangers were, even such, that without a miracle he could not hope to escape. And then in expressing this, he desires *the wings of a dove*: not only because this fowl amongst others is noted to be very swift of flight; but also because the dove, being a gentle and harmlesse bird, and withall weak and fearfull, that is wont when she sees any storm coming, or is in danger of any bird of prey, to fly away into the holes and clefts of the rocks in desolate places, and there to sit mourning by her self, was fittest to resemble his condition, who being unjustly pursued by his enemies, was therefore desirous, if it were possible, to get out of their reach.

Verf. 8. *I would hasten mine escape from the windy storm and tempest.*] That is, from the violent storms of persecution, which his enemies were raising against him: and in this expression some conceive he alludes to doves flying away to some place of shelter, when they see a storm coming upon them; as is observed in the foregoing Note. But however, in those words, *I would hasten mine escape*, we may see how hopelesse for the time he judged his condition, in that he had no desire to stay and wait a while to see whether it might not ere long be better with him; but if he might have his wish, all his desire was to hasten away straight out of the reach of his enemies. In relation whereto those words of David to his servants, when he fled out of Jerusalem because of Absalom, may not seem unworthy our observation, 2 Sam. 15. 14. *Arise, and let us flee; make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly.*

Verf. 9. *Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues, &c.*] That is, Divide them in their counsels, that they may not agree; and so let this be their ruine. The phrase that David here useth seems to have reference to the Lords crushing of the Babel-builders, Gen. 11. by dividing their tongues. But however, observable it is, that according to this prayer of David, the conspiracy of Absalom was indeed defeated by the division of his counsellors. As for the following words, *for I have seen violence and strife in the city*, though some understand them to be indefinitely spoken of the open wickednesse that abounded in every place; as if he had said, that openly in town and city men did as boldly exercise all kind of violence, injustice and oppression, as robbers did in their lurking-places, to spoil those at unawares that passed by them: yet I rather think that David doth herein complain of the injustice, violence and seditious distempers, which he found in Keilah, or rather in Jerusalem, when he was forced to fly thence because of the Insurrection of Absalom; and therefore he speaks of it, as that which himself had seen, and not which he had heard by relation from others, *I have seen violence and strife in the city.*

Verf. 10. *Day and night they goe about it upon the walls thereof, &c.*] That is, the men in whom he had seen such violence and strife, as he had said in the foregoing verse: or rather, *they*, that is violence and strife, *goe about it upon the walls thereof,*

thereof, that is, they compasse and environ the city likewalls. The meaning of this expression I conceive is this; that violence and strife, and so all kind of injustice and wickednesse, had wholly possessed the city, and did rule and reign in it; so that whereas the walls of a city are made to secure the inhabitants from violence and oppression, there quite contrary they were hemmed in with violence and strife as with walls: or they were under the power of violence and strife as of garrison souldiers upon their walls, so that the godly could nowhere be free from violence and injuries: *mischiefe also and sorrow are in the midst of it*; that is, in every house and in every company; there is no place free.

Verf. 11. *Deceit and guile depart not from her streets.*] That is, they are openly and constantly practised amongst them.

Verf. 13. *But it was thou, a man, mine equall, &c.*] Because after David was king he could have no equall, therefore some conclude that this must be meant of some of Sauls courtiers, with whom David lived as his equalls. But I see not but that it may be Ahithophel of whom this is spoken, understanding the words thus; *But it was thou, a man, mine equall*, that is, one that was in as high esteem both with me and others, as I my self was, to whom I carried my self no otherwise then if he had been mine equall, my second self: *my guide*, that is, my chief counsellor, whose advice in all things I was still ready to follow; see 2 Sam. 15. 12, and 16. 23.

Verf. 14. *We took sweet counsell together, &c.*] The ground of this expression is, because friends are wont to take much sweet content and delight in communicating their secret counsels one to another: *and walked unto the house of God in company*, that is, together, or amongst the companies that flocked thither in great number to worship God there.

Verf. 15. *Let death seize upon them, &c.*] That is, let some violent death surprize them sodainly and unexpectedly, and carry them away, and so frustrate all their counsels: and the same may likewise be intended in the following clause, *and let them goe down quick into hell, or, the grave*; namely, that they might be cut off on a sudden, without any disease or sicknesse foregoing. Yet doubtlesse he alludes, at least, to the earths swallowing up of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Numb. 16. 33. see also the Note Psal. 28. 4. *For wickednesse is in their dwellings and among them*; that is, in all their dwellings, and in all their meetings; or, it is every where to be found amongst them, in all their habitations.

Verf. 17. *Evening and morning and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud.*] To wit, out of the anguish and sorrow of my heart, and the fervency of my spirit in calling upon the Lord. He names the evening first, because the Hebrews accounted the evening the beginning of the day.

Verf. 18. *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battel that was against me, &c.*] That is, He hath preserved me in as much peace and safety, when mine enemies fought against me, as if I had been in no danger; or, He hath delivered my life from danger, and settled me in a peaceable condition. Yea some expound it thus, *He hath delivered my soul in peace*, that is, without any trouble or stirring on my part. As for the next words, *for there were many with me*, either it may be

meant of his enemies, that there were many with him, to fight against him; or else of his helpers, that there were many with him to protect him, (though his friends were false to him) meaning Gods holy angels; see 2 Kings 6. 16.

Verf. 19. *God shall hear and afflict them, even he that abideth of old, &c.*] That is, the eternall and immutable God, who abideth still the same that he hath been of old in all former generations; and therefore as he hath been alwaies ready to hear the prayers of his servants, and to afflict and punish their wicked enemies, so he will be still. *Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God;* that is, because they goe on in a constant way of prosperity, and there is no alteration or change in regard of any adversity that befalls them, therefore they boldly despise God. Yet many Expositours understand it thus; Because they are obstinately wicked, there is no change wrought in them, they are no way bettered by any of Gods dealings with them, therefore they fear not God. But the words in our Translation will hardly bear this exposition.

Verf. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, &c.*] It may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Cast thy gift upon the Lord, &c.* and then by *gift* is meant either that affliction which God allots a man for his portion, for the exercise of his faith, &c. according to that of our Saviour Joh. 18. 11. *the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* or else rather the gift which any man desires of God; as if David had said, (speaking both to himself and others) Whatever gift thou desirest from God, referre it wholly to his provident care over thee: when thou hast made known thy desire to God, cast thy care for the obtaining of this gift which thou desirest merely upon God. And indeed being thus understood, it is all one in effect with that translation which we have in our Bibles, *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*, that is, thy cares and troubles, which lye heavy upon thee. *And he shall sustain thee;* to wit, by providing for thee, protecting and upholding thee: *he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved;* that is, to be utterly ruined and cast down: see the Note Psal. 13. 4.

Verf. 23. *But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction, &c.*] That is, the grave and hell: *bloudy and deceitfull men shall not live out half their daies;* to wit, which they desire and hope to live, and which in the ordinary course of nature they might live. Yea and to this some adde also, that when such men do live longer, their life is usually accursed, full of inward terrours, and worse then any death.

PSALM LVI.

The Title. **T**O the chief musician upon Ionath-elem-rechokim, &c.] Some take these also to be the first words of some known song, to the tune whereof this Psalm was to be sung. But yet others translate the words thus, *touching a soul that suffereth violence from a band of strangers;* and others better thus, *upon the dumb dove in a farre country:* wherein they say David tearms himself a dove, because being fled to the Philistines, he was there as a dove amongst many birds of prey; for which also see the Note Psal. 55. 6; and *dumb*, because though

though he heard there many reproachfull speeches against God and his people, yet he was forced to be silent; neither durst he besides complain of the wicked dealings of Saul and his courtiers, for fear of exposing the people of God to the scorn and derision of the heathen. *Michtam of David*; see the Note on the title of the 16. Psalm: *when the Philistines took him in Gath*; which I conceive must needs be meant of that story 1 Sam. 21. 14, 15. though, because there is another Psalm before, to wit Psal. 34. that was composed upon that occasion, some conceive that this was penned when he was again in danger the second time he went thither, 1 Sam. 29. 3, 4.

Verf. 4. *In God I will praise his word.*] That is, I will praise God for his word: as if he had said, Though God may seem to disregard me, yea to be against me; yet having his promise, that he will never fail his, but will protect and bless them, and having withall his expresse promise made to me by Samuel concerning the kingdome, on this word of his I will rest, and in this I will rejoyce, and bless God for it. This I conceive is the plain meaning of these words. Yet some make this to be the sense of them; *In God I will praise his word*, that is, with Gods help I doubt not but I shall have occasion to rejoyce in his holy promises. And some likewise understand it of the word of Gods decree, to wit, that whatever God should decree concerning him, he would praise God for it.

Verf. 6. *They hide themselves, &c.*] To wit, that they may carry their plots the more closely, and may lye in wait unawares to doe me a mischief: *they mark my steps when they wait for my soul*; that is, they watch to lay snares for me; or, they mark and observe all my actions and conversation, to see if they can pick a quarrell or get any advantage against me; or, they watch my goings, that they may follow and pursue me, which way soever I turn my self: and all this, because *they wait for my soul*, that is, to take away my life; for nothing lesse will content them.

Verf. 7. *Shall they escape by iniquity? &c.*] As if he should have said, They think by taking away my life, to secure themselves, and to settle Saul and his posterity in the kingdome: but shall this doe it? Is iniquity, which provokes God to take vengeance, likely to secure them from vengeance? No doubtlesse; this will rather hasten their destruction: and this therefore he desires God to manifest in the following words, *in thine anger cast down the people, O God.*

Verf. 8. *Thou tellest my wanderings, &c.*] That is, Thou dost exactly know in what a restless condition I have lived many yeares together, being driven up and down from one place to another, and no where suffered to abide in quiet: *put thou my tears into thy bottle*; that is, let them not be lost and shed in vain, do not despise and disregard them, but be mindfull of them, and let it be seen that thou makest precious account of them. He compares the teares that he shed, when he was as it were in the wine-presse of affliction, to the wine that is pressed out of the grapes, every drop whereof they are carefull to save.

Verf. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God, &c.*] That is, By vows made to thee in the hour of my distresse, I took upon me to return thee praise, if thou didst deliver me; and so there lyes an obligation upon my soul, and therewith much

care and sollicitousnesse of spirit, to make good my engagements. The very same expression we have Act. 21. 23. *we have four men which have a vow on them.*

Verf. 13. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 6. 4. and 1 Sam. 21. 13: *wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling?* that is, seeing thou hast delivered me thus from the jaws of death, wilt thou not also support me, that I may not sink through despair in any future tryalls and troubles, and keep me from falling into any sinfull practise, though my temptations be many and great? or, wilt not thou still preserve me, that I may not be overthrown by mine enemies, or fall under the power of them that seek my ruine? see the Note Job 12. 5: *that I may walk before God*, to wit, trusting in him, seeking to please him, enjoying his grace and favour, and having him alwaies before mine eyes; see the Note Gen. 17. 1: *in the light of the living*, that is, here in this world: yet some understand it also of the light of heaven. The same is intended as where the Scripture speaks of *the land of the living*: for which see the Note Psal. 27. 13.

P S A L M LVII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, *Al-taschith*, &c.] Many Expositours hold that this also was some muscicall Instrument, or the first words of some song, to the tune whereof this Psalm was to be sung. Yet because *Al-taschith* signifyeth *Destroy not*, therefore others hold that this is prefixed in the Title, either as a memoriall of that memorable passage, when there was such an opportunity offered for slaying Saul, and David did not only restrain his own affections with this thought, that he must not destroy the Lords anointed, 1 Sam. 24. 6. but also stayed Abishai from doing it, when they found him asleep in his camp, and that by using these very words, *Destroy him not*, as they are expressed 1 Sam. 26. 9. (which is therefore only improbable, because we have the same in the Titles of other Psalms, as Psal. 59, and 75, which were not penned upon any such occasion;) or rather as a memoriall of Gods mercy, who was pleased, when he was in such desperate danger, to give a command that he should not be destroyed; or to expresse the argument of the Psalm, to wit, that it is a deprecatory Psalm (and such the rest also are that have this Title) made when he was in danger of death, and wherein he begs of God that he might not be destroyed, notwithstanding his enemies pursued him so fiercely. *Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave*; to wit, the cave of Adullam, 1 Sam. 22. 1; or the cave in the wilderness of *En-gedi*, 1 Sam. 24. 1. where Saul by Gods providence fell into Davids hands, but that, as is above said, he would not destroy him.

Verf. 1. *My soul trusteth in thee, &c.*] That is, Though I have taken this cave for a hiding place, yet my trust is not in that, but in thee; see the Notes Psal. 33. 20, and 1 Sam. 24. 22: *yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge*; herein, as some think, he alludes to the wings of the Cherubims over the mercy-seat; for this expression see the Notes Ruth 2. 12, and Psal. 17. 8.

Verf. 2. *I will cry unto God most high, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 9. 2: *unto God that perform-*

performeth all things for me; which may be referred to the accomplishment of Davids affairs, to wit, that all that was done by him or for him, was accomplished by the all-ruling power and providence of God; or else to the full performance of all things that God had promised; or else to the perfecting of all things which the Lord undertook to doe for him, to wit, that God did not leave his work imperfect, but did surely finish it in his own good time. And observable it is, which some do here note, namely, that expressing this in the present tense, *he performeth all things for me*, David doth imply, that even then in the great dangers he was in, God was carrying on his purposes of mercy, though in outward appearance things seemed to work contrary thereto.

Verf. 3. *He shall send from heaven and save me, &c.*] That is, say some, He shall send his angels to save me; but for the meaning of this expression, see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 17: *from the reproach of him that would swallow me up*; that is, from the ruine which mine enemies intend to bring upon me (for had they herein prevailed over David, it would have tended to the reproach of him and his cause) and especially from the slanderous and scornfull insulting speeches, wherewith they reproached him. And indeed so it was, when David following Saul out of the cave had pleaded his cause with him, and Saul thereupon had acknowledged his innocency and condemned himself, 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth*; that is, God shall send help because of his mercy and truth; or, by helping me God shall manifest unto all men his mercy to me, and his truth in making good his promises. The first clause may be render'd, as in the margin of our Bibles, *He shall send from heaven and save me; he reproacheth him that would swallow me up*: and then the meaning is, that God would bring reproach upon his enemies, to wit, by destroying them, and so by disappointing them of their hopes, and frustrating their plots and attempts against him.

Verf. 4. *I lye even among them that are set on fire, &c.*] That is, men of a hot, fierce and furious spirit, that being enflamed with wrath and envy, are continuall incendiaries to enflame others against me. And by saying that he did lie amongst such men, he would imply, that he was amongst them, as one that was cast down, weak and helpeless, waiting upon God, but no way able to resist them, nor knowing which way in regard of men to turn himself for succour. *Even among the sons of men*; so he tearms his enemies, either by way of contempt, because they were, notwithstanding their greatnesse in Sauls court, but weak flesh and bloud, as other men are; or else to imply, that however they pretended themselves the sons of God, yet they were not indeed such, but mere carnall men, void of all piety and grace: *whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword*; where by terming their teeth *spears and arrows*, he intends to set them forth as cruell monsters, that were greater destroyers then any beasts of prey could be; or else their teeth are thus described together with their tongue, both being the instruments of speech, to imply, that by their slanderous and mischievous tongues they did most cruelly wound and tear both him and others, the righteous servants of God.

Verf. 5. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.*] As if he had said, Thy glory lyes at the stake in the dangers of thy servant, and therefore by delivering me manifest the glory of thy power and goodness &c. to be above all the creatures in heaven and earth; or, shew forth thy glory, that both angels and men throughout the earth may admire and praise thy name.

Verf. 6. *They have prepared a net for my steps, my soul is bowed down, &c.*] That is, I am so encompassed with their net, that I am in a manner overwhelmed, and ready to fall under their power; or, my soul is even pressed down with fear, as birds that will couch down and lye close to the ground to hide themselves from danger: see the Notes also Psal. 38. 6, and 44. 25. *They have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves:* and so indeed it was with Saul, who seeking to surprize David, did himself fall into Davids hands in the cave, where he might have slain him.

Verf. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, &c.*] That is, I am confidently perswaded that thou wilt deliver me; according to that Psal. 112. 7. *his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord:* or, I have fully determined to praise thy name; and therefore it may be translated, *My heart is prepared, O God, &c.* as being chearfully ready to praise thy name, *I will sing and give praise.*

Verf. 8. *Awake up, my glory, &c.*] That is, my soul, or my tongue; see the Note Gen. 49. 6. Yet some understand it of his skill in composing Psalms, or of the holy spirit of God wherewith he was inspired when he did compose them; and others of his harp, for his skilfull playing whereon he was very renowned: and indeed that follows in the next words, *awake psaltery and harp.*

Verf. 9. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.*] That is, both among Jews and Gentiles; and most probable it is, that this he spake as a type of Christ, and as foreseeing the calling of the Gentiles: see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 50.

Verf. 10. *For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 8. 1, and 36. 5.

P S A L M LVIII.

Verf. 1. **D**O ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation, &c.] Some conceive that by this word *congregation* any pack of wicked men may be meant, that combined together against David. But I rather think it is meant of those that were in place of authority; as if he had said, You that are Sauls counsellors and judges, by your place ye ought to *speak righteousness*, and *judge uprightly*, even as God doth, whose person ye represent, Isa. 45. 19. *I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right:* and indeed in your proceedings against me this you pretend to doe, you colour over your practises against me with a pretence of zeal for justice, and for the good of the kingdome: but such is the clear justice of my cause, that I dare appeal to your selves; when to flatter Saul for your own advantage, you can slander one that you know is guiltlesse,

lesse, and that hath deserved so well both of him and the whole kingdome, is this to speak righteousness? judge your selves: *do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men*—see the Note Psal. 57. 4.

Verf. 2. *Yea, in heart you work wickednesse, &c.*] Hereby David would imply, that they did not only speak and doe that which was wicked, but that they also did it wittingly, having plotted & contrived it before in their hearts; & so consequently, that the mischief they did, proceeded not from humane frailty, & the overbearing power of any sudden temptation, but from the mere wickednesse of their hearts: *you weigh the violence of your hands in the earth*; that is, the evil and injustice which you have plotted in your hearts you afterwards act openly, not in a corner, but in the sight of all men. And by this phrase, *you weigh the violence of your hands*, he implies 1. that deliberately they contrived to execute the evil they had conceived in their hearts; and 2. that in all the violence wherewith they oppressed him and others, they pretended justice. A pair of balances is the emblem of justice, because that doth exactly determine the just weight of things, making no difference between gold and lead; and therefore to imply that they pretended to weigh all things duly, and to deal with all men exactly, according to the balance of justice, and yet did notwithstanding oppress men with much violence, he expresseth it thus, that they weighed the violence of their hands in the earth.

Verf. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb, &c.*] To wit, from God and his people, and from all holiness and righteousness; as the Apostle saith of naturall men, that they are *alienated from the life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. See the Note Psal. 54. 3: *they goe astray as soon as they be born*; that is, even from their childhood. Now though this be the naturall and common condition of all mankind, yet David mentions it here with respect to his enemies, and as an aggravation of their wickednesse, as implying thereby, that it was by long custome grown incurable. By his restraining power God doth so bridle the corruptions of some gracelesse men, that they are of a more harmlesse conversation then others are; and if they do at sometimes break out into some lewd courses, yet they recover themselves, and give over such courses again: but now of his enemies David would imply this, that they had been desperately wicked even from the cradle; which is that the Prophet also intended in Isa. 48. 8. *thou wast called a transgressor from the womb*. As for the following words, *speaking lies*, that particular of their lying and flandering is perhaps the rather expressed, because lying is usually one of the first sins of young children.

Verf. 4. *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent, &c.*] That is, Their virulent disposition and wickednesse is as deadly to men, against whom as serpents they spit out their venome and malice, as the poison of serpents is: *they are like the deaf adder, (or asp) that stoppeth her ear, &c.* Some writers report of the asp, that to prevent the charmer, she is wont to lay one ear close and hard to the ground, and to stop the other with her tail, that she may not hear his enchantments. In reference hereto, or at least to the common conceit of people herein, David here compares his enemies, that would by no means be perswaded to desist from their wicked courses,

courses, though these perswasions tended meerly to their good, to these adders or asps, that thus stop their eares against the charmer, when he seeks only to rid them of their poison, and to make them harmlesse. And it may be that he had herein particular respect to Saul and his courtiers, in that after they had heard that moving Apology of David 1 Sam. 24. 9. they left not off to persecute him; which some therefore think was the occasion of penning this Psalm. We have severall other places of scripture, that allude to that which is said of the serpent and the charmer; as that Eccles. 10. 11. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment*, and that Jer. 8. 17. *I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed*: but yet this doth not justify charmes, see Deut. 18. 10. for similitudes are often taken in the scripture from sinfull practises, as from the thief Rev. 16. 15. See also Luk. 16. 8, and 18. 1. &c.

Verf. 6. *Break their teeth, O God, &c.*] See the Notes Job 4. 10. and Psal. 3. 7, and 10. 15.

Verf. 7. *Let them melt away as waters, which run continually, &c.*] That is, like waters congealed to snow or ice, which when they are melted by the sun or rain, do continually run away till they be quite wasted and gone: and observable it is, that whilst his enemies might seem in the eye of reason, for their strength and unmoveableness, like so many mountains and rocks, yet by faith he looked upon them as so many heaps of snow or ice, that might soon come to nothing. Yet some hold that David compares them here to floods of water, that continually passe away: for which see the Note Gen. 49. 4. *When he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows*, that is, the wicked man, *let them be as cut in pieces*, that is, as arrows that being shot do snap in sunder, and so can never doe hurt.

Verf. 8. *As a snail which melteth, let everyone of them passe away, &c.*] The snail is said to melt, either 1. because being troden upon, it presently turns into a slimy water; or 2. because being once out of the shell, it soon spends its moisture, and through the heat of the sun it wastes and dies; yea some say that if salt be put upon it, hereby it will melt to water; or 3. because the snail lives not long, but within a while wastes away, and leaves her shell empty. But however here again it is worth the observing, that by way of contempt he compares his mighty dreadfull enemies to such a poor creature as the snail; which though it may seem to threaten with its horns, yet alas there is no danger nor dread in them. *Like the untimely birth of a woman*, they shall not see the sun; that is, as an untimely birth dies before it be born, and so never sees the sun, so shall it be with them, in the midst of those great designs they have conceived in their minds, they shall be cut off, and so they shall not be able to bring them to effect.

Verf. 9. *Before your pots can feel your thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirl-wind, &c.*] That is, Before your pots can be well warmed, by the burning of the thorns which you put under them, God shall suddenly and violently cut them off as with a whirl-wind: so that the meaning is, that look as thorns put under a pot, though they be soon kindled, and with a great crackling noise do suddenly break forth into a mighty flame, yet are soon burnt away, before the pot can come to feel, as it were, the heat of the fire; so God should take away
Davids

Dauids enemies before they had made the least progresse in a manner in those great designs, which rashly, and with a great deal of fury they at first undertook: and therefore he adds, *both living*, that is, whilst they are yet vigorous and lively, in the very flower of their lives, see the Note Psal. 55. 15; and *in his wrath*, that is, in his just indignation against them.

Verf. 10. *The righteous shall rejoyce, &c.*] Meaning himself and others; *when he seeth the vengeance*; yet not simply at the destruction of their enemies, but because themselves are delivered, and God is glorified in their destruction: and therefore it is said also in the next words, *He shall wash his feet in the blood*, not of his enemies, but *of the wicked*. And by that phrase of washing his feet in their blood is implied, 1. in what abundance their blood should be shed, so that the righteous might as conquerours walk up to the ankles in blood, according to a like expression Psal. 68, 23. *that thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies*; and 2. that the righteous should be refreshed by the shedding of these wicked mens blood; as men used in those times to refresh themselves by the washing of their feet. To which also some adde, that he should hereby become more pure and holy in all his waies, as being stirred up thereto by Gods judgements on the wicked.

Verf. 11. *So that a man shall say, &c.*] That is, Many men shall say, not only the righteous, who having been staggered before, shall hereby recover themselves, but also wicked men, being forced by this clear evidence to the acknowledgement of these truths; *Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth*; that is, he observeth and judgeth those things that are done here below; neither is all the punishment of the wicked reserved to the world to come.

P S A L M LIX.

Verf. 4. **T**hey run and prepare themselves without my fault, &c.] That is, With all eagernesse they prosecute the businesse, making all the hast and all the preparations they can, that they may apprehend and slay me causelessly: *awake to help me, and behold*; that is, do not seem to disregard me any longer, but take notice of the violent proceedings of mine enemies, and likewise of mine innocency and danger.

Verf. 5. *Awake to visit all the heathen.*] and consequently all such brutish people, enemies of God and all goodnesse, as the heathens are. For either by *the heathens* here he doth particularly mean Saul, and his crew that sided with him, for which see the Note Psal. 10. 16; or at least by desiring God to visit the heathen, he doth covertly also desire the like against them; because if the heathens were fit to be destroyed, much more they that professed themselves Gods people, and yet were as bad as the heathens: which is more clearly expressed in the following words, *be not mercifull to any wicked transgressours*; that is, any that are obstinately wicked, and that will not be reclaimed; see the Note Psal. 28. 4.

Verf. 6. *They return at evening, &c.*] As if he had said, Having come and gone

all the day long, seeking to apprehend me, they return again in the evening, being never weary of prosecuting their cursed design. It is an expression of the diligence of Sauls officers in pursuing the life of David. *They make a noise like a dog*, that is, as a dog grins and snarles and barks, so do they, with threatening words and furious gestures, expresse their rage and madnesse against me; or, they follow me with open mouth, as hounds pursue their game, barking and yelping as they goe: *and goe round about the city*; that is, whilst some beset my house, others goe up and down the city, to search me out, or to lye in wait for me in every place. Thus these words are commonly expounded. Yet because when Sauls officers carried him word that David was sick, being deluded by Michals device, he sent them back again, some hold that the first words, *they return at evening*, are meant of that return of Sauls messengers; and accordingly that the following words are meant of the madnesse of Sauls officers, and their eager searching for David, when they saw how they had been deluded; *they make a noise like a dog, and goe round about the city*.

Verf. 7. *They belch out with their mouth, &c.*] That is, They pour out, as in a way of boasting, many vile and wicked speeches, slanderous & furious threatening words: *swords are in their lips*; that is, they talk of nothing but slaughter and bloud, murdering and throat-cutting; every word they speak is as a sword, see the Note Psal. 57. 4. *For who, say they, doth hear?* the meaning whereof is, that they encouraged themselves in these speeches, 1. because no man heard their threatnings, that would give David notice of it; and 2. because they minded not Gods all-hearing ear, yea and perhaps thought that God minded not what is done here amongst men: see Psal. 10. 11.

Verf. 9. *Because of his strength will I wait upon thee.*] That is, Because of Sauls strength, I will rest with patience upon thee, without whom by his strength I know he can doe nothing.

Verf. 10. *The God of my mercy shall prevent me.*] That is, The God that is and alwaies hath been mercifull to me, shall help me, either before I come to be in any great danger, or at least before Saul shall do me the mischief he intends: see also the Note Psal. 21. 3.

Verf. 11. *Slay them not, &c.*] That is, Cut them not all off on a sudden; *lest my people forget*, that is, lest my followers, or my countrey men, or the people over whom thou hast appointed me to reign, forget thy mercy to me, and thy just wrath upon mine enemies, and the sins whereby they provoked thee to punish them; or, lest being freed by this means from the afflictions which they formerly endured from them, they should grow forgetfull of serving thee. Because judgments suddenly executed are usually as suddenly forgotten, therefore David prayeth that God would rather destroy them by degrees, that his people might for their spirituall advantage have them the longer in their eye, as spectacles of Gods vengeance. Yea and herein withall too 1. he bridles himself from that which is naturall to men, an over-eager desire of the present destruction of his enemies; and 2. he covertly taxeth the people for being so ready to forget the great works of God. *Scatter them by thy power*; that is, by thine almighty power (which

(which is here opposed to Sauls great strength mentioned before vers. 9:) break them in pieces, and bring them to such misery, that they may wander up and down, some one way and some another, not knowing where to find any relief or refuge: *and bring them down*, to wit, from that lofty condition wherein now they live. All which he begges, for the good and in the name of all Gods people: and therefore he addes those last words, *O Lord our shield*. Many expositours take this to be spoken by David, as a type of Christ, concerning the dispersion of the Jewes; whom God hath not utterly destroyed, but scattered through the world, that his people (Jewes or Christians) might not forget their sin, nor the wrath that is fallen upon them for their despising and crucifying the Lord of glory.

Verf. 12. *For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 7: *let them even be taken in their pride*; that is, when they are in the height of their prosperity and pride; or, let them be punished for their pride, which is indeed the ground of all their cursed speeches; or let them be insnared in their own pride, let that which they have in their pride attempted against me prove their own ruine: *and for cursing and lying which they speak*, that is, their execrations and slanders. And this too some apply to the blasphemous speeches of the Jewes against Christ.

Verf. 13. *Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be, &c.*] That is, let their wealth and worldly greatnesse wast by little and little, till they come to nothing, and farre from being what they now are: or thus, When thou hast kept them long enough in an accursed wasting condition, as spectacles of thy wrath for the instruction of others, then destroy them utterly from the land of the living: *and let them know that God ruleth in Iacob, unto the ends of the earth*; that is, let these men know, when they come to be destroyed, that God ruleth in his church whereever it is spread unto the ends of the earth; or, let men know, even the heathens unto the end of the earth, by hearing of so famous a judgement upon the wicked adversaries of the godly, that God ruleth in Iacob.

Verf. 14. *And at evening let them return, &c.*] This is added in reference to that which was said before ver. 6. as if he had said, Let their judgement be answerable to their sin: as now they run up and down to take me, returning in the evening, and make a noise like a dog, and goe round about the city; so *at evening let them return*, to wit, when they have all day run up and down for meat, *and let them make a noise like a dog*, howling for hunger, *and goe round about the city*, to begge their bread, and no where find it, as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

Verf. 15. *Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.*] Or, *If they be not satisfied then they will stay all night*, and so lye pinched with hunger all the night long: see the note Job 13. 23.

Verf. 16. *But I will sing of thy power, &c.*] Thus he ascribes his escape to God, though it were by the device of his wife Michal: *yea I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning*; that is, say some, when they thought to have had me in their power, alluding to Sauls commission to his officers, 1 Sam. 19. 11. to watch him, and to slay him in the morning.

Verf. 17. *Vnto thee, O my strength, will I sing, &c.*] He tearms God his strength, in opposition to what he had said verf. 9. of Sauls strength,

P S A L M LX.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician upon *Shushan-eduth*, &c.] *Shoshannim* the plural number of this word *Shushan*, we have in the Title of the 45. Psalm, concerning which see the Note there. And because *Eduth* signifyeth a testimony or beautifull ornament, therefore some translate *Shushan-Eduth*, the Lilly of the Testimony, because this Psalm was a glorious testimony of David faith and thankfulness; or because praying in this Psalm for the good successe of his forces gone out against the nations here mentioned, he insitteth largely on the glorious promises that God had made concerning the kingdome of David, and the enlarging of his peoples territories, verf. 6, &c: and others, the lilly of beauty or ornament, because this Psalm shews that the kingdome of Israel should be glorious and eminent above other kingdomes, as the lilly is above other flowers: and others, a six-stringed instrument of the Testimony, because the Priests used to play hereon before the Ark, which was called the Testimony. *Michtam of David, to teach*: the same I conceive is intended in this clause, as is in those Titles, *A Psalm of David, Maschil*, Psal. 32, and, *A Psalm of David to bring to remembrance*, Psal. 38. concerning which see the Notes there. Yet some would expresse the particulars which this Psalm was intended to teach: as that it was to teach posterity the great things that David had done; or to teach that God would fully make good his promise concerning the land of Canaan, though hitherto a good part of it had been kept from them: yea and some hold that these words simply, that the Levites were to teach it their scholars, that it might be sung as a triumphant song when David should return with triumph. As for the following words, *when he strove with Aram Naharaim, &c.* see the Notes 2 Sam. 8. 3. and 13.

Verf. 1. *O God thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, &c.*] This is spoken of the sad condition, wherein the people had been, not only in the daies of the judges, but also more lately under Saul, especially towards the later end of his reign, when partly by reason of Sauls cruelty to the Priests and other the godly of the land, and partly by reason of the frequent invasions of the Philistines and other bordering nations, the Israelites were often sorely distressed, and sometimes forced to fly and hide themselves in severall places: see 1 Sam. 13. 19, and 31. 7. Yea and it may comprehend all the time when there was civill war between David and the house of Saul, in the beginning of Davids reign; all which time the land was under great afflictions, and that justly for their sins, as he intimateth in the next words, *thou hast been displeased.*

Verf. 2. *Thou hast made the earth to tremble, thou hast broken it, &c.*] Either this is spoken in reference to the inhabitants of the land, that God made their hearts to tremble, and that he had broken them in pieces with civill dissentions; or else the meaning is, that God had brought such grievous troubles upon them, that the earth seemed as it were to tremble under them as with an earthquake, and to be rent asunder.

Verf. 3.

Vers. 3. *Thou hast shewed thy people hard things, &c.*] That is, Thou hast brought upon us many grievous miseries; see the Note Psal. 4. 6: *thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment*; that is, thou hast brought us to such a condition, that we are astonished and tremble and stagger, full of horror and trouble of spirit, dull and stupid in the evils that are fallen upon us, and even bereaved of sense and understanding, not knowing what to doe, or which way to turn our selves, no otherwise then as if we had been made to drink of some venomous or enchanted cup. See the Note Psal. 11. 6.

Vers. 4. *Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee; that it may be displayed because of the truth.*] This may also be understood of those foregoing evil times, whereof David had spoken hitherto: as if he had said, To make good the truth of thy promises, and to let thy people see how faithfull thou art in all thy promises, even in those times thou hast returned in mercy to them that feared thee, and hast led them forth to fight with their enemies, and hast made them victorious over them. For by giving a banner to them that feared him is meant, not only that God had led them forth and encouraged them to goe forth with banners displayed against their enemies, but also that he had given them the victory in the day of battel, whereof displayed banners were a sign. And if we understand it thus, of what God had done for his people in former times after he had sorely afflicted them, then is it alledged as an argument to move God to doe the same for his people now again. But I rather think that David speaks here of what God had done at present for them. And accordingly by the banner displayed is meant, either Gods anointing David to be the king of his people; as if he had said, Though thou hast many years thus afflicted thy people, yet now thou hast raised up a banner to them that fear thee, in that thou hast given me to be king to this people, whom they follow chearfully, and under whose conduct they have fought successfully against their enemies: or else, the many victories which God had given them; and then it is as if he had said, However it hath been formerly, yet now for their sakes that fear thee, and to strengthen our faith with assurance that thou wilt make good all thy promises, and particularly those concerning the enlarging of our dominions, by the many victories given us for the gathering together and encouragement of thy scattered and disheartned people, as oft as we goe out with our armies we return victoriously; not as formerly, with most of our ensigns and souldiers lost, but as conquerours with banners displayed; and hereby we are heartned with assurance, that God will still subdue our enemies under us.

Vers. 5. *That thy beloved may be delivered, &c.*] This may be referred to the foregoing verse, as another reason why God had lifted up a banner to them that feared him, to wit, that those his beloved ones might be delivered, who before were in danger to be overrun by their enemies round about them; or else rather it is to be referred to that which follows; as if it had been expressed thus, *Save with thy right hand and hear me, that thy beloved may be delivered.* This and the seven following verses we have again in the end of the 108. Psalm.

Vers. 6. *God hath spoken in his holinesse, &c.*] That is, say some, in his Sanctuary. But the meaning hereof they make to be this, that God had promised him.

that the kingdome of Israel should be settled upon him and his seed for ever: and though this promise was brought to him by Samuel first, and lately by Nathan, 2 Sam. 7. 11, 12, &c. yet for the assured certainty of it he looked upon it no otherwise, then as if it had been an oracle given by God himself out of his Sanctuary. But I rather understand it thus: God hath holily and faithfully promised the kingdome to me and mine: as he is a holy God he hath promised it; and therefore he can no more fail of performing his promises, then he can cease to be a holy God: so that it is all one in effect as if he had said, God hath sworn by his holinesse; according to that Psal. 89. 35, 36. Now hereupon David adds, *I will rejoyce*; as if he had said, And herein I will rejoyce, and will chearfully enjoy the victories and kingdome which God hath given me. Though God hath given me great encouragement by the successe of my wars, and hath given me great cause thereby to think that God, who was offended with his people in the daies of Saul, is now become favourable again to them; yet that which I build upon is the promise of God: I did not by any faction exalt my self to be king, but God promised the kingdome should be mine. And this promise, together with his rejoycing in that God had already, and would yet farther perform it for him, he expresseth in the following words, *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth*; that is, God hath put all the land of Canaan, both the countrey within Jordan, where Shechem stood, and the countrey without Jordan, where Succoth was, under my absolute dominion, and hath appointed it to be left unto my posterity by right of inheritance. The phrase used alludes to the power that lords have to divide a land which is brought under their subjection, as Joshua did the land of Canaan. And he rather doth he mention these places, (together with Gilead and Manasseh in the following verse) because they had stood out longest against David, and had most obstinately sided with Ishbosheth, see 2 Sam. 2. 8: and therefore the certainty of Gods promise was herein most notably discovered.

Verf. 7. *Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine, &c.*] See the former Note: *Ephraim also is the strength of mine head*; the ground of this expression is, because this tribe was above others numerous and strong, and had many that were famous men of valour and expert in war, concerning which see the propheties concerning this tribe Gen. 48. 19. and Deut. 32. 11: and either he alludes therein to the heads of those beasts that are armed with horns, making *Manasseh and Ephraim* the horns wherewith he would gore his enemies; or else the meaning is, that Ephraim was the strength of his head, that is, of his kingdome and sovereignty, his headship and principality; or that from them he would have many to be of his life-guard; and so the like phrase is used 1 Sam. 28. 2. for which see the Notes there. *Judah is my law-giver*, which is said either because in Jerusalem, which was in Judahs portion, the great councill of the Sanhedrim was kept, see the Note Numb. 11. 16. as likewise Davids sovereign court of justice, Psal. 122. 5. *there are set thrones of judgement, the thrones of the house of David*; or 2. because he meant chiefly out of this tribe to chuse his princes, judges and counsellors, that should give laws to the people, and be subservient to him in the government of the king-

kingdome; or 3. because out of his loyns (who was of this tribe) there was still to be a king sitting on the throne of Judah, according to that prophesy (whereto he alludes) Gen. 49. 10. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, &c.*

Verf. 8. *Moab is my wash-pot, &c.*] Though in the foregoing verse he gloried in the Israelites subjection to him, yet the services he there assigns to them are ingenuous and honourable, because he was to rule over them as brethren; but these now assigned to the forreign nations, that were subdued by him, are baser and servile. *Moab is my wash-pot*; or, *wash-bowl*; that is, I will make no more reckoning of them, then a man doth of a pot provided to wash dishes in, or rather to wash his feet in (for that in those Eastern countreys they used to doe very frequently) I will imploy them in the basest of services, making them the scullions of my kitchen: yea, and it may imply also, that he would no more scruple the destroying of them, then a man would to throw an earthen pot against the ground and dash it in pieces; see the Note 2 Sam. 8. 2: *Over Edom will I cast out my shoe*; that is, I will trample upon the Edomites, as a vanquished people, and will take possession of their countrey, as mine by conquest, see the Note Ruth 4. 7. Or else this phrase may imply, that he would use them as his slaves: for this phrase may be taken from that contemptuous carriage of masters towards their slaves, when they in anger throw their shoes at their heads, or at least in a way of scorn do throw them at them, intending they should make them clean, or bring them after them. And this he expresseth in the future tense, because the Edomites were not wholly subdued. *Philistia, triumph thou because of me*; to wit, as becomes subjects to honour the victories of their king. It may be read also, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *triumph thou over me*; but then it must be understood as spoken in a way of mocking them: as if he had said, You Philistines were wont to domineer and triumph over us, and now of late to scorn me, as if I should never have been able to subdue you; but now you see God hath brought you in subjection to me: And indeed in Psal. 108. this clause is expressed thus, *Over Philistia will I triumph.*

Verf. 9. *Who will bring me into the strong city? &c.*] That is, the strong cities of Edom; as is implied in the next words, *who will lead me into Edom*? as if he had said, Having vanquished the Edomites in the open field, as is expressed in the title of this Psalm, how shall I now come to subdue their defenced cities? And indeed that the cities of the Edomites were very strong, appears plainly by that of the prophet to Edom, Obad. 3. *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high, that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?* But yet many Expositours do rather think that Rabbah of the Ammonites is the strong city here intended, 2 Sam. 12. 26. and that chiefly because it may seem strange, that there should be mention here made of all the bordering enemies of Israel round about, and yet nothing said of them.

Verf. 10. *Wilt not thou, O God, which hast cast us off? &c.*] Thus David gives a hint again, how much better it was with Gods people now under his government, then it had been in Sauls reign, that they might acknowledge that God was pleased with the settling of him in the throne.

P S A L M L X I.

Verf. 1. **H**ear my cry, O God, &c.] Severall expositours hold that this Psalm was composed by David, as a prayer of the people of God: but I see no convincing reason, why it may not be as well understood as spoken by him in his own name.

Verf. 2. *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, &c.*] To wit, with fear, care and sorrow: see the Note 2 Sam. 15. 30. For because here verf. 6. he styles himself king, it may seem most probable that this Psalm was composed when he was fled from Absalom even unto Mahanaim, which was in the utmost borders of the land without Jordan, 2 Sam. 17. 24: and though thereupon many expositours hold, that the first clause should be translated, *from the end of the land will I cry unto thee*; yet I should rather think that it may purpose-ly be expressed in those words, *from the end of the earth*, to imply, that although he should be driven not only to the end of the land, but to the end of the earth, yet even from thence he would cry to God for help: see the Note Psal 42. 6. *Lead me to the rock that is higher then I*; that is, which is so high above me, that I of my self am not able to climbe up to it; meaning this, Do thou bring me into an estate of more sure safety, then I by any power or forces of mine am able to attain.

Verf. 4. *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever, &c.*] Though there be in these words a clear promise, that when God should bring him back again to Jerusalem, he would constantly worship God in his Tabernacle, concerning which see the Note Psal. 23. 6: yet I conceive the chief thing intended therein is, to imply that he doubted not, but doing so, he should there find sure and constant protection, see the Note Psal. 27. 5. which is farther explained in the next clause, *I will trust in the covert of thy wings*, for which see the Notes Ruth 2. 12. Psal. 17. 8, and 57. 1.

Verf. 5. *For thou, O God, hast heard my vows; &c.*] That is, my prayers, which with vows annexed I offered up unto thee: *thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name*; that is, those present and future blessings, which are the peculiar portion of those that truly fear God, and wherein the men of the world have no share at all, as the love and favour of God &c. Others conceive that this heritage of those that fear Gods name, given to David, was either the enjoyment of Gods holy ordinances in his tabernacle, which indeed the faithfull did esteem their choicest heritage, and whereof he had spoken in the foregoing verse, *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever*; or else the quiet possession of the land of Canaan, which God had promised to his people, and which was indeed never conferred upon them in the largest extent thereof till the daies of David, but now was given to him, in regard of the government thereof, and to his seed after him.

Verf. 6. *Thou wilt prolong the kings life, and his yeares as many generations.*] See the Note Psal. 21. 4.

Verf. 7.

Verf. 7. *He shall abide before God for ever, &c.*] That is, He shall constantly enjoy Gods favour and protection: see the Note above verf. 4. and likewise Psal. 56. 13. But understanding it of Christ, it may be meant of his appearing in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9. 24. *O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him;* that is, Furnish him with those graces which are wont to preserve both the persons and thrones of princes, to wit, mercy and compassion, truth and equity and upright dealing; according to that of Solomon Prov. 29. 14. *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever;* see the Note Psal. 45. 4: or else rather, Provide means for his preservation out of thy mercy and faithfulness to him.

Verf. 8. *So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 34. 1: *that I may dayly perform my vows,* namely, my vows of praise and thanksgiving; for they only can be dayly performed. And herein he referres to what he had said before verf. 5. *for thou, O God, hast heard my vows.*

P S A L M LXII.

Verf. 1. **T***Truly my soul waiteth upon God.*] David breaks forth into these words abruptly, as one that had been long struggling with a temptation, sometimes inclining one way, sometimes another; but yet at last having gotten the day, concludes with confidence, *Truly my soul waiteth upon God:* as if he had said, Let Satan or mine own corrupt heart suggest what they will to the contrary, though the Lord may seem to have forsaken me, in that he suffers mine enemies continually to molest me, yet truly my soul waiteth upon God.

Verf. 2. *I shall not be greatly moved.*] According to that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9. *we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed:* see 1 Cor. 10. 13. See the Notes also Psal. 13. 4, and 16. 8, and 21. 7. and 37. 24.

Verf. 3. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? &c.*] That is, against me? why do so many of you conspire mischief against one poor man? *ye shall be slain all of you; as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence,* that is, ye cannot stand long, ere long ye will fall both suddenly and violently; any small thing shall make you fall headlong, yea your own envy and wickedness shall ruine you, as a bowing wall and a tottering fence will fall even with its own weight. A wall when it cracks and bulks out may seem twice as broad as it was, and therefore to stand very firm; but yet it is certainly near to ruine; and so David saith it would be with his enemies: though they were swollen with pride, and might look and talk bigly, yet ere long they would certainly fall, and be utterly ruined in an instant. We have an expression much like this Isa. 30. 13. *wherefore this iniquity shall be to you, as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.*

Verf. 4. *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency, &c.*] That is, the man mentioned in the foregoing verse, whom they sought to cast down from the

regall dignity whereto God had anointed him: *they delight in lies*, that is, in flanders and false flatteries; or rather in those evil practices, which will deceive those that rely thereon. See the Note Psal. 4. 2.

Verf. 7. *In God is my salvation and my glory,*] See the Note Psal. 3. 3.

Verf. 8. *Trust in him at all times, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 34. 1. *Te people pour out your heart before him.* See the Notes 1 Sam. 1. 15. and Psal. 42. 4.

Verf. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, &c.*] To wit, because they are poor, weak creatures, able of themselves to doe neither good nor evil; and withall they are unstable and inconstant, and oftentimes deceitfull and perfidious: *to be laid in the balance, they are altogether (or, alike) lighter then vanity*; that is, if men do well weigh things in the judgement of right reason, and do make just tryall of them, they will find that all men are alike mere vanity, or that if all mankind together be put in one scale, and vanity in the other, vanity will overweigh them. Now the drift of inserting these words here is to confirm his foregoing advice, that men should trust in God, by shewing the vanity of trusting on men. Yet some think the aim of this clause is to shew, that men may safely trust in God, because men are such poor vain creatures, no way worthy their admiration or fear.

Verf. 10. *Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery, &c.*] That is, Trust not in the wealth that is gotten by oppression and robbery, nor in those sinfull practises, or in any such like; think not by any such evil courses to accomplish your desires. And he calls this *becoming vain in robbery*, because men do vainly deceive themselves, when they trust in such things; to which purpose the like expression is used Jer. 23. 16. *Hearken not unto the words of the prophets, that prophesie unto you; they make you vain*: yea and it may imply also, that it argued lightnesse and vanity in them to be so ready to catch at these things for their safety and defence; and that it would make them be vile and foolish in the eyes of others. *If riches increase*, to wit, though it be in a lawfull way, *set not your heart upon them*; that is, do not trust in them, nor dote on them, so as to be proud of them, and anxiously sollicitous to preserve or encrease them.

Verf. 11. *God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, &c.*] That is, oftentimes; so that there is no question to be made of it. See the Note Job 33. 14.

Verf. 12. *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, &c.*] The sweet content he took in thinking on Gods mercy makes David turn his speech to God, *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy*; so that thy servants may with confidence rest upon thee: *for thou rendrest to every man according to his work*; and therefore the righteous may in this regard also trust in God, as assuring themselves that God will protect and blesse them, and punish their wicked enemies.

P S A L M LXIII.

The Title. **A** *Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Iudah.*] To wit, the forest of Hareth, 1 Sam. 22. 5. or the wilderness of Ziph, 1 Sam. 23. 14, and 26. 1, 2. both which were in the tribe of Iudah, and David often in both of them in great distresse and danger, by reason of the incessant persecution of Saul.

Verf. 1. *My soul thirsteth for thee, &c.*] To wit, to enjoy the presence of God in his Tabernacle; see the Note Psal. 42. 22: *my flesh longeth for thee* (which is added, because when the soul of a man doth earnestly desire any thing, the body will be likewise stirred and affected therewith:) *in a dry and thirsty land where no water is;* that is, a land that being chapt through drought, doth seem to thirst for water, and when it comes, drinks it in greedily like a thirsty man; or, a land wherein the inhabitants or passengers for want of water are dried up with thirst: and indeed the word in the originall signifyeth *a weary land*, that is, a wilderness, through which travellers could not passe without much faintnesse and wearinesse. Now thus David describes the place where he was, 1. to imply his faith and confidence in God, in that being in such streights he did not forget God, nor cast away his hope in him, but rather his distresse made him long the more after God; and 2. to expresse thereby the fervency of his desires after God, in that as great as his wants were being in such a dry and barren wilderness, yet he minded not his streights in such outward respects, in comparison of his desire to enjoy Gods presence in his Sanctuary. Yea and it may imply also that the place where he hid himself was as void of spirituall comforts, as it was of water; and that the parched ground thirsted not more after water, then he did after God.

Verf. 2. *To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.*] Some conceive that David in these words desired, that he might be as effectually refreshed with the consideration of Gods power and glory, even whilst he was in that dry wilderness, as ever he had been in the Sanctuary. But I rather conceive that Davids desire herein is, that he might again enjoy the signs of Gods powerfull and glorious presence in his Sanctuary, with the same refreshing to his soul, as he had formerly done; to wit, the Ark (for which see the Notes 1 Sam. 4. 21. 1 Chron. 16. 11. and 2 Chron. 6. 41.) and all other the holy Ordinances that were there to be enjoyed.

Verf. 3. *Because thy loving kindnesse is better then life, my lips shall praise thee.*] His aim herein may be to imply, either 1. that however he was at present in a sad condition, in a place that was altogether comfortlesse, and withall in continuall danger of his life; yet being assured of Gods favour, which may justly be preferred before life it self, he should in that alone have abundant cause to blesse God: or 2. that when he was restored to the enjoyment of the signs of Gods loving kindnesse in his Sanctuary, he would there praise Gods name, & that not so much for his deliverance, as for that discovery of Gods loving kindnesse, which was far better then life it self: or 3. that there was more assurance for a mans safety in Gods lo-

ving kindnesse, then there was in life it self, or in all the naturall advantages that tended to the preservation of life, so that the assurance of Gods favour might be a juster ground of praising God even in the greatest dangers, then any safety in regard of his outward condition could yield.

Verf. 4. *Thus will I blesse thee, while I live, &c.*] This word (*thus*) may have reference to divers particulars. *Thus*, that is, as I purpose and do at this present, though in great distresse; or *thus*, that is, Being thus restored, according to my desire, to thy Sanctuary, there I will openly praise thee. But I rather think it refers to those affections he had described to be in himself concerning his desire after Gods Tabernacle; *Thus*, that is, being thus affectionately desirous of enjoying thy presence in the Sanctuary, and esteeming thy loving kindnesse better then life it self, *I will blesse thee, while I live*, that is, whereever and in what condition soever I am. *I will lift up my hands*; to wit, in praising thee, or in praying to thee; as if he had said, Being thus delivered I shall be for ever encouraged to pray unto thee; see the Note Job 11. 13: *in thy name*, that is, *to thy name*, as it is elsewhere expressed, Psal. 9. 2; as if he had said, I will call upon thee: yet it may be understood divers other waies; *in thy name*, that is, through thy help; or, at thy command; or, trusting in thy goodnesse and mercy.

Verf. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatnesse, &c.*] This, with that which follows in the next verse, may be meant, either of the time when he should be restored to Gods Sanctuary again, to wit, that then remembring on his bed the comforts he had found in Gods Ordinances, and the enjoyment of Gods presence therein, his soul should be abundantly satisfied therewith; or else of the time of his exile in the wilderness, to wit, that even there, when he could not come at Gods Tabernacle, and when he was in no little want of outward things, yet remembring God, his soul should be abundantly satisfied with spiritual comforts. For the phrase here used, see the Note Psal. 36. 8.

Verf. 6. *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.*] That is, at severall times of the night, for they divided the night by severall watches: see the Note Judg. 7. 19.

Verf. 7. *In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoyce.*] To wit, as chickens that sleep securely and with content under the wings of their dams. See the Notes Ruth 2. 12. and Psal. 17. 8, and 57. 1.

Verf. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though I be driven far from Gods Tabernacle, and God may seem to have cast me off; yet out of the strength of my affections to him, and through faith in his mercy and the fatherly love he bears to me, even in this afflicted condition, notwithstanding all the discouragements that lye in my way, my thoughts are still running after God; neither do I cease constantly to desire and seek with all earnestnesse after his favour, yea and after his favourable presence in his Sanctuary. And then for the following words, *thy right hand upholdeth me*, either they are added 1. as the motive that encouraged him to follow so hard after God, namely, that God had still preserved him, and supported him in all his troubles; or else 2. as the effect of his so pressing after God, to wit, that because he did thus trust in God,

God, therefore God did uphold him; or 3. as the means whereby he was enabled in so sad a condition to persevere still in seeking after God, namely, because God by his spirit did support him.

Vers. 9. *But those that seek my soul to destroy it, shall goe into the lower parts of the earth.* That is, They shall be laid in the grave, or thrown into hell, or hide themselves in caves and dens.

Vers. 11. *But the king shall rejoyce in God, &c.* This he speaks of himself in the third person, believing assuredly that God would yet in time make good his promise to him concerning the kingdome: *every one that sweareth by him*, that is, by God, *shall glory*; that is, all that truly worship God, that truly fear and serve God, shall triumph when God shall destroy mine enemies, and exalt me to the throne, as knowing that hereby the good of the people in generall shall be promoted, and that in my kingdome the kingdome of the promised Messiah shall begin to shoot forth. Because swearing by God is appointed as a part of divine worship Deut. 6. 13. therefore usually in the Scripture it is figuratively put for the whole worship of God; as Isa. 45. 23. *unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear*, and Isa. 65. 16. *he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth*. Yet withall this may particularly imply such as did sincerely appeal to God, as the witnesse of their innocency: and therefore unto these are opposed, in the following clause, those that speak lies, *but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped*; to wit, either by being cut off and destroyed; or by being so confounded with shame, that they shall not dare to utter any such lies any more.

P S A L M LXIV.

Vers. 1. **P**reserve my life from the fear of the enemy. That is, Preserve me from being afraid of the enemy; or from the evil which I fear the enemy should doe me.

Vers. 3. *Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows, &c.* See the Note Psal. 57. 4.

Vers. 4. *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect, &c.* That is, at me, who am perfectly clear of the least evil intended ever against them. See the Notes Psal. 11. 2, and 26. 1.

Vers. 5. *They commune of laying snares privily; they say, who shall see them?* That is, the snares they have laid; or themselves that laid the snares: see the Note Psal. 59. 7.

Vers. 6. *They search out iniquities, &c.* That is, They seek to lay divers iniquities to my charge; or they devise and plot how they may unjustly oppresse & ruine me: and accordingly the following words, *they accomplish a diligent search*, do set forth their diligence in plotting mischief against him; and perhaps also in trying all wayes to effect and accomplish what they had so contrived. Only indeed this last clause may be translated otherwise, *we are consumed*

by that which they have thoroughly searched: and then the drift of the words is, to imply the exceeding danger the righteous servants of God were in by reason of these crafty plots of their enemies, namely, that in the judgement of their enemies the righteous could never escape their snares, and were no better then dead men already; and that in true judgement, if they were left unto themselves, it could be no better with them. And therefore he adds, *both the inward thought of every one of them and the heart is deep*; that is, they are full of deep dissembling, craft and subtilty: so that hereby they are charged 1. that they did not carry on their designs with open fury and violence, but whilst they were silent and dissembled outwardly, they maliciously contrived mischief against him in their hearts; and 2. that being men of a deep reach, they found out many unexpected waies of deceit and mischief.

Verf. 8. *So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves, &c.*] This is thus exprest to signify, 1. that when Gods wrath was fallen upon them, they should accuse and condemn themselves; 2. that the evil intended against David by their bitter words should fall upon themselves; 3. that their slanders and bitter words should be the means of their own ruine; & 4. that at least this should bring down Gods vengeance upon them. However he implies, that thus they should be slain with their own sword, and that the arrows they shot against David should recoil back, and wound themselves: see before verf. 3.

Verf. 10. *The righteous shall be glad, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 58. 10.

P S A L M LXV.

The Title. **A** *Psalm and Song of David.*] See the Note on the Title of the 30. Psalm. Because of severall passages in this Psalm, verf. 3, 9, 10, 11, &c. many Expositours conceive that it was composed, when after the three years famine in Davids time, God was pleased by sending a seasonable rain to give them hopes of a plentiful harvest, 2 Sam. 21.

Verf. 1. *Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion, &c.*] It is in the original, *Praise is silent to thee, O God, in Sion*; and many observable particulars this implies: as 1. that God is good unto his Church in a speciall manner above others, and gives them daily new occasions of praising him; 2. that his Church are the only people that do truly know God, and so the only people that know how to praise him; 3. that God did only accept of the worship which they performed, and the praise which they offered, Sion being the only place where God would be worshipped; 4. that whereas others, though they live upon Gods blessings, yet mind not the Donour, Gods people are still carefull and ready for every mercy to return praise; and 5. that even in the worst times the people of God will with patient silence wait upon him, in assurance that he would give them occasion to praise his name.

Verf. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*] Here David begins to reckon up the benefits for which God was most worthy to be praised in Sion; and accordingly in the first place he pitcheth upon this, that he was most ready

ready to hear the prayers of his people; insomuch that *all flesh*, that is, all sorts of men of all nations, though but dust and ashes, poor, frail, helplese creatures, might hereby be encouraged to draw near in prayer unto him, the glorious God of heaven and earth. And thus the words do also covertly imply a prophecy concerning the calling of the Gentiles.

Verf. 3. *Iniquities prevail against me, &c.*] Here David mentions another great mercy which God affords his Church, for which they were especially bound to praise him, and that is his pardoning their sins: and it is added here as that which must encourage them to goe to God in prayer, of which he had spoken in the foregoing verse. *Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away*: which is as if he had said, Though our iniquities be such, that they may justly provoke thee to displeasure, yet thou wilt pardon them, and purge them away, to wit, by an expiatory sacrifice, which shall be offered up for them. For by this phrase of iniquities prevailing against him, divers things may be implied: as 1st, that his opposition against them had not been such, but that they had overcome and foyled him; 2^{ly}, that they had brought him into subjection and bondage to them; 3^{ly}, that they were so many and great, that he was not able to bear them, but was likely to sink under the burden of them; and 4^{ly}, that they had brought Gods judgements upon him: and indeed by other passages in this Psalm it seems probable, that it was composed when the people of God had been under some fore judgement. As for Davids expressing this in the singular number, *Iniquities prevail against me*, whereas the following words are in the plurall number, *as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away*, the reason of this is, either because he speaks in the name of the whole people, as it were collectively in one body, and that the rather, as being their king and heads; or else because, this Psalm being intended as a form of thanksgiving for the use of the people, he would hereby teach every man, as it were by his example, to confesse his own particular sins.

Verf. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou chusest, &c.*] Here still farther mercies are added, for which God was in a speciall manner to be praised in Sion: and he begins with that of Gods chusing them of his own free grace to be his people, this being the first spring of that mentioned in the foregoing verse, to wit, his pardoning their sins; and then in the following words addes divers others, *Blessed is the man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee*; to wit, by receiving them to thy favour, who were enemies by nature, by taking them into so near a relation to thee, as to be thy peculiar people, yea thy children, such as may continually have free access unto thee, as are through Christ made one with thee, and to whom thou wilt communicate thy self unto all eternity: *that he may dwell in thy courts*. see the Notes Psal. 15. 1, and 23. 6: *we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, &c.* See the Note Psal. 36. 8.

Verf. 5. *By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation, &c.*] That is, Because of thy righteousness, to wit, thy faithfulness, which moveth thee to make good thy promises to thy people, see the Note Psal. 51. 14, or thy justice, which moveth thee to aid all those that are wronged and oppres-

Oppressed, thou wilt answer us when we call upon thee from thy tabernacle and temple, (which is one of the Priviledges of Gods people mentioned in the foregoing verse;) and that by executing strange and unusuall judgements upon our adversaries, and by many miraculous deliverances afforded us, which shall be terrible to our enemies, and dreadfull to thine own people: and it is likely that David speaks of these terrible things, in reference to the signs and miracles which God wrought in Egypt, and at the giving of the law. As for the following clause, wherein he tearmes God *the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are as farre off upon the sea*, this is added, either 1. to imply, that the Gentiles should also be sharers with the Jewes in these mercies, when they also should become the people of God; or 2. to intimate, that by those forementioned terrible things, which God should work for his people, many that dwelt farre off from his people should be wonne to pray unto and to trust in God; or 3. to set forth the power of this God, who should doe such great things for his people, and so give them such speciall occasion to praise him in Sion, by shewing that all the inhabitants of the world, far and near, have their dependance wholly upon God, in whom they live, move, and have their being: see the Note Psal. 22. 9. whence it is also that by a secret instinct of nature all nations are moved to look to God in their dangers, though they be indeed ignorant of the true God.

Verf. 6. *Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains, being girded with power.*] That is, which God, being endued with an almighty power, doth cause the mountains to stand fast, so that neither the winds nor floods can remove them, nor do they sink under their own weight, as great buildings of men often do for want of a firm foundation. I conceive that David adds this large description that here follows, of the great works of God throughout the world, either 1. to shew that it was no such strange thing, that God should extend grace at last to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jewes, since from the first creation God had been very good to all the inhabitants of the world, and had done great things for them; or 2. to set forth the mighty power of that God, from whom his people expect such terrible things to be done for them; or 3. because, though all the world receive benefit from these great works of God, yet only Sion looks on them as blessings from God, and returns him praise for them.

Verf. 7. *Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.*] Some conceive that the last words, *and the tumult of the people*, are added by way of explaining what he meant in the first words, to wit, Gods appeasing the tumults and insurrections of unruly people, whereby kingdomes and common-wealths are indangered: and indeed by seas and the waves thereof in the Scripture great armies and tumults of people are usuallly meant; as Jer. 51. 42. and so Esa. 17. 12, 13; see also the Notes Psal. 46. 3, 6. But I rather chuse the plainer exposition, that in the first words he speaks of Gods stilling the seas, to wit, both by keeping them within their bounds that they overflow not the land, and by making them quiet at his pleasure, when they are most tempestuous; and that then in the next words he adds, that after the same manner likewise he stilleth the tumult of the people.

Verf. 8. *They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens, &c.*] Any great works of God, wherein there is any speciall impressiō of his majesty and glory, may be tearmed Gods *tokens*; and therefore some understand hereby the sun, moon and stars, which are seen in the remotest parts of the earth, and of which God said in the first creation, Gen. 1. 14. *Let them be for signs.* But because David speaks here of such *tokens* as should make men *afraid*, I rather conceive that hereby is meant such works of God as are looked upon by men as tokens of his anger, as namely 1. thunder and lightening, and hail, and earthquakes, and comets, and other strange meteors seen often in the air; or 2. those miraculous signs which God wrought for the good of his people and the ruine of their enemies, as the dividing of the red sea, &c. the same whereof was terrible to the nations far off; or 3. the judgements which he executes upon wicked men, such particularly (say some Expositours) as disturb the peace of kingdomes; for they conceive this is spoken in reference to *the tumult of the people* mentioned in the last words of the foregoing verse. As for the following words, *thou makest the out-goings of the morning and the evening to rejoyce*, thereby is meant, either 1. that God makes all the men of the world from East to West to rejoyce with his manifold blessings; or 2. that he makes all men to rejoyce in the out-goings of the sun in the morning, (an expresseion used likewise Psal. 19. 6. *His going forth is from the end of the heaven*) and so likewise of the moon and stars in the evening; as the tokens before-mentioned are a cause of terrour to men, so these of rejoycing: or 3. that by giving peace to the inhabitants of the earth, to wit, through the terrour wherewith the nations are restrained and kept in, by reason of those tokens of Gods wrath mentioned in the foregoing clause, men may goe out chearfully in the morning, and the wild beasts in the evening, without terrour or danger; according to what the Psalmist saith, Psal. 104. 20, 23: or 4. that when men goe out to walk in the cool of the morning and evening, he maketh them to rejoyce, in beholding how the earth is enriched with all kind of plenty: or 5. that he maketh the out-goings of the sun in the morning, the moon and stars in the evening, to have a chearfull and pleasant aspect, as if they seemed to laugh or to sing; as we see the like poeticall expresseion used again verf. 13. to set forth the pleasant look of fields covered with corn. And indeed the two last expositions seem to me the most probable.

Verf. 9. *Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it, &c.*] To wit, as men are wont to visit their friends, carrying wine and sweet-meats, or some such like junkets with them; see also the Note above on the Title: *thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water*; that is, say some Expositours, the river Shiloah, which ran close by Jerusalem, the city of God; or the river of Jordan, the chief river of Canaan, Gods holy land, which used at times to overflow its banks, and so to make the land the more fruitfull. But I rather conceive that it is those sweet and plentifull showrs of rain sent from God out of heaven, or the clouds from whence the rain falls, that is here called the river of God; and that hereby is intimated, that seasonable showrs were to the land of Canaan to enrich it with plenty, in stead of those great rivers wherewith other countries are watered, see

the Notes Deut. 11. 10, 11, 12; and in stead of those brooks and rivulets, which husbandmen draw into their grounds to make them fruitfull.

Verf. 11. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodnesse, &c.*] Two things may be implied in this phrase: 1. that the plenty of corn and flowers and fruit &c. which God of his goodnesse caused the earth to bring forth, was an ornament to it, like a coronet or garland upon the head of a man; and 2. that God blessed the whole circle or revolution of the year, that in every part of it there were still some fruits of Gods bounty thereon to be seen: *and thy paths drop fatnesse;* that is, thy clouds; whereon God is elsewhere said to walk and to ride as in a chariot, as Psal. 104. 3. and Nahum 1. 3. or else the meaning is only this, that it is he only that maketh the earth rich and fruitfull; and in the expression used there may seem to be an allusion to that which is commonly said of mens carefull visiting their grounds, to wit, that *every field is best dugged by the dust that falls from the masters feet.*

Verf. 12. *They drop upon the pastures of the wildernesse, &c.*] That is, such places as are not manured and tilled, and are lesse frequented of people; see the Notes Job 38. 25, 26; and the *little hills*, though in summer they are most parched, and in winter most pinched with cold, *rejoyce on every side*, to wit, as being full of vines and other pleasant fruit-trees &c. and so the inhabitants do thereupon rejoyce; yea themselves have a pleasant aspect, as it is usuall with the latine poets to say *pratarident*: and so likewise the next verse must be understood. See the Note before verf. 8.

P S A L M LXVI.

Verf. 1. **M***Ake a joyfull noise unto God, all ye lands.*] Hereby the Psalmist expresseth how earnestly he desired that God might be glorified, in that he could wish that, if it were possible, all nations might be wonne to praise his name, as indeed there was just cause for all to doe. But see farther in the Notes upon Deut. 32. 43. and 1 Chron. 16. 23, 24.

Verf. 3. *Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works? &c.*] The Psalmist bids them thus to direct their speech to God, because when men set God before their eyes in any holy service they undertake, it makes them perform it the more heartily and fervently. And by putting all nations upon the acknowledgement of Gods terrible works, he covertly encourageth the people to trust in God, who could doe such terrible things to their enemies. *Through the greatnesse of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee:* see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 45.

Verf. 5. *Come and see the works of God, &c.*] That is, Weigh well with us the wonderfull works of God; see also the Note Psal. 46. 8: *he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men;* that is, those prophane men that are adversaries to the people of God; or all mankind in generall. And it may be spoken by way of contempt, to intimate how base and vain they are in comparison of God.

Verf. 6. *He turned the sea into dry land, &c.*] That is, the red sea: *they went through the floud on foot;* that is, Jordan: *there did we rejoyce in him;* that is, our nation, or we his people; for thus they speak of themselves as one body with their

their forefathers, to shew that the wonders wrought for their forefathers were a just ground of encouragement for them. We have the like expressions Psal. 81. 5. and Hof. 12. 4.

Verf. 7. *He ruleth by his power for ever, &c.*] As if he had said, And therefore what he hath done for his people in former times he can doe still: *his eyes behold the nations*, to wit, to observe their waies, to rule and overrule them as he pleaseth: *let not the rebellious exalt themselves*; to wit, because this omnipotent all-seeing God can easily destroy them.

Verf. 10. *Thou hast tryed us as silver is tryed.*] That is, with very sore and many afflictions, as silver is tryed in a hot fire and many times; see Psal. 12. 6, and the Note upon Job 23. 10: yet not to destroy us, but to purge away our corruptions: and therefore when God tryeth his people with lighter afflictions, he saith on the contrary, Isa. 48. 10. *Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, or, as silver.*

Verf. 11. *Thou broughtest us into the net, &c.*] That is, into bondage, or into great streights and dangers on every side: *thou laidest affliction upon our loins*; that is, by sore afflictions thou hast bereaved us of all strength, and made us exceeding weak and feeble; or, thou hast suffered men to bind us in chains; or, thou hast layd very heavy burdens of affliction upon us; or, thou hast caused men to use us like pack-horses, beating us, and laying intolerable burdens upon us.

Verf. 12. *Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads, &c.*] That is, we lying upon the ground, as those do that are wounded in battel, our enemies ride over our heads; or, they ride us like beasts, because they that ride upon beasts are lifted up above their heads, or do, as it were, sit or lean over their heads. However, the meaning is only this, that their basest enemies, having brought them into subjection, did insult over them and abuse them with all possible cruelty, scorn and contempt. And indeed we have the like expression Isa. 51. 23. *But I will put it (that is, the cup of trembling) into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over.*

Verf. 15. *I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams.*] That is, with the smoke arising either from the whole burnt-offerings of rams, or from the fat of rams, which in peace-offerings was only burnt upon the altar; for this it is that is here called *incense*, to shew that how unsavory soever it might be in it self, yet through Christ, of whom all these sacrifices were types, it was a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour unto God. Yet some understand this of *incense*, that was burnt with their sacrifices.

Verf. 17. *I cryed unto him with my mouth, &c.*] Some conceive that these words *with my mouth* are added, to shew the certainty of this truth, that God is most ready to hear the prayers of those that call upon him; as if a husbandman should say, to prove that God is most ready to blesse the work of his hands that is industrious in his calling, *With these hands of mine did I till this ground and sow it, and thus and thus God was pleased to blesse my labours.* But for this see the Note

Psal. 3. 4. *And he was extolled with my tongue; to wit, by my returning him praise, when he had granted my requests; or, by my praying; for God is greatly exalted by his servants flying to him in all their necessities, as their only hope and refuge.*

Verf. 18. *If I regard iniquity in mine heart, the Lord will not hear me.*] That is, If I have any evil intention in that which I beg of God, according to that Jam. 4. 3. *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts;* or, if I wittingly allow my self in, or give my self over to any sin whatsoever, praying, but the whilst, through inward self-flattery, delighting in any sin, and purposing to nuzzle my self therein, yea though it should be only some inward lust of my heart, God would not regard my prayers. This I conceive is the drift of these words: yet it may well be also that the Psalmist intended hereby to justify himself against the slanders of his enemies.

Verf. 20. *Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.*] So that though he did not regard iniquity in his heart, as is said before ver. 18. yet he ascribes it wholly to the mercy of God, that his prayers were not rejected.

P S A L M LXVII.

The Title. **T***O the chief Musician on Neginoth.*] See the Note on the Title of the 4. Psalm.

Verf. 1. *God be mercifull unto us, and blesse us, and cause his face to shine upon us.*] There seems to be a clear allusion in these words to that form of prayer used by the Priests in blessing the people, Numb. 6. 25, 26. for which see the Notes there, as also Psal. 31. 16. But yet what is here desired, the following verse doth more fully shew.

Verf. 2. *That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.*] As if they had said, We do not desire merely that it may be well with us, but *that thy way*, that is, thy dealings with thy people, which are all mercy and truth, Psal. 25. 10. (see the Note there) *may be known upon earth*, that is, to all the inhabitants of the earth, *and thy saving health among all nations*, that is, and that the way which thou hast ordained for the saving of thy people may be known amongst all nations. Because the sad calamities, which the Church did often lye under, were as a stumbling-block to other nations, through their misunderstanding Gods intentions therein, and kept them off from joyning themselves to the Church; therefore the people of God do here desire, that God, by the discovery of his favour to his people, would let all the world see his way to his people, &c. to wit, how dearly he loves them, how tenderly carefull he is over them, to provide for them, to protect and deliver them, and to order all things for their salvation, and not for their destruction, that so this might bring in the heathen nations to joyn themselves to the Church of God. So that by *the way* of God here is meant, 1. generally all the waies of his speciall goodnesse and mercy to his people; and 2. more particularly and especially that way of his *saving health*, as it is expressed in the second clause, that is, that

that way which God hath ordained for the eternall salvation of his people through Christ: whence it is that Christ is called *the way*, Joh. 14. 6. and Gods salvation, Luk. 2. 30; as also the doctrine of the Gospel is called *the way of the Lord*, Act. 18. 25, 26. This is the chief thing which the Church here desires may be made known to all nations; and so the words covertly imply that great mystery of the calling of the Gentiles.

Verf. 3. *Let the people praise thee, O God, &c.*] That is, thee the true God, abandoning their false gods, whom they have hitherto served: which is repeated in the following verses again and again, to shew that they could never sufficiently rejoyce in, or be thankfull for those inestimable benefits, which they should all enjoy under the kingdome of Christ.

Verf. 4. *For thou shalt judge the people righteously, &c.*] The meaning is, that though God suffereth his people sometimes to be afflicted by their enemies for their good, yet he will surely deliver them at last, ordering and guiding them in all things for their advantages; yea and that especially by making them righteous, and obedient to all his righteous commandements. The like is often prophesied concerning Christs kingdome, as Isa. 11. 4. and in divers other places.

Verf. 6. *Then shall the earth yield her increase, &c.*] Many understand this figuratively, to wit, either that in all parts of the world many converts should be brought in to the Church, and so the earth should yield a mighty harvest of holy men to God; or else that the elect of all nations should bring forth the fruit of repentance and praise, and of a holy life and conversation, to the glory of God: and so they say the same thing that is here intended, is expressed more in the end of the next verse, *and all the ends of the earth shall fear him*. But I rather understand it literally, that God should blesse his people by causing the earth to yield abundant increase: only we must know then, that under this particular all other outward blessings are comprehended; as the following words do also imply, *and God, even our own God, shall blesse us*.

Verf. 7. *God shall blesse us, &c.*] These words are here again repeated, thereby covertly to cry down, as it were, either the infidelity of those that would not trust in so sure a refuge, or the ingratitude of those that lived upon Gods blessings, but would not acknowledge the Donour.

P S A L M LXVIII.

Verf. 1. **L** *Et God arise, let his enemies be scattered, &c.*] As if he should have said, If God do but stirre or shew himself, even that will be enough for the scattering of his enemies. Because this Psalm begins with the very words, which were still used by Moses when the Ark was to remove, Numb. 10. 35. it is most probable that David composed it, when after his divers glorious victories over the Philistines 2 Samuel 5. 20, &c. he resolved to remove the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Zion with great triumph and joy, 2 Samuel 6. 12. But yet because those words verse 18. of this Psalm, *Thou hast ascended on high, &c.* are by the Apostle

applied to the ascension of Christ into heaven Eph. 4. 8, it cannot be denied that David did look upon that triumphant removall of the Ark, as a type of Christs glorious ascension, who was indeed that *angel of Gods presence*, Isa. 63. 9. whom they tempted in the wilderness, 1 Cor. 10. 9. And accordingly these words may covertly contain a prophecy of the stability of Davids kingdome, especially in Christ, and of the subduing of all his enemies.

Verf. 2. *As smoke is driven away, so drive them away, &c.*] That is, Though they mount aloft for a time, and seem very terrible to others, as the smoke doth when at first it overspreads and darkens the skie, yet let them perish suddenly: but see also the Note Psal. 37. 20. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God*: but see the Note also Psal. 22. 14.

Verf. 3. *But let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God, &c.*] David seems here to oppose the exceeding joy of the Israelites at the carrying of the Ark to Zion, to the sad condition they were in under Saul and the judges, especially when the Ark was taken by the Philistines: but see also the Notes Psal. 5. 11, and 32. 11, and 58. 10. And observable also it is, that whereas in the foregoing verse the wicked are said to *perish at the presence of God*, here on the contrary the righteous are said to *rejoyce before God*: the presence of God, that is deadly to the wicked, is a joy to the righteous.

Verf. 4. *Extoll him that rideth upon the heavens, &c.*] See the Notes Deut. 33. 26, and 2 Sam. 22. 11: *by his name IAH*; which is an abbreviation of *Iehovah* (of which see the Note Exod. 6. 3.) as *Eli of Elohim*: but the meaning is, that they should praise him, who is the only true God, and so hath made himself known to be, and that especially in his word, wherein by his name he hath distinguished himself from all the false Gods of the heathens.

Verf. 5. *A Father of the fatherlesse, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.*] That is, in heaven, see Deut. 26. 15; or, in the land of Canaan, see the Note Exod. 15. 13; or, in his Tabernacle, where he is alwaies present amongst us, and ready at hand to help, see Psal. 26. 8. But under these particulars of Gods favour to the fatherlesse and widows David intends chiefly to imply, that God is ready to help his poor oppressed people, when they are destitute of all outward succour.

Verf. 6. *God setteth the solitary in families, &c.*] That is, He blesteth the barren with many children; for they are the barren that are here called *the solitary*, either because the reproach of barrennesse amongst the Jews made such delight much in solitarinesse, not caring to be in company; or rather, because their houses might be deemed solitary, in regard their families were not encreased with children. But yet this expression of setting the solitary in families may be extended to the Lords bringing of them home to live peaceably and quietly in their own houses, and amongst their kindred and friends, that had been driven away, and so wandered about as exiles in desarts and solitary places. *But the rebellious dwell in a dry land*; that is, in a condition destitute of all comforts, and where they are exposed to manifold miseries. And some conceive that this is
spoken

spoken in reference to the rebellious Israelites perishing in the wilderness.

Verf. 7. *O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, &c.*] For this expression see the Note Lev. 27. 17.

Verf. 8. *The earth shook, &c.*] See Exod. 19. 18: *the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; sweating, as it were, with terror and toil.* But the words both of this and the foregoing verse seem to have been taken out of Deborahs song, Judg. 5. 4, 5; for which therefore see the Note there.

Verf. 9. *Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.*] As if he should have said, After thou hadst brought us into the promised land, thou didst still manifest thy fatherly care over us, in that thou didst yearly refresh the land with seasonable shows, and thereby didst renew the strength of that thine inheritance, (see the Note Exod. 15. 17.) when it was dried up and spent, wearied as it were with the scorching heat of the Sun, so that it grew faint for want of water, and not able to yield fruit any longer. This I conceive is the meaning of this place. Yet some understand it of Gods refreshing his people, his inheritance (see the Note Deut. 4. 20.) with the shows of the Gospel: see the Note Deut. 11. 11.

Verf. 10. *Thy congregation hath dwelt therein, &c.*] This is added to shew the reason why God did yearly bless the land with such encrease, namely, that his people might be provided for, whom he had planted there; and that the rather, because it was indeed almost a miracle, that such a spot of ground, as Canaan was, should nourish so many millions of people, which is not now sufficient, as some report, to nourish the thousandth part of them. *Thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodnesse*, to wit, this land, or rather this fruitfull encrease of the land, *for the poor*; that is, thou givest so great an encrease, that even the poor are provided for; or, thou hast provided liberally for thy poor people: and so he calls them, either to intimate that their condition would have been soon poor enough, if God had not so provided for them; and in reference to their poor condition in the wilderness, or in Egypt, or their ancestours; and all to magnify Gods goodnesse in setting his heart upon such a wretched people. See the Note Deut. 26. 5.

Verf. 11. *The Lord gave the word, &c.*] Here David begins to speak of the victories God had given his people; wherein he insists the longer, because the praying God for some late victories obtained was one chief thing intended in this Psalm. *The Lord gave the word*; that is, By vanquishing their enemies for them, God put a triumphant song into the mouths of his people; or, he caused the tidings of severall glorious victories to be brought to them: *great was the company of those that published it*; that is, in every town and village the women came out, (for the word in the original here is in the feminine gender) and that in great multitudes, to sing songs of triumph: concerning which custome see the Note 1 Sam. 18. 6. That this may be also applyed to the publishing of the glad tidings of Christs victories over the world and death and Hell by the ministers of the Gospel, who bring this treasure to men in earthen weak vessels, I deny not: but that it should be here intended, I cannot see.

Verf. 12. *Kings of armies, &c.*] This may be taken as that song of triumph which

which the women should sing, implied in the foregoing verse; or else as the words of David, wherein he continueth the relation of the Churches victories: *Kings of armies*; that is, Kings attended and furnished with divers and mighty armies: *did flee apace*; to wit, as stricken with great terrour: yea the words in the originall, *did flee, did flee*, may imply, that they were often and suddenly put to flight, and that they fled severall waies and farre away, see Deut. 28. 25. *And she that tarried at home divided the spoile*; that is, the women that stayed at home: and the meaning is, either that the souldiers had such rich spoile, that at their return they had much to give away amongst their wives and daughters and friends; or that the enemy was so wholly vanquished, that the women did not fear to goe out to gather the spoile that was left in the field; and so the mighty became a prey to weak ones. And this may be applyed also to the victories of the Church in the daies of the Gospel, over her enemies spirituall and temporall.

Verf. 13. *Though ye have lien among the pots, &c.*] This also may be taken as a part of the womens song before mentioned, wherein they encourage the people of God; or rather as the words of the Psalmist, wherein from the great things he had recited, which God had done for his people, he encourageth them to trust in God for the time to come. *Though ye have lien amongst the pots*; that is, though ye may be for a time in great darknesse and distresse, in great streights and poverty, kept in the basest bondage and drudgery, like kitchin-scul lions, that lay themselves down to sleep amongst the pots, or, as some say, like those scul lions in an army (which may be indeed particularly intended, because the Psalmist is here speaking of war) that skulk by night amongst the pots, there to shelter themselves from the cold winds and rain, & so are all-over besmeared with dirt and smoak and soot: *yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*; that is, God will bring you again to a very prosperous condition, and make you glorious by deliverance. Yea and it may also imply, that those afflictions should not impair their spirituall dignity and beauty, but should rather promote it, in that their faith and courage and other graces should shine the more brightly. And how this may be applyed to that purity and glory, wherewith Christ shall clothe those that were most wretched and loathsome in their naturall condition, we may easily conceive. As for his comparing them to doves, see the Note Psal. 55. 6.

Verf. 14. *When the Almighty scattered kings in it, &c.*] That is, in the land of Canaan, Gods inheritance mentioned verf. 9: *it was white as snow in Salmon*; to wit, say some expositours, with the bones of the slain scattered thereon. But considering how this is joyned with the foregoing verse, I rather think that in saying the land *was white as snow in Salmon*, on the lofty tops whereof they say the snow used to lye all the year long, David intended to signify, that by those victories God had given them, the land was brought, as it were miraculously, into a flourishing, prosperous and joyfull condition, (which whitenesse signifieth) that was in a darksome and dolefull condition before.

Verf. 15. *The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan, a high hill, &c.*] Here David begins to set forth the chief priviledge which God had afforded his people, and which

which was indeed the fountain from whence all other blessings did flow in unto them, namely, that God had chosen to dwell amongst them as his peculiar people; for to intimate this he extols mount Sion, whether they were now carrying the Ark, the sign of Gods presence, equalling it with or exalting it above all other hills whatsoever in this regard. For so the words must needs be understood, as they are render'd in our Translation, *The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan, &c.* as if he had said, Though Sion the hill of God be but a barren and a small low hill of itself, yet being now chosen of God to be the settled place of his habitation, in this regard it is no whit inferiour to that rich and fruitfull and lofty hill of Bashan, (for which see the Note Psal. 22. 12.) but doth rather excell it. And hereby also is implied, that the kingdome of David seated in Sion, and so consequently of Christ, did far excell all the kingdomes of the world, in regard of this prerogative of Gods dwelling amongst them as his people: which is also the drift of the following verse, wherein he checks all hills for their proud lifting up themselves, seeing all their eminency was nothing being compared to that of Sion; *Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in, &c.*

Verf. 17. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, &c.* Or, *many thousands of angels*, as if he had said, an innumerable multitude of angels. To shew what a sure defence God was to his people, amongst whom he dwelt in Sion, David tells us here, that God was continually attended with an innumerable company of angels, whom he could send forth when he pleased, as chariots of war to fight against the enemies of his people: *the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place*; that is, God is among this mighty host of angels as their Lord, having them all under his power and command, and who is in himself a surer defence then all the angels can be; and that in his holy place in Sion, as he was formerly in Sinai, (which may also be intended here under those words *his holy place*) see the Note Deut. 33. 2: which David here mentions to imply, that Gods presence now in Sion was by vertue of that covenant which he made with them in Sinai, that they should be his peculiar people; and that he was present there by revealing his will unto them, as he was formerly in Sinai by giving them his law. Thus commonly these words are understood. But yet many learned Expositours understand them of the angels attending Christ in his ascension into heaven, and that this is said here of Christs ascension, in allusion to the multitudes of horsemen and chariots that attended the Ark when it was carried up into Sion, which was a type, they say, of Christs ascending into heaven. And indeed it is evident Act. 1. 10. that the angels were present with Christ when he ascended into heaven. And if they attended him when he came into the world, honouring his birth with a hymn of praise, *Glory to God in the highest, &c.* Luk. 2. 13, 14, according to that Heb. 1. 6. *when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*; well may we think that they also attended him in his glorious and triumphant ascension into heaven, prailing him for his victories over our spirituall enemies, as in Revel. 5. 11, 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Verf. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, &c.*] The Apostle doth expressly apply this to the ascension of Christ Eph. 4. 8: for having said verf. 7. that *unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, to prove that the spirituall gifts which are severally dispensed to Christians are given them by Christ, he alledgeth this place, *Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men*; and that he alledgeth it with respect to the ascension of Christ is evident verl. 9, 10. *Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, &c.* Some learned Expositours do therefore hold, that David in this place doth as a prophet speak directly & immediately of Christ, taking occasion from the promises he had before mentioned, which God had made to his people, to speak of Christ the fountain of all Gods promises, & from the removing of the Ark into Sion, to speak of the heavenly Sion, whereinto Christ, the true Ark of the Covenant, God manifested in the flesh, is ascended up. *Thou hast ascended on high*; that is, Thou, O Lord Christ, after thou hadst humbled thy self even to the very grave, didst rise again, & hast ascended triumphantly into the highest heaven: *thou hast led captivity captive*; that is, thou hast led away many captives, or thou hast carried away thy enemies into absolute captivity, to wit, the world, sin, death, and Satan; even those *principalities and powers* (as the Apostle speaks Col. 2. 15.) whom *having spoiled on the Crosse, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them*. I know indeed that some learned men do by the *captivity that was led captive* understand the elect, Christs redeemed ones, whom having rescued from the bondage of Satan, that they might serve him, he carried them with him triumphantly into heaven, to wit, in that by his ascension he opened a way for them, that they might follow him thither; whence is that of the Apostle Eph. 2. 6. that *God hath raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Iesus*. But the first exposition is doubtlesse the best. As for the next words, *thou hast received gifts for men*, which is rendered by the Apostle, *and gave gifts unto men*, it is meant, doubtlesse, of the gifts of the holy Ghost, which Christ, after he was ascended to the right hand of his father, did abundantly powr forth upon his officers and other his members, whereof the fiery tongues that lighted on the Apostles at the feast of Pentecost Act. 2. 3. were a visible sign; for so the Apostle explains this place Eph. 4. 11, 12. Nor need we stumble at it, that the Apostle saith *and gave gifts unto men*, whereas it is here in the Psalm, *thou hast received gifts for men*, both these expressions being all one in effect; and that either 1. because (as some would have it) Christ gave gifts to his officers that he left behind him, that he might receive from them those whom they converted, that were brought in as an offering to God, to whom they were to live; according to that of the Apostle Rom. 15. 16. where he saith that he preached the Gospel, *that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the holy Ghost*; wherein he might be said to receive *gifts for men*, in regard that Christ caused many to be thus brought in unto him, not for his own advantage, but for his Churches benefit: or 2. rather, because Christ as Mediator received the gifts of the holy Ghost from the Father, that he might give them to his servants, as he saith Matth.

11. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my father, and Joh. 14. 26. the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom my father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and Joh. 15. 26. when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father: or 3. (which I like the best) because in an usuall scripture-phrase, thou hast received gifts for men is as much as to say, receiving thou hast given gifts unto men; as in Hos. 14. 2. that which is render'd in the margin of our Bibles, Take away all iniquitie and give good, is in the originall, and receive good, that is, take and give good to thy people; and so Exod. 25. 2. that which is in our Translation, speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering, is in the original, that they take for me an offering; and so it is here, thou hast received gifts for men, that is, thou hast taken and given gifts unto men: and thereupon that follows vers. 19. Blessed be the Lord who daily loadeth us with benefits. Yea, for the rebellious also; that is, those that do long stand out rebelliously against the Gospel, as is expressly evident in many of the Jews, that would not submit to Christ, when he preached the word of life unto them, and yet after the ascension of Christ were wonne to the Christian faith, and received the gifts of the holy Ghost: that the Lord God might dwell among them; that is, amongst those that were wonne to joyn themselves to God in Christ as his people, and that partly in Gospel-ordinances, the outward signs of Gods presence among them, and partly in their hearts by faith and other gifts of his spirit, and afterwards eternally in heaven. And so these words do imply, that Christ did not ascend into heaven, that he might be far off from his Church; but rather that he might be the more effectually present amongst them by the gifts of his spirit, according to that promise Matth. 28. 20. feeding them with his own body and bloud, and teaching and guiding them in the waies of life by his own holy spirit. Thus we see how this place must be understood of the ascension of Christ. But yet I see not why the words may not be understood, as they are by many other of our best Expositours, as spoken to God, and that with relation to the carrying up of the Ark into Sion, after many glorious victories that God had given to David over his enemies; though withall mediately and principally they were meant of Christs triumphant ascension into heaven, of whom David we know was a speciall type. For indeed to the type the words may be very fitly applyed, as well as to Christ, 1. because in Sauls time, by the enemies frequent distressing the Israelites, the glory of the God of Israel had been much obscured, whereas now by Davids subduing the heathen the glory of God was highly exalted again, therefore in relation to Davids taking the strong and high places of the enemy, or rather of the advancing of Gods glory thereby, and his triumphant going up into Sion, in the Ark, the sign of his presence, David speaks thus to the Lord that had given him these victories, and had brought his enemies into bondage to him, *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive*: and 2. because not God, but his people, yea and many of the wicked rebellious ones amongst them, were enriched by the spoils of their enemies, and the tribute they were forced to pay, as a rancome for their lives and liberty, and yet it was God that had brought them into subjection, therefore he addeth those words, *thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also*; and 3. because by these*

victories, which David and his people had obtained over their enemies, God had made it evident, that he dwelt amongst them as his peculiar people, for their protection and assistance, therefore is that last clause added, *that the Lord God might dwell among them*. But however, whether we referre it to the type or antitype, there is doubtlesse in the severall expressions here used an allusion to the custome of Princes riding in triumph after some great victories obtained: as namely 1. to their ascending up into their triumphant chariots, or their riding up in their chariots to some place of eminency, such as was the Capitol in Rome; 2. to their leading of their prisoners bound before them; and 3. to their casting of medals and pieces of money to the people, as they rode in triumph amongst them.

Vers. 20. *Vnto God the Lord belong the issues from death.*] That is, He hath many and divers waies to deliver his people from the most desperate dangers; see the Note Psal. 3. 8. And this is here mentioned, with that which follows, as an effect of the ascension of Christ.

Vers. 21. *But God shall wound the head of his enemies, &c.*] That is, He shall wound them mortally: and the same is repeated again in the next clause, *and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses*; that is, as perseuereth obstinately in opposing Christ and his Church: only because long, shaggy and bushy hair was usually worn by men out of pride, & makes those that wear it to look the more fiercely, therefore this expression of wounding their *hairy scalp* may probably imply, that God would irrecoverably wound his proudest & fiercest enemies. Yet some understand it of Christs vanquishing our spirituall enemies, as conceiving the words have relation to that old promise, that the seed of the woman should break the serpents head.

Vers. 22. *The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea.*] That is, God hath decreed or promised, that though his people should be in as desperate danger, as they were when formerly they fought with Og, that terrible giant, and mighty king of Bashan, yet he would cause them to return with triumph, laden with the spoils of their vanquished enemies, as he did then; and though they should seem to be in the very jaws of death, as when they went through the red sea, yet he would deliver them and bring them safe out of all their dangers, as he did then. So that this phrase of bringing his people again from Bashan, &c. doth either imply his causing them to return with victory from fighting with their enemies, or rather that their deliverances from such desperate dangers should be as a resurrection from the dead, as if God should have brought them back again from the grave. As for those first words, *The Lord said, &c.* the meaning is not, that God had then made any such expresse particular promise; but that thus much was intended in the generall promises that he had made for the preservation of his people; or that thus much might justly be concluded from that former experience they had had of the great things that God had done for them.

Vers. 23. *That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 58. 10.

Vers. 24.

Verf. 24. *They have seen thy goings, O God, &c.*] This may not unfirly be understood of Gods going forth with his people in their wars, to subdue their enemies before them: for having spoken in the foregoing verses, how God would make his people victorious over their enemies, as in former times when they fought with the king of Bashan, and when they were carried through the red sea; in relation thereto this may be added, *They*, that is, the enemy to their terrour, and thy people to their great encouragement, *have seen thy goings, O God*, that is, they have seen how thou hast gone before thy people, as their captain, to cause their enemies to fly before them; or, they have seen the strange way thou madest for them, when thou ledst them through the red sea. But yet because of that which is added in the following verses, I rather conceive that the Psalmist begins to set forth the triumphant pomp of those that sang praises to God for their victories: to wit, either that which is described Exod. 15. 1, 20, 21. after the drowning of Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the red sea, of which mention was made before verf. 22; or rather that of Davids carrying up the Ark into Sion with great solemnity, as is largely described 1 Chro. 15. which was the occasion of composing this Psalm. *They have seen thy goings, O God*; that is, *They* that flocked together to behold this glorious sight, have with great joy seen how thou wentest up in triumph amongst thy people: *even the goings of my God, my King, in the Sanctuary*; that is, they have seen thy goings, O God, who dwellest in thy Sanctuary, where thou hearest the prayers of thy people, and from whence thou comest forth to their help; or, they have seen how thou wentest up amongst thy people, when they went to praise thee in thy Sanctuary: which is farther described in the following verse, *The singers went before, &c.*

Verf. 26. *Blesse ye God in the congregations, even the Lord from the fountain of Israel.*] This may be understood either as the words of the Psalmist, or as the triumphant song sung by the people, hinted in the foregoing verse, *the singers went before, &c.* And it is divers waies expounded by Interpreters: as 1. that the people of God are thereby stirred up to praise God from their hearts, *the fountain* from whence all praises must flow that will be accepted of God; or 2. to fetch their praises from the Scriptures, *the fountain* of Gods Church, from whence they must learn how to serve God; or 3. to blesse the Lord Christ, who was descended from the Patriarch Jacob, of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, Rom. 9. 5. But I think the meaning of the words is best expressed in the margin of our Bibles, *Blesse ye God, even the Lord, ye that are of the fountain of Israel*, that is, all ye tribes that are sprung from Israel; see the Note Deu. 33. 28. Yet some make this the meaning of the words; *ye that are of the fountain of Israel*, that is, that are true Israelites, the genuine children of that faithfull and pious patriarch: & others understand the words mystically; ye that had your spirituall being, as members of the Church, from *the fountain* of the Gospel preached, which from Israel, out of Sion flowed into all nations.

Verf. 27. *There is little Benjamin, with their ruler, &c.*] That is, with their rulers or princes; or, with him that was the head of their tribe: which might be the rather added here, to shew that this tribe, though it was the least of all the tribes, see the Note 1 Sam. 9. 21. & therefore called here *little Benjamin* (haply also in allusion to

Benjamins being the youngest & least amongst all the sons of Jacob; yet was a distinct tribe by it self, and had their Ruler amongst the Heads of the tribes, as others had: *the princes of Iudah and their counsell,* that is, their counsellors; or, *with their company*, that is, those of the people of the tribe that came along with them. However I conceive the drift of this verse is, to describe the pompous train of those that attended the Ark, when it was carried up into Sion: and though some conceive that *Benjamin and Iudah* are expressed, and so also afterwards *the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali*, because these tribes had a speciall stroke in those victories which David had lately obtained, and that *Benjamin* is named first, because that tribe went first in the train; yet I rather think that the Psalmists aim was, by naming the chiefeft and the meanest of the tribes, *Iudah and Benjamin*, these two that were nearest to Jerusalem, and *Zebulun and Naphtali*, that were farthest off, figuratively to imply that all the tribes were there; and that the rather to shew, that the civill wars being ended, and all the kingdome reduced to obedience, the whole nation was now unanimously joyned in seeking to promote the worship of God; and that *Benjamin* is named first, that David might not seem to neglect that tribe that had been most violent for Sauls family against him. As for those that apply this whole Psalm to Christ, they understand this verse of the Apostles, who were many of them of the tribe of Iudah, as being the brethren of Christ; and many of Galilee, where lay the portion of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali; and by *little Benjamin* they understand Paul, who was the last called of all the Apostles, and tearmed *the least of the Apostles*, and was indeed of Benjamins tribe. But there is no necessity of applying all the passages of the Psalm to the daies of the Gospel.

Verf. 28. *Thy God hath commanded thy strength, &c.*] That is, God that hath taken thee for his peculiar people, hath established thy kingdome with great strength, and hath given thee strength to vanquish thine enemies: *strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us*; that is, settle and strengthen more and more the kingdome and dominion thou hast conferred upon us; confirm, continue and encrease the victories thou hast given us, and the benefits thou hast bestowed on us. And this also may be applyed to the kingdome of Christ.

Verf. 29. *Because of thy temple at Ierusalem, &c.*] That is, Because thou art present amongst us in thy Temple which shall be, or thy Tabernacle which is at Jerusalem (for it may be referred to either of them, see the Note 1 Sam. 1. 9.) and dost manifest this by the wonderfull things thou doest for us: *shall kings bring presents unto thee*; that is, the kings that shall successively rule over thy people shall bring gratulatory sacrifices and offerings unto thee; or rather, kings of forraign nations shall bring presents unto thy people, by way of acknowledging that thou, the great God of heaven and earth, dwellest amongst them as thy people: see 1 Kings 10. 24, 25. But this may be also understood as a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles.

Verf. 30. *Rebuke the company of spear-men, &c.*] That is, as the word in the originall signifies, men armed with long spears like unto reeds, or made of reeds; their canes or reeds being, they say, in those countries hard and strong, like the

the wood of trees. Some indeed render this, *Rebuke the beast of the reeds*: and because reeds are wont to grow in watry and fat grounds, whence is that Isa. 35. 7. *the parched ground shall become a pool, &c. in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grasse, with reeds and rushes*; therefore by *the beast of the reeds* some do understand voluptuous men, or people that are proud and bold by reason of their wealth and plenty, like cattel that feed in a fruitfull soil. But I take it to be more agreeable with that which follows to take the words thus; *Rebuke the beast of the reeds*, that is, Destroy, or drive away, or blast the endeavors of those mighty, savage and barbarous enemies of thy people, that are like unto those wild beasts that use to lurk amongst the reeds; or, as some would have it, fierce and subtle, like the Crocodile that useth to lye in the reeds of Nilus in Egypt; whence they say it follows in the next verse, *Princes shall come out of Egypt, &c. the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people*; that is, their mighty Princes or commanders in war, with the meaner people that follow them, see the Note Psal. 22. 12: *till every one submit himself with pieces of silver*; that is, with pieces of mony, or lumps and wedges of silver: *scatter thou the people that delight in war*; to wit, those that causelessly make war upon thy people.

Verf. 31. *Princes shall come out of Egypt, &c.*] This, and that in the following verse, is clearly a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles; *Egypt* and *Ethiopia* being perhaps named in stead of all, because they were above others most grossely idolatrous and wicked: *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God*; to wit, by yielding up themselves to him as his captives, by praying to him, or begging mercy of him, or by presenting to him their gifts or tribute.

Verf. 32. *Sing unto God, ye kingdomes of the earth, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 47. 1, 2.

Verf. 33. *To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old, &c.*] That is, who is a God of infinite majesty, the most high God, that from the beginning of the world hath swaied and governed the heavens and all things contained therein; and therefore it is fit that all kingdomes and nations should serve him: *lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice*; see the Notes Psal. 29. 3, 4, &c.

Verf. 34. *Ascribe ye strength unto God, &c.*] This is spoken in reference to what he had immediately before said concerning the thunder; and see the Note Psal. 29. 1: *his excellency is over Israel*; that is, his majesty, the excellency of his power and goodnesse, &c. is in a speciall manner manifested amongst his people, in his care over them above others, in the miraculous victories he hath given them, and other the glorious things he hath wrought for them: *and his strength is in the clouds*; that is, his power is eminently seen there; which again hath reference to what he had said in the foregoing verse of the thunder: as if he had said, And thus hath God two glorious thrones, whereon he is seen in his majesty, one in his Church on earth, and the other in heaven.

Verf. 35. *O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places.*] That is, as some conceive, both out of heaven, and out of thy tabernacle; which indeed agrees with what was said in the foregoing verse: but see the Note Psal. 43. 3. and see also Psal. 47. 2.

P S A L M L X I X.

Verf. 1. **S***ave me, O God, &c.*] It is evident by many passages of this Psalm, that in the New Testament are applied to Christ, as we may see verf. 4, 9, 21, and 22, that David wrote this Psalm of himself, as he was a type of Christ; and therefore what is here said in the beginning of this Psalm, may be understood of the Passion of Christ; *Save me, O God*, see Matth. 26. 34: *for the waters are come in unto my soul*; that is, I am filled and even choaked up with waters, to the unavoidable endangering of my life. See the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 5. and Psal. 32. 6.

Verf. 4. *They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 7. 3, and 25. 3. Yet many conceive, that it was in particular reference to this place, that Christ said of the Jews hatred against him Joh. 15. 25. that it was *that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause*. As for the last clause in this verse, *then I restored that which I took not away*, it seems to have been a proverbiall speech, used commonly concerning those that suffered for those things of which they were not guilty; and so it may be used here by David, either to imply generally that they did not only most injuriously oppress him, but also pretended therein to proceed against him in a way of justice, as against a malefactor; or else more particularly, that in spoiling him of all that he had, they clamoured against him, that it was but to make satisfaction to the justice of the law which he had transgressed. But now, if we understand it of Christ, the meaning must needs be, that he suffered for other mens offences, not for his own, according to that Isa. 53. 4, 5, 6. *surely he hath borne our griefs, &c.* and so did indeed satisfy divine justice for mans robbing God of his glory.

Verf. 5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishnesse, and my sins are not hid from thee, &c.*] Understand this as spoken by Christ, and then the meaning must be this, Thou, Lord, knowest that the sins for which I suffer are only the sins of thine elect, which are mine merely by imputation: but understand it of David, and then either we must take it as spoken ironically, *O God, thou knowest my foolishnesse, &c.* that is, thou knowest whether I be guilty, or (which is all one in effect) that I am no way guilty of that foolishnesse, that is, that wickednesse, those grievous sins which mine enemies would charge upon me; and so this expression is much like that of the Prophet, Jer. 20. 7. *O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived*: or else rather as an acknowledgement of his failings, yet withall implying a profession of his innocency in those things whereof they accused him; as if he should have said, Though I am foolish, I confesse, and have many waies offended thee, which thou knowest right well; yet withall thou knowest that I am no way culpable in those things which they would lay to my charge.

Verf. 6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake, &c.*] To wit, as apprehending that thou hast forsaken me, because thou comest not in to my help, notwithstanding all my confidence in thee, and my frequent

quent and fervent prayers unto thee, and so being discouraged by mine example; or, as failing of that help which they expected from me, who had often been an instrument of their preservation. But now if we refer these words to Christ, they seem to contain a desire, that he might be supported in that great work of mans redemption, that so those that had fixed their faith and hope on him might not be ashamed (as indeed all his disciples must needs have been, if he had not after his crucifying triumphed over death by his resurrection, which is evident by that sad complaint of those two Luk. 24. 21. *We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel,*) but might alwaies find God ready to grant their desires in whatever they should ask in his name, which the following clause may seem to imply, *let not those that seek thee be confounded, &c.*

Verf. 7. *Because for thy sake I have born reproach, &c.*] That is, for my endeavouring to walk piously, to oppose the corruptions of the times, and to approve my self to thee in all my waies; and more particularly for my yielding to take the kingdome upon me, which I did not out of any private ambition, but merely at thine appointment. But now Christ may be said to have born reproach for Gods sake, either because he underwent it in obedience to Gods will, or because he did all those things, for which men reproached him, out of piety and obedience to God.

Verf. 8. *I am become a stranger unto my brethren, &c.*] That is, My nearest friends, for fear of displeasing Saul and other mine enemies, stand aloof from me. But if we referre this to Christ, it may be meant either of the Jews in generall, according to that Joh. 1. 11. *he came unto his own, and his own received him not;* or else more particularly of his disciples forsaking him, Matth. 26. 56. and Peters denying him verf. 70; yea and perhaps of his own kinsmens despising him, of which it is said Joh. 7. 5. *that neither did his brethren believe in him.*

Verf. 9. *For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up, &c.*] By the house of God here may be meant, 1. the Tabernacle of God, towards which David shewed much zeal, both in that he was, whilst he might, a most frequent and devout observer of all the service of God therein, and especially in that he was grieved for the neglect and corrupting of that truth and purity of worship, which should have been maintained and preserved therein, and highly offended with those that were the cause of it; and 2. the Church and people of God, for which he was zealous, in that he so earnestly desired and sought their welfare, and was troubled and displeased to see, that they who were called by Gods name and professed themselves Gods people, should yet indeed deny God, and corrupt his religion, and seek the ruine of those that were indeed the people of God. And then by his being *eaten up* with this zeal may be meant, 1. that it had exhausted and consumed, as it were, his moisture and vitall spirits; or 2. that it had wholly turned him into fire, as things eaten are turned into the nature of him that eats them; or 3. that being transported herewith, it made him wholly to forget and disregard himself, not in the least minding his own credit or safety; or 4. that it had exposed him to be devoured by the rage of his enemies. How this is applyed to Christ, we see Joh. 2. 17. As for the next clause, *and the reproaches of them that reproached*

reproached thee are fallen upon me, 1. we must know, that God may be said to be reproached by any wickednesse committed by ungodly men, contrary to the laws and commandments of God, and particularly by any opposition that is made against his truth, any corruption that is brought into his worship, and any wrong that is done to his servants for his sake: and 2. that David might say, that the reproaches wherewith they reproached God, did fall upon him, 1. because his enemies reproached him for Gods sake, for his being so solicitous to obey Gods will; or 2. because in regard of his interest in God, he took himself to be reproached in the reproaches of his God; or 3. because he took to heart the reproaches wherewith they reproached God, as much as, yea more then if himself had been reproached by them; or 4. because he grieved as bitterly for their sin and misery that thus reproached God, as if himself had been guilty of their sins. And indeed this last some conceive to be most probable, because the Apostle applying these words to Christ, Rom. 15. 3. doth from thence undertake to prove, that Christians ought rather to seek to please their neighbours for their good, then themselves, as Christ for our good was content to undergoe the guilt of our sins and the punishment due thereto, *Even Christ*, saith the Apostle, *pleased not himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me*; to wit, in that the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ, and he suffered the curse which they else should have suffered.

Verf. 10. *When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, &c.*] To wit, as bewailing both Gods dishonour, and their wickednesse, and begging of God that they might repent and be saved, (and that because I saw my zeal against them o-ther waies discovered, did no good, but only enraged them the more against me;) *that was to my reproach*, that is, they derided me for my piety and (as they judged it) my vain confidence in God.

Verf. 12. *They that sit in the gate speak against me, &c.*] That is, say some, those that sit begging in the gate. But doubtlesse the meaning is, that the magistrates spake against him, or the people that assembled before the courts of justice; for which see the Notes Gen. 22. 17. and Psal. 9. 14: this being a great aggravation of his misery, that they, whose office it was to defend his innocency, should in the seat of justice seek his ruine: and many learned Expositours take the next clause as an expression of the same thing, namely that the great ones, whom he calls *drinkers of strong drink*, (for so it is in the originall) sang songs of him. But reading it as it is in our Bibles, *and I was the song of the drunkards*, the meaning is, that the baser sort of debauched people did also scorn and deride him. And so David hereby seeks to expresse, that in all places, both publick and private, and by all sorts of persons, from the highest to the lowest, he was traduced and reproached daily.

Verf. 13. *But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time, &c.*] As if he had said, Notwithstanding all these discouragements, I continue still to pray unto thee, O Lord; or, whilst mine enemies do thus wrong me, by prayer I seek to thee for shelter; and my prayers, however mine enemies deride me for them, do find acceptance with thee. And now referring this to Christ, the accep-
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~~addition~~ mentioned may be, that when he had fully accomplished the work of man's redemption, according to that clause of our Saviours prayer Joh. 17. 1. *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy son*: see also Heb. 5. 7. *O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation*; that is, with that salvation, which in all faithfulness and truth thou hast promised thy servants.

Vers. 18. *Deliver me because of mine enemies.*] That is, because their rage and violence is so great against me, even seeking my life; or, because though I be not worthy of deliverance, yet they, in regard of their wickedness and unjust persecuting of me, are certainly worthy to be destroyed; or, that they may not triumph over me, and be hardened in their sins and in their persecuting of the righteous and innocent, but that rather I may triumph over them.

Vers. 20. *Reproach hath broken mine heart, &c.*] This may be meant of the reproaches wherewith they reproached both God and himself. As for those words which are added, *and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, &c.* how they were accomplished in Christ, when *all his acquaintance stood afar off* from him, Luk. 23. 49. see the Note before vers. 8. Yet they may also imply, that Christ had not the least assistance from man in the work of our redemption.

Vers. 21. *They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*] That is, Instead of comforting me, by their scoffing and opprobrious speeches, they added to my affliction, as if they should have given me gall and vinegar in my hunger and thirst. The last clause, concerning their giving him vinegar to drink, was doubtless literally accomplished in Christ, when they gave him vinegar upon the Crosse, Matth. 27. 48; and therefore it is said Joh. 19. 28. I conceive in reference to this place, that when Christ said, *I thirst*, (which was the occasion of their giving him vinegar to drink) he spake this purposely that the Scripture might be fulfilled. As for the first clause, *they gave me also gall for my meat*, divers learned men think that was also literally accomplished in Christ, when coming to Golgotha Matt. 26. 34. *they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall*. But because this was only mingled with the drink, and cannot therefore so properly be said to be given him for meat, therefore this may seem more questionable; though I see not why the words should be restrained to so strict a sense.

Vers. 22. *Let their table become a snare before them, &c.*] There is in these words an allusion to birds, who going to feed on the meat that is laid as a bait for them, are often caught in a trap or snare; and the imprecation herein expressed seems also to have reference to the complaint in the foregoing verse; as if he had said, As they have given me gall for meat and vinegar for drink, so let their plenty and dainties prove no better in the conclusion than gall and vinegar to them: whence it may be that the Apostle Rom. 11. 9. citing this place, but not tying himself to the very words, but only to the sense, adds these words, *and a recompence, Let their table be made a snare --- and a recompence unto them*. But however by *their table* here is meant, first, their outward bodily food, and so the curse is that their plenty on their table, and consequently whatever might be to them a support of life, and a means to refresh them, might prove an occasion of insnaring them in sin, and of bring-

bringing mischief and destruction upon them; as is evident by those more general words that follow, *and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap*: and 2. of the word of God, the food of their souls; and so the curse is, that by perverting the Scripture, and by their not believing the word of the Gospel, they should be the more hardened, and so this their spirituall food should prove the savour of death unto death unto them; which may well be acknowledged to be intended here, because the Apostle Rom. 11. 9, &c. applies this with the following verses to the blindness of the Jews, I know that some hold that this, *Let their table become a snare*, was accomplished in the Jews, when being assembled to eat the Paschever at Jerusalem, they were there besieged, taken and destroyed by the Romans. And how we ought to judge of such imprecations as these, see in the Note Psal. 28. 4.

Verf. 23. *Let their eyes be darkened that they see not, &c.*] According to that which is threatned Deut. 28. 28; concerning which see the Note there: *and make their loyns continually to shake*; to wit, through fear or weakness, or the pressure of intolerable burdens.

Verf. 24. *Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathfull anger take hold on them.*] This implieth many and grievous judgements; such as they should no way be able to escape, and should be of long continuance, and besides inflicted in a way of wrath: and this some do particularly restrain (as they do also the following verse) to the final destruction of Jerusalem, and the wrath that did thenceforth seize upon the Jews; see 1 Thess. 2. 16.

Verf. 25. *Let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents.*] To wit, by destroying their land, towns and cities, together with the Temple; or by destroying them and their posterity in a great measure, and causing the rest to be carried away as captives into strange countries: which agrees with that our Saviour did also threaten the Jews with Matth. 23. 38. *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*

Verf. 26. *For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten, &c.*] That is, They insult over, and with all despight and cruelty seek utterly to ruine, me and others, whom thou as a father hast corrected: and it may also be peculiarly applyed to Christ, who was Isa. 53. 4, 5, *smitten of God and afflicted, wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*: and to the same purpose is the following clause, *and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded*; to wit, by scoffing at them, and by upbraiding them with their sufferings.

Verf. 27. *Adde iniquity to their iniquity, &c.*] It may be read, as in the margin it is, *Adde punishment of iniquity to their punishment*; that is, Let them be punished with one plague upon another; or, Let them be punished eternally, where there shall be a supply of never-ceasing wrath. But reading it as it is in our Text, the meaning must needs be as if he had said, As they have added affliction to my affliction, so let them be delivered up to a reprobate sense, that they may adde sin to sin, till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity. As for the following clause, *and let them not come into thy righteousness*, either the desire therein is 1. that they might be hardened in their sins, and so might never repent and be-
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come righteous; or 2. (which impliyes the same) that God would not justify them, *Let them not come into thy righteousness*, that is, Do not pronounce them righteous, let them not partake of that righteousness or faithfulness, whereby thou art alwaies certainly wont to absolve and justify those that do truly believe and repent, (see the Note Psal. 51. 14.) and so it is the same with that which is added in the next verse, that they might not be numbered amongst the righteous; or 3. (which I like the best,) that they might never come into heaven; for that is indeed called *righteousnesse* elsewhere, as Psal. 24. 5. concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 28. *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, &c.*] That is, Let them not be of the number of those that were from all eternity chosen and ordained both to the life of grace and of glory hereafter; and accordingly when they die, let them be cast into hell; as it seems to be more clearly expressed in the following clause, *and not be written with the righteous*. Yet withall I conceive, that this phrase of blotting them out of the book of the living may also imply a desire, that however by outward profession they might be of the number of those that were the Church and people of God, and thereupon might accordingly hope and boast that their names were written in heaven, yet God would not own them for such, yea that God would manifest that they were reprobates, to wit, either by casting them out of the Church, (as we see the Jews are not now the people of God, but the Gentiles are succeeded in their room) or by casting them out into utter darknesse. The expression here used is the same with that Ezek. 13. 9. concerning the false prophets, *they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, &c.* I know indeed some understand both of being cut off by death. But for this and other things, see the Note Exod. 32. 34.

Verf. 29. *But I am poor and sorrowfull, &c.*] That is, afflicted and broken-hearted, see Psal. 40. 17; yet some apply it to the poverty and low estate of Christ: *let thy salvation, O God, set me on high*; that is, let it set me above the reach of mine enemies, see the Note Psal. 28. 9. But this too some understand of Christs ascension.

Verf. 31. *This also, &c.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, *I will praise the name of God, &c.* he adds, *This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock, that hath horns and hoofs*: and either the drift of these last words *that hath horns and hoofs* is, to set forth what bullock he meant, to wit, one that was young and tender, whose horns began to bud forth, and whose hoofs began to harden, or one that was for years ripe and fit for sacrifice, thereby to set forth that thanksgiving was more acceptable to God than any the choicest sacrifice; or else they are added by way of slighting those legall sacrifices of brute beasts, in comparison of that reasonable service of praise; as if he had said, *the calves of our lips*; so the prophet calls our praising God Hos. 14. 2. is a sacrifice far more acceptable to the Lord, than calves or bullocks *that have horns and hoofs*.

Verf. 32. *The humble shall see this and be glad, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 34. 2, and 40. 3. *and your hearts shall live that seek God*; that is, your hearts that were in a

manner dead within you; because of mine or your own sad distresses, shall be revived again: see the Note Psal. 32. 26.

Vers. 33. *For the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.*] That is, his servants that are brought into the straits of any distresse by Gods afflicting hand for their sins; or those that are persecuted and bound for his sake, or for his truth and cause.

Vers. 35. *For God will save Sion, and will build the cities of Judah, &c.*] David foreseeing by the spirit of prophesy the great calamities that would befall the land and people of Israel in succeeding times, doth here foretell, for the encouragement of the faithfull, that the reformation begun amongst them by the setting up of his throne, should be carried on; that God would preserve Sion, the place of his publick worship, (with which he begins, because the maintenance of Gods worship was the foundation of all their happiness) and that he would cause the whole kingdome to prosper and flourish unto the coming of Christ, of whose kingdome his was a type: and withall the same he intends also concerning the Church of Christ, Gods spirituall Sion; see the Note Psal. 2. 6: *that they may dwell there, and have it in possession*; that is, that the faithfull Israelites may dwell long in Sion and in the land of Canaan, see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 10. and that the faithfull may continue in the Church, and after this life may dwell for ever in the heavenly Canaan.

Vers. 36. *The seed also of his servants shall inherit it, &c.*] This must be understood, as the former verse, 1. of the faithfull Israelites continuing in the land which God had given them; (and some understand it of the times when the Jews shall be converted to Christ) and 2. of the true believers abiding in the Church, and at last for ever with God in heaven.

P S A L M LXX.

Vers. 1. **M**ake haste, O God, to deliver me, &c.] See the Notes Psal. 40. 13, &c. where we have this whole Psalm almost word for word.

P S A L M LXXI.

Vers. 1. **I**n thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, &c.] Many passages in this Psalm make it most probable, that this Psalm was composed by David in his old age, when his son Absalom was risen up against him, see vers. 9, and 18. But for the two first verses, see the Notes Psal. 31. 1, 2.

Vers. 7. *I am as a wonder unto many, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, either 1. because thou hast so wondrously advanced me, raising me from keeping sheep, to sit on the throne of Israel, and hast alwaies hitherto so miraculously preserved me; or 2. because I walk so strictly, and because my waies seem so strange to them, in that I restrain my self from that liberty and from those pleasures to which others give up themselves, and can so willingly expose my self to so great troubles for conscience sake, and then bear them too with patience and cheerfulness,

ness, according to that which Peter saith to the faithfull in those times 1 Pet. 4. 4. *they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot*; or 3. because thou hast now forsaken me, who have alwaies served thee so constantly, and trusted in thee with so much confidence. But I rather conceive the meaning is, that because of his uncouth waies, and because of the grievous afflictions which God had brought upon him, raising up his own son against him, that sought to bereave him both of his life and kingdome, they gazed and pointed at him in a way of wonder, as some fool or mad-man; yea they withdrew themselves and fled away from him, as some detestable monster, one that was the shame of mankind, not worthy to live amongst men, and by whom it was pity the earth should be any longer defiled: in opposition to which therefore he adds, *But, let them judge as they will of me, thou art my strang refuge*. And indeed we find the like expressions used elsewhere much to the same purpose, as Isa. 8. 18. and Zach. 3. 8. and 1 Cor. 4. 9.

Verf. 8. *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise.*] That is, Let me have cause to praise thee, and enable me to praise thee freely, abundantly and continually, that I may have nothing else in a manner in my mouth, but thine honour and praise; see the Note Job 8. 21.

Verf. 12. *O my God, make haste for my help.*] As if he had said, And hereby disprove what mine enemies boast of, to wit, that thou hast forsaken me: and his own confidence that they were herein deceived, he implies in those words, *O my God*.

Verf. 14. *But I will hope continually, &c.*] This hath reference to that foregoing desire verf. 12. that God would make hast to help him; and is as if he had said, that however, though God should deferre to help him, yet he would still wait in hope upon God.

Verf. 15. *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and thy salvation all the day, &c.*] That is, thy faithfulness and justice, manifested in saving and delivering thy righteous servants; see the Note Psal. 51. 8: *for I know not the numbers thereof*; that is, for thy mercies and deliverances are innumerable, so that I shall never want matter of praising thee, nor can ever sufficiently extoll thy name. Others, I know, give an exposition of these words that is somewhat different from this; *my mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness*, that is, I will, the best I can, generally declare thy justice in punishing the ungodly, *and thy salvation*, to wit, in the preservation and deliverances of thy righteous servants; *for I know not the numbers thereof*, that is, I must needs confesse, that both thy judgements on the wicked, and thy mercies to the righteous, are more then I can reckon. But the first exposition is the best.

Verf. 16. *I will goe in the strength of the Lord God, &c.*] That is, I will walk daily in the confidence of Gods strength, and not of mine own; whatever I undertake and whereever I goe, I shall goe on in assurance of assistance and protection from the almighty God; however weak I am in my self, and however violent mine enemies be against me, and though I meet with never so many and great troubles and hinderances and discouragements in my way, yet I shall goe on with
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cheerfulnesse, courage and confidence; not falling back, or turning aside to the right hand or the left, for any evils I may meet with in my course: *I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*; that is, I will not mind any other helps or supports, but will rely upon thy faithfulness solely and wholly. I know some do restrain the first clause either to his praising God (for having said in the former verse, that his mouth should shew forth Gods righteousness, &c. here he addes, say they, that he would enter upon this work in Gods strength) or else to his going out to warre against his enemies, or his persevering to withstand them in the maintenance of his just cause in the confidence of Gods aid. But I conceive it is best to understand it more generally, of his resting upon Gods power and help in all things whatsoever.

Verf. 17. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth.*] That is, say some, by the holy instructions of my parents and teachers, and withall by thine own spirit: or rather, thou hast taught me experimentally even from my youth by many wonderfull deliverances, how good and faithfull thou art, how tenderly carefull thou art over me, and what a strong and sure refuge thou art to all that fly unto thee: and thus I have been trained up from my childhood, to trust in thee, and to fly to thee in all my troubles.

Verf. 18. *For sake me not untill I have shewed thy strength to this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.*] That is, to succeeding generations; to wit, either by recording it in the Psalms, see the Note Psal. 45. 17; or by relating it to them who should report it to those of another generation, and so it should be successively made known in all ages.

Verf. 19. *Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high.*] See the Notes Psal. 36. 5, 6.

Verf. 20. *Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 4. 6: *shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth*; that is, from those desperate dangers, wherein I seemed to be as a man that was dead and buried. See the Note Psal. 42. 7.

P S A L M LXXII.

The Title. **A** *Psalm for Solomon.*] Some read it, *A Psalm of Solomon*, and hold that it was composed by Solomon: only seeing in cannot be denied that this Psalm was one of Davids prayers, because of those words in the close of this Psalm verf. 20. *The prayers of David the son of Iesse are ended*; they say withall, that the Psalm is no other but the prayer which David made for Solomon a little before his death, when by Davids appointment he was anointed king of Israel, his father yet living, 1 Kings 1. 39. and that it was only brought into the form of a Psalm by Solomon. But whether it were composed by Solomon, or, as others rather think, by David, however it was for Solomon, that is, concerning Solomon, or, for Solomons sake; as being written by way of 1. congratulating him for the honour which was newly conferred upon him; 2. of praying to God for him, that his kingdome might be just, prosperous and lasting; and thereby also teaching the people what they should beg of God on his

his behalf; 3. of propounding to him the pattern of Christs perfect government, that imitating him in his government, he might draw down the blessings here mentioned upon him; and 4. by way of foretelling what his government should be. Only we must know, that though Solomon alone be expressly named here, yet what is desired for him is covertly also desired for all that were to succeed him in that throne, even unto Christ, in whom the kingdom was to be established forever, and of whom Solomon was a type, in regard whereof even he also is called Solomon Cant. 8. 12. see the Note 2 Sam. 12. 24. And indeed that this Psalm is chiefly meant of Christ, is evident, because there are many passages hereof that cannot properly be meant of Solomon, as those vers. 5, 7, 8, 11, and 17; and that vers. 8. is expressly applyed to Christ, Zach. 9. 10.

Verf. 1. *Give the king thy judgements, O God, &c.*] This prayer may be understood as made by David, either in his own name, or in the name of the people: *Give the king thy judgements, O God, and thy righteousness unto the kings son;* that is, to Solomon. For though some by *the kings son* in the second clause understand Solomons posterity; yet I rather think it is Solomon that is here called both *the king* and *the kings son*, this being peculiar to him, and which could not be said either of Saul or David, that sat in the throne before him, that he was made king by right of succession of Gods appointment, as the son and heir of David the king. Only withall we must also include Christ, who, as man, was the son and heir of David, Luk. 1. 32. *the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David;* and in regard of his divine nature, the Son of God, the great King of heaven and earth. And then for the thing desired for Solomon in these words, it is, that God would enable him to govern his people justly, according to that form of righteousness prescribed in his Word: for by Gods judgements and Gods righteousness is meant, either the knowledge of that way of righteous government prescribed in Gods law; or those gifts and graces which God was wont to give to magistrates, that they might justly govern the people; or an ability and holy will to govern according to that exact pattern of Gods righteous governing the world. So that it is in effect the same with that which Solomon begged of God for himself 1 Kings 3. 9. But now as these words are referred to Christ, the accomplishment is most clear: for as *the Father committed all judgement unto the Son*, Joh. 5. 22; so he adorned his humane nature with a fulness of all grace requisite hereunto, see Isa. 11. 2, 3: and therefore some note; that in reference to Christ this is spoken rather by way of prophesying what should be, and by way of congratulating the graces and just government of Christ, then of praying that this might be.

Verf. 2. *He shall judge, &c.*] That is, When thou hast thus fitted him for the government of thy people, as is before said, then *he shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgement*: and most fitly might this be said of Christ, the true Melchisedech, (see the Note Gen. 14. 18.) of whom it was prophesied Isa. 32. 1. *Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness.* See also Isa. 11. 4. and the Note Psal. 43. 1.

Verf. 3. *The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness.*] That is, say some Expositours, By reason of the righteousness of his government.

vernment, there shall be such peace, that the barrenest parts of the kingdome shall be husbanded, and shall yield the fruits of the earth in abundance; which is indeed the usuall effect of peace: see the Note 1 Kings 4. 25. But rather I conceive it is a metaphoricall expression; as if he had said, that all kind of peace and prosperity should grow up and flourish in every part of the kingdome, the earth should yield as fair a crop of peace and prosperity as of other the fruits of the earth; as we use to say of any thing that is plentifull, that it may be found growing under every hedge. And the mention that is made of the mountains and hills, is either only because Judea was a mountainous and hilly countrey; or else to imply how the kingdome should in every place flourish in this regard; as it is a sign of the universall fruitfulnessse of a land, when even the mountains, the most barren places, do yield a rich encrease; or that even those places should be safe and peaceable, where wild beasts and robbers were wont to lurk. However, in this prophesy of the peace of his government, there is an allusion certainly to the name of *Solomon*; concerning which, as also how this may be applyed to that peace which Christians enjoy by Christs subduing Satan, sin and death, see the Notes Gen. 14. 18. 2 Sam. 12. 24. and 1 Kings 4. 24. And withall observable it is, how this agrees with that of the prophet Isa. 32. 17. *And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quicknesse and assurance for ever.*

Verf. 5. *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, &c.*] This may be understood, either as spoken to the king, for whom he had hetherto prayed; and so the meaning must be, that because of his wisdom and justice in governing his kingdome, the people should reverence and fear him, and yield him willing and ready obedience; as it is indeed expressely said of Solomon, 1 Kings 3. 28. *that all Israel feared the king, for they saw the wisdom of God was in him to doe judgement*: or else rather as spoken to God, *They shall fear thee, &c.* as if he had said, By the righteousnessse of the kings government, O God, religion shall be promoted, and men shall be brought willingly and sincerely to fear and serve thee. But now because it is said that this should be *as long as the sun and moon endure, &c.* that is, to the end of the world, this must needs be referred to Christ, whose kingdome must continue for ever. For we see in the later end of Solomons reign, there was a great defection to idolatry amongst the people, and at last his own servants rose up against him; and when his son came to the throne, ten of the tribes revolted from him.

Verf. 6. *He shall come down like rain upon the mowen grasse, &c.*] That is, Whereas tyrants are like storms of wind and hail, that destroy the fruits of the earth, he shall be like sweet showrs, that make the fruits of the earth to grow up and flourish, because by the justice of his government the people of God shall flourish in every regard. But especially is this accomplished in the kingdome of Christ, by whose doctrine (for which see the Note Deut. 32. 2.) and by the righteousnessse and goodnessse of whose government, the Church shall flourish and be enriched with all kind of blessings, especially spirituall; their hearts shall be cheered with comfort, and they shall bring forth abundantly the fruit of a holy life and conversation: besides that it might be the more fitly said, *He shall come down like*

like rain, because his kingdome is in a speciall manner from above, Joh. 3. 31. see also Hos. 6. 3.

Verf. 7. *In his daies shall the righteous flourish, &c.*] That is, There shall be many righteous ones, and they shall be exalted and be prosperous in every regard; which most fitly suits with Christs kingdome, who not only blesseth the righteous, but makes men righteous, and by the preaching of the Gospel amongst the Gentiles did wonderfully encrease the number of them: *and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth*; see the Notes above verf. 3, and 5.

Verf. 8. *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*] That is, from the red sea, or, the salt sea, unto the mediterranean sea, and from the river Euphrates, unto the desert that lyeth Southward beyond the utmost bounds that way of the land of Canaan. Concerning these bounds of the kingdome of Israel, see the Note Exod. 23. 31: and how this was accomplished in Solomons daies, but especially in the spreading of Christs kingdome all the world over, see the Note 1 Kings 4. 21. and the Note also on the Title of this Psalm.

Verf. 9. *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, &c.*] That is, The most remote and barbarous nations shall submit themselves to him, or seek his favour: *and his enemies shall lick the dust*; that is, they shall kisse the ground when they come before him in token of reverence (for that was the custome of those Eastern countries when they bowed to their kings;) or they shall bow their faces to the very ground, as if they meant to lick the dust: and hence these two are joyned together Isa. 49. 23: *they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet.*

Verf. 10. *The kings of Tarshish, &c.*] See the Note 1 Kings 10. 22. *and of the isles shall bring presents*; to wit, by way of tribute and homage: *the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts*; that is, as it is commonly thought, the kings of the nations inhabiting Ethiopia and Arabia the happy, descended from Seba and Sheba, the son and grandchild of Cush, Gen. 10, 7. But see also the Notes 1 Kings 10. 1. Psal. 45. 12. and 68. 31.

Verf. 11. *Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, &c.*] This cannot be meant of Solomon, unlesse we take it as figuratively spoken, *all kings*, that is, all any thing near about him. But in Christ it is and shall be literally accomplished.

Verf. 12. *For he shall deliver the needy, &c.*] That is, He shall rescue them from those that by fraud or violence wrong and oppresse them; and this shall make men willing to submit to his government. But though this, with that which follows in the two next verses, is clearly spoken of deliverance from externall injuries, yet as it is referred to Christ, it may be also understood of his delivering poor sinners from the spirituall tyranny of sin and Satan, and of saving their souls.

Verf. 14. *He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, &c.*] That is, their life, as the following words shew: *and precious shall their blood be in his sight*; that is, whereas many men, princes and great ones especially, regard the shedding of poor mens blood no more then the spilling of a little water, he shall shew that he

makes precious account of the blood even of the meanest and most contemptible amongst the people, 1. by being sparing in shedding their blood; see 2 Kings 1. 13. 2ly, by defending them against those that would shed it, and 3ly, by taking vengeance on those that did shed it, especially when it is shed for Gods cause, in regard the Lord doth then the more prize it, when thereby his truth is confirmed, and his cause maintained.

Verf. 15. *And he shall live, &c.*] To wit, long and prosperously; but see the Note Psal. 21. 4: *and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba*; to wit, by way of tribute and presents, 1 Kings 10. 15: which is added to imply both how rich and potent a king he should be, as indeed it is said of Solomon 1 Kings 10. 23. that he *exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches*; and also with what affection and willingness they should submit to his government; for to signify this, was that ancient custome of bringing presents to their princes, see the Note 1 Sam. 10. 27. And with all, especially as it is referred to Christ, it implies, that men should willingly contribute of any thing they had, for the promoting of his kingdom & glory. *Prayer also shall be made for him continually*: which as it is meant of Christ, doth either imply that men should pray for the coming of this their Messiah, or else rather for the advancement of his kingdom, and for the Church his body; which was in part fulfilled, when the children cried in the Temple, *Hosanna to the son of David*, Mat. 21. 15: *and daily shall he be praised*; Christians endeavouring to honour him both by word and deed.

Verf. 16. *There shall be an handfull of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains, &c.*] That is, so fruitfull shall the land be, that though but a handfull of corn be sown in the earth, & that upon the top of the mountains, where by reason of extreme cold in winter, and heat in summer, the ground is usually barren, yet it shall yield such mighty corn, so thick & so high, that being shaken with the wind, it shall ruffle and make a noise like the thick bows of the lofty trees on mount Lebanon. And hereby also is implied the abundance of all other things that should be in those times, & that the smallest beginnings should through Gods blessing grow to great abundance. Yea & some understand it too of the sowing of the seed of the Gospel, and of the great increase and flourishing estate of the Church & kingdom of Christ, that should follow hereupon. *And they of the city shall flourish as the grasse of the earth*; that is, as the earth shall every where yield a great increase of grain, so shall every city yield as great an increase of men, so that they shall be every where as plentiful as the grass of the earth, and they shall be too in a flourishing condition. And how both these were literally accomplished in Solomons reign, is expressed 1 Kin. 4. 20. *Judah and Israel were many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.*

Verf. 17. *His name shall endure for ever, &c.*] If we refer this to Solomon, the meaning may be, that for his wisdom, his just and gentle government, and the prosperity of his reign, his glory and renown should be continued even after he was dead for many generations. But referring it to Christ, the meaning must be, that he & his kingdom should continue for ever; as likewise that his name should be continued in his spirituall offspring, that should be called Christians: see the

Note

Note above vers. 1. *And men shall be blessed in him;* that is, if we refer it to Solomon, men shall propound him as a pattern of one eminently blessed, saying, the Lord bless you as Solomon was blessed; see Gen. 48. 20: but referring it to Christ, the meaning is, that in and through Christ believers should attain perfect blisse and happinesse, according to that promise made to Abraham, Gen. 12. 3. *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*

Vers. 18. *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things.*] To wit, by his own power: & this seems to be added in reference to the wonderfull goodnesse of God in continuing the kingdome to Solomons posterity, notwithstanding many of them did so often provoke God to have utterly destroyed them; but especially with reference to Gods wonderfull works in the Churches redemption by Christ, her miraculous preservation maugre the rage of Satan against her, and the many other benefits we enjoy by his kingly office.

Vers. 19. *Let the whole earth be filled with his glory, &c.*] This seems also to be spoken with respect to the times of the Gospel. *Amen & amen:* see the Note Ps. 41. 13.

Vers. 20. *The prayers of David the son of Iesse are ended.*] For the adding of those words, *the son of Iesse*, see the Notes 2 Sam. 23. 1. It is evident that the 86, the 110, &c. divers of the following Psalms besides, were composed by David; and therefore it well may be questioned why it is said that here *the prayers of David are ended*. But to this divers answers are given by Expositours: as 1. that this was the last Psalm that David composed, and haply placed last in the order of the Psalms, & that since the order of the Psalms was transposed: or 2. that this was the last of the Psalms which David joyned together in a book; & that the following Psalms (wherein there are some also that David himself did afterwards compose) were collected by some other holy man of God, & joyned to that book of Psalms which David had formerly made: or 3. that this is added here, because hitherto we have had Davids Psalms, but now those that next follow were composed by Asaph and others. And indeed if it were clear that the following Psalms were not composed by David, it might well be said in this regard that here *the prayers of David are ended*, though some Psalms of Davids making be afterwards inserted; as it is said, *The words of Job are ended*, because his reasoning with his friends doth there end, though some words that Job spake are afterwards inserted in that book, as ch. 40. 3, 4, 5, & ch. 42. 1, 2, &c.

P S A L M LXXIII.

Vers. 1. **T***Ruly (or yet) God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.*] That is, that are upright-hearted amongst the people of God. Yet some would have the meaning of these words to be this, that they whose hearts are clear from passion do know God to be good, though others being under temptation and disturbed with passion cannot often be so perswaded. With the like abrupt expression the 62. Psalm begins; concerning which see the Note there.

Vers. 2. *But as for me, &c.*] As if he had said, Though this be so, and I knew it well enough, as having had frequent experience of Gods manifold goodness, both to my self & other his faithfull servants, and though I have alwaies endeavoured

in all things to approve my self to God: yet my feet were almost gone; that is, I was almost transported beyond the bounds of piety, even to the accusing of God in words, at least in thought, of injustice and unfaithfulness; or, I had almost fallen from this persuasion of heart concerning the goodness of God to the righteous, and from believing the truth of Gods promises, yea almost from the uprightness of my waies, yielding to doe as those wicked men did, whom the Lord thus prospered. And observable it is, that all sinfull slips were so grievous to David, that he laments here even that his steps had well-nigh slipped.

[Vers. 4. *For there are no bands in their death, &c.*] This may be understood either 1. of the sodainnesse of their death, to wit, that they drop, as it were, on a sodain into the grave, without any foregoing sicknesse or pain; which then is more fully set forth in the following clause, *but their strength is firm*, not wasted by any foregoing sicknesse, see the Note Job 21. 13: or 2. of the gentlenesse and easinesse of their death, that they do not die a hard and bitter death, either by reason of inward gripes and pinches of conscience, and terrours of mind, or of bodily pangs and strugglings with death, their souls being bound within them as with bands, which death hath much adoe to untie or break, so that they cannot depart, or at least are long held back, as with bands, from dying; (but how this can agree with that following clause, *but their strength is firm*, I cannot well see:) or 3. of their dying a naturall death, to wit, that they are never brought to die as malefactours, being bound with bands, cords or chains; and that because the laws can take no hold of them: whatever wickednesse they commit, by reason of their riches and greatnesse, they are sure to escape: or 4. of their dying in a good old age; namely, that they are not violently dragged to an untimely death by any sicknesse or dismall casualty, but having sweetly passed over the whole naturall course of their lives, they quietly give up the ghost. And *their strength is firm*; that is, proportionably to their years, all their life long they are strong and healthfull, till at last, being spent by mere old age, their life is expired, and they goe down into the grave.

[Vers. 6. *Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain, &c.*] That is, Because of this their prosperous condition, they carry themselves proudly in every regard, in their countenance, speech, gesture, &c. as some men will do when they have gotten a chain of gold, they grow highly conceited of themselves, being ready still to boast of and advance themselves, and to despise others; or they please themselves and glory in their pride, as esteeming it an ornament to them: *violence covereth them as a garment*; as if he should have said, And by reason of this their pride, they become bold, cruell and violent oppressors of others; for this expression of violence covering them as a garment, is to imply, that they do not only conceive it in their minds, but also expresse it outwardly in their deeds, yea and glory in it, as men do in some gorgeous attire, seeking to outstrip one another herein, as they seek to outstrip one another in bravery, and perhaps wearing the trophies of their oppressions in a way of boasting. And to this some adde also, that oppression is as constantly their practice, as it is for men every day to put on their garments; and that hereby they seek to defend themselves,

selves, as men shelter themselves from the cold by their raiment. But however the main drift in alledging this is, to set forth how strange it might seem, that when men did thus abuse the bounty and goodnesse of God, he should notwithstanding suffer and prosper them still.

Verf. 7. *Their eyes stand out with farnesse, &c.*] Because the farnesse of the face makes the eyes to be hidden rather then to stand out, some would have this clause rendered thus, *Their eyes goe out with farnesse*; meaning, that they had scarce any eyes to be seen: but now others say, that farnesse doth often cause the eyes of men to swell and stare out of their heads. However many learned men take it to be only a figurative expression of the swelling of their minds, manifested in their outward habit and gesture: as if he had said, Their minds swell out with their prosperous estate, as mens eyes stand out with extreme farnesse of body; and see also the Note Job 15. 27. *They have more then hearts could wish*; that is, more wealth. But yet it may be understood more generally, to wit, that all things prosper with them, even in a manner above what themselves or any other man could have expected or desired.

Verf. 8. *They are corrupt, &c.*] That is, stark rotten and naught, or, dissolute and licentious, letting the reins loose to all manner of wickednesse: and *speak wickedly concerning oppression*; where that word *wickedly* is added, either 1. only because oppression is a great wickednesse; or 2. to imply that herein lay their great wickednesse, that they were so farre from hiding their oppression, that they were not ashamed openly to boast of it and glory in it; or 3. because their speech herein was so exceedingly presumptuous and bold, as if they were above all order and law, and might doe with any man what they pleased themselves: *they speak loftily*; to wit, as looking down with contempt upon others.

Verf. 9. *They set their mouth against the heavens, &c.*] To wit, in that they blaspheme God and his Saints; or in that they speak proudly, contemptuously and wickedly of all divine things: and *their tongue walketh through the earth*; that is, they speak evil of all men, as any occasion is given, not sparing any; and in doing this their tongues scarce ever lye still. But the sense of the whole verse may be this, that they talk and bragge, as if neither God nor man could hinder them in any thing they have a mind to doe.

Verf. 10. *Therefore his people return hither, &c.*] That is, The people of God, who is implied in the foregoing verse in those words, *They set their mouth against the heavens*; as if he had said, Because the wicked do thus prosper, therefore the godly themselves, Gods own dear people, do often fall into these thoughts and temptations, wherewith I was assaulted, and are wel-nigh overcome by them, ready to fall from their stedfastnesse, and to betake themselves to tread in the steps of such wicked men; or, they do often fall into these thoughts, expressed in the following verse, *How doth God know, &c.* And *waters of a full cup are wrung out to them*; that is, God doth wring out to them a cup full of the waters of affliction, or sorrow, on tears, according to that Psal. 80. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure*: and these are said to be *wrung out*; by allusion to the custome of wringing or squeezing the drugs

druggs which make a potion bitter or distastfull, that it may thereby be made the more exceeding bitter. So that this clause is here added, either to shew the effect of these thoughts and temptations, returning again and again upon them, namely that their souls are thereby even overwhelmed and filled with bitter sorrows; or else to shew the time when the godly are assaulted with this temptation, namely, when themselves were made to drink deep of the cup of affliction; or, which is much the same, to shew the cause why they stumble so at the prosperous estate of wicked men; namely, because they themselves are in the mean time in a most afflicted sad condition; but see the Note Psal. 11. 6. I know that some Expositours do understand this not of the godly, but of carnall men amongst Gods people; *Therefore his people return hither*, that is, multitudes, even of those that professe themselves the people of God, do turn to these men, that thus prosper in the world, and side with them, and applaud them, and doe as they doe: and then the meaning of the second clause, *and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them*, they will have to be, that hereupon they have their share in the plenty of these wicked great ones. But the first exposition is far the best.

Verf. 11. *And they say, &c.*] Some conceive that here the Psalmist returns to set forth the impious language of those profane wretches, of whom he had spoken before verf. 9. But rather they are the words of the people of God, whereinto they were ready to break forth, when they stumbled at the prosperity of this ungodly crue, as is expressed in the foregoing Note. *And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?* see the Notes also Job 22. 12, 13, 14.

Verf. 12. *Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, &c.*] This may be also taken as a continuance of the foregoing speech of Gods people, stumbling at the prosperity of the wicked; and the like may be said of the two following verses. But rather it is the Psalmist that doth here again set forth how himself was assaulted with this temptation; and then doth afterwards shew in the remainder of the Psalm how he got the mastery of it.

Verf. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, &c.*] That is, I have in vain laboured through thine assistance to cleanse it; for otherwise *who can say, I have made my heart clean?* Prov. 20. 9. see 1 Joh. 3. 3. and 5. 18: *and washed my hands in innocency;* see the Note Psal. 26. 6.

Verf. 14. *For all the day long have I been plagued, &c.*] That is, continually; and chastened every morning, that is, without delay, or day after day; as sure as the morning riseth every day, some distresse or other is sure to befall me. But see the Note Job 7. 18.

Verf. 15. *If I say, I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.*] Having said verf. 12. *Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world, &c.* here he inserts another *behold*, as in opposition to that; *Nay*, saith he, *If I say I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children:* to wit, either because they have alwaies acknowledged this truth, that God doth often prosper the wicked, and sorely afflict his own dear children; or because seeing it hath alwaies been the portion of Gods children to be often in an afflicted condi-

condition, if I should say that they only are happy that are in a prosperous condition for outward things, I should deny them in effect to have been thy children, and should charge them with folly in flattering themselves with vain hopes of thy love and favour, and in binding themselves to such strict rules of righteousness, when it was not like to be any advantage to them.

Verf. 16. *When I thought to know this, &c.*] That is, when I purposed and endeavoured to search it out by mine own reason, how it could stand with Gods justice and holiness in his government of the world, that the righteous should be so greatly distressed, & the worst of the wicked should so exceedingly flourish; *it was too painfull for me*, that is, I did afflict & weary my self to find it out, & all in vain.

Verf. 17. *Untill I went into the Sanctuary of God.*] That is, say some Expositours, untill in my meditations I ascended into Gods holy dwelling place in heaven, and considered that there he had prepared a place of eternall rest and blisse for his righteous servants; from whence the wicked should be surely excluded. But I rather understand it thus, Untill I searched Gods holy Word, resolving to judge herein according to what he had revealed there; or, Untill I went into Gods holy Tabernacle, and by prayer desired the Lord to inform me herein, and was there instructed by the teaching of his word in the assemblies of his people, or by divine oracles there given by his priests.

Verf. 18. *Surely thou didst set them in slippery places, &c.*] To wit, either because in prosperity men are prone to fall into all kind of wickedness & profaneness; or rather, because wicked men seldome continue long in their prosperous estate, but are suddenly brought down and are utterly ruined; and seem therefore here to be compared to men standing aloft on some slippery pinnacle, from whence falling they must needs be dashed in pieces, as the following words imply, *thou castedst them down into destruction.*

Verf. 19. *They are utterly consumed with terrors.*] To wit, wherewith they are stricken, either by God immediately, see the Note Psal. 53. 5; or by the strange, sudden and unexpected judgements of God upon them; or by the lashes of their own guilty and accusing consciences.

Verf. 20. *As a dream when one awaketh, &c.*] That is, so are they, or, so vanisheth their prosperity; see the Note Job 20. 8. Or rather we may understand it thus, with relation to the following clause, As men awakened from a dream despise their most pleasing dreams, as knowing them to have been mere fancies, see Isa. 29. 7, 8; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, that is, when thou risest up as one awakened from sleep, to execute judgement on these men, *thou shalt despise their image*, that is, by destroying them thou shalt make it manifest both to themselves and others, that they were but as a vision of a dream; and that the high conceits they had of their blisse, were but only the imaginations of men that were lulled asleep with the pleasures of this life, and not awakened to judge rightly of things: see the Note also Psal. 39. 6.

Verf. 21. *Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.*] That is, inwardly afflicted; see the Notes Job 16. 13, and 19. 27. and Psal. 7. 9, and 16. 7. Some understand it of his grief, because he had been so foolish and brutish,

as to stumble at the dispensations of God before spoken of. But it is rather meant of his former vexing and fretting, when he envied the prosperity of the wicked.

Verf. 22. *So foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.*] That is, in thy judgement, or in comparison of thee; or, when I come to judge by mine own reason of thy waies and works, how wise soever I may seem to be in humane affairs, yet in this I am no more able to comprehend thy wisdom, then a beast is to comprehend the waies of men. And all this he saith, because in this temptation he had only minded present things.

Verf. 23. *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, &c.*] Some understand this of the Psalmists constant cleaving to God, his serving him and trusting on him, even when he was assaulted with strong temptations to the contrary. But I rather understand it of Gods fatherly care over him; *I am continually with thee*; that is, in my greatest distresse thou dost not cast me off, yea notwithstanding those foolish and brutish thoughts which I sometimes give way to: *thou hast holden me by my right hand*; to wit, that I might not be overborn by this or any such like temptations, see also the Note Psal. 16. 8.

Verf. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 21. 3: *and afterward receive me to glory*, that is, thou wilt exalt me to a prosperous condition here, (for this is also included) and wilt afterwards receive me into thy heavenly glory.

Verf. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*] That is, I have no other God in heaven, to trust on or call upon; nor is there any creature upon earth, on whom I set my heart: thou art my only hope and confidence, my joy and comfort and love and delight, thou art all in all to me.

Verf. 26. *My flesh and my heart faileth, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, with earnest longing after God; and indeed so the same expression is used Psal. 84. 3. But I rather understand it thus, *My flesh and my heart faileth*, that is, Being left to my self, I may be, and am often in great streights and danger, brought so low, that my strength and heart may be in a manner overwhelmed with trouble and sorrow, and in the judgement of men I may seem past all hope of recovery. *But God is the strength of my heart*, in the Hebrew *the rock of my heart*, see the Note Deut. 32. 4: *my supporter and comforter*; see the Notes Psal. 27. 1. and 43. 2: *and my portion for ever*; see the Note Psal. 16. 5.

Verf. 27. *They that are far from thee shall perish, &c.*] These words *far from thee* imply an absolute forsaking God, to cleave to the creatures. The best of Gods servants may sometimes grow strange to God, and may turn away from God by doubting of his providence, and by stepping awry into some sinfull waies: but then they recover themselves again. But now when men do wholly withdraw themselves from their obedience to God, to walk after their own lusts, & do trust in and love any creature more then God, these may be said truly to be far from God, and to goe a whoring from God, and therefore are sure to perish; as it follows in the next clause, *thou hast destroyed all them that goe a whoring from thee.*

Verf. 28.

Verf. 28. *But it is good for me to draw near to God, &c.*] As if he had said, Be the prosperity of the wicked never so great, let others doe what they will, I see it is best to cleave only to God, and to rest wholly upon him. *I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works* ; to wit, because God never fails to give them that trust in him abundant cause of praising him.

P S A L M LXXIV.

The Title. **M** *Asaph of Asaph.*] See the Notes on the Titles of the 32. and 50. Psalms. Because it is clear that this Psalm sets forth the sad condition Gods people were in, either when Jerusalem was taken and the Temple was burnt by the Chaldeans, (which the mention that is here made verf. 6, 7. of destroying and burning the Temple seems to imply) or when the Temple was at least defaced and pillaged and profaned by Antiochus, 1 Mac. 1. 21, &c. (which to many seems most probable, because then they had no prophet amongst them, as is said here verf. 9. whereas at the Babylonian captivity they had divers prophets;) either we must say, that it was composed by some of the posterity of Asaph, or by some other holy man of God that lived in those times, and that it was committed to them who were singers in the Temple, or that, if it were made by David, or Asaph himself, it was written as a prophesie of the great miseries that were in future times to come upon the people of God.

Verf. 1. *Why doth thine anger smoke, &c.*] See the Note Deut. 29. 20: *against the sheep of thy pasture* ; that is, thine own people, for whom thou hast undertaken to provide as a shepheard for his flock, and hast accordingly disposed of them in a rich and fruitfull soil, the land of Canaan.

Verf. 2. *Remember thy congregation which thou hast purchased of old, &c.*] To wit, ever since thou madest a Covenant with Abraham and his seed; or, ever since thou didst deliver them from their bondage in Egypt, when they were first reduced by thee into the form of a common-wealth, and had laws and a form of government prescribed them, whereby they were to live under thy obedience as thine own peculiar people: *the rod of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed*; that is, thy people, who are thy peculiar portion, or the land which thou hast given thy people for their portion; for in that expression, *the rod of thine inheritance*, he alludes to the custome of measuring out portions of land by a pole or rod, as elsewhere to measuring by a line or cord, see the Note Deut. 32. 9, and Psal. 16. 6. Yet if we read it (as it is in the margin of our Bibles) *the tribe of thine inheritance*, then I conceive that thereby is meant the tribe of Judah, amongst whom God chose to dwell in a speciall manner; which appears more plainly by the following words, *this mount Sion, wherein thou hast dwelt*; wherein also the people of God expresse this to be their greatest grief, that the worship of God should be suppressed by their enemies.

Verf. 3. *Lift up thy feet unto the perpetuall desolations, &c.*] That is, Come in speedily, and with chearfulnesse and courage, to see and revenge the desolations

ons which the enemy hath made, and which are like to be perpetuall, unlesse thou, Lord, art pleased to interpose thy self; or, come in to trample and tread down the enemy, that hath made such desolations amongst us. It is in effect the same with that Psal. 68. 1. *Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered, &c.* Even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the Sanctuary; that is, the Temple: yet some extend this also to their synagogues. What the Chaldeans did in this regard, see in 2 Kings 25. 9, &c. and what Antiochus Epiphanes did, see 1 Mac. 1. 21, &c. and 2 Mac. 6. 1, 2, &c.

Verf. 4. *Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations.*] To wit, in the Temple; it may be extended to their synagogues also. It is meant of the clamours of the enemy, when they destroyed Gods people and his holy place; of which likewise there is a like complaint Lam. 2. 7. *they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast.*

They set up their ensigns for signs.] To wit, of their victory; glorying, in a manner, as if they had vanquished the Lord Jehovah, whose house they destroyed. And it may be also that these signs, which they set up of their conquest, are covertly opposed to the ceremoniall signs, whereby formerly God had testified his presence there; as if they had said, In stead of the sacred signs of Gods dwelling there, the enemy set up their signs in token that they had now subdued that place.

Verf. 5. *A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.*] Divers Expositours understand these words thus, That the more active and industrious any man was in cutting down the timber and other wooden work of the Temple, the more famous and highly esteemed he was amongst their enemies. But because of that which is by way of opposition added in the following verse, *But now they break down, &c.* our Translation will not so well bear this exposition: but rather the meaning seems to be this, *A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees;* that is, formerly men were famous for contributing their help in a laborious way to the building of the Temple, by cutting down trees that stood thick together in the woods, or the greatest and best timber-trees, and by hewing and squaring them for the building after they were cut down.

Verf. 6. *But now they break down the carved work thereof at once.*] That is, all the carved work of the Temple, not sparing any part thereof; or, they all at once strive who shall be forwardest in this sacrilegious work. And very observable it is which is noted by a learned Interpreter, to wit, that the words in the original rendered in our Translation *with axes and hammers*, are not properly Hebrew but Syriack words, purposely to hint thereby the time when & the persons by whom this was done.

Verf. 7. *They have cast fire into thy Sanctuary.*] How this was done by the Chaldeans is evident 2 Kings 25. 9: and concerning the times when Antiochus Epiphanes tyrannized over the Jews it is expressly said, that the gates of the Temple were burnt with fire, 1 Mac. 4. 38.. So that I see not why from this place any should confidently conclude, as yet some have done, that this Psalm cannot be under

understood of the desolations that were made by Antiochus, but of the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians.

Verf. 8. *They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together, &c.*] That is, all their holy places, wherein they use to meet to worship God, according to that which follows, *they have burnt up all the synagogues of God in the land*, or rather, all the people of Israel, not sparing any. This was inwardly the desire and purpose of their hearts, when they were pouring forth their rage upon the people of God.

Verf. 9. *We see not our signs, &c.*] That is, the signs of Gods favourable presence amongst us, as his own peculiar people, which formerly we enjoyed: where by may be meant, 1. the miracles that he had frequently wrought in former times for their deliverance, and for the destruction of their enemies; which indeed are often called signs and tokens in the Scripture, as Psal. 78. 43. *he wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan*; and so also Psal. 135. 9: and 2, their sacred ceremonies, which were signs of Gods dwelling amongst them, and of all the covenant blessings which they enjoyed above other nations, as the Ark, the Urim and Thummim, their sacrifices and sacraments and sabbaths, and all other legall rites, which were also signs and shadows of good things to come: and 3. the signs whereby the prophets were wont to shadow forth the things which they foretold were to come to passe. And this some conceive is added, as in opposition to what they had said before of their enemies verf. 4. *they set up their ensigns for signs*; as if they had said, Whilst we daily see the signs of our enemies subduing us, *our signs*, of Gods favourable presence amongst us, *we see not*. And then it followeth, *there is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long*: where by their not having any prophet may be meant, that they had no ordinary teacher, to instruct and comfort them in their great afflictions; and by their not having any that knoweth how long may be meant, that they had none endued with an extraordinary spirit of prophesie, that could inform them how long their troubles would continue; according to that Lam. 2. 9. *the law is no more, her prophets also find no vision from the Lord*. Or else both clauses may intend the same thing, to wit, that they had not, as formerly, any prophet amongst them. Now however it be clear that thus it was with the Jews under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, for which see 1 Maccab. 4. 46; yet I see not why it may not be also meant of the Babylonian captivity. For though Ezekiel and Daniel were prophets amongst the Jews in Babylon, yet because it is evident that Ezekiel began not to prophesie till the fifth year of Jehoiachins captivity, Ezek. 1. 2, and that we read not of his prophesying any longer then till the 25: year of that captivity, Ezek. 40. 1. or at the most till the 27. year, Ezek. 29. 17: and for Daniel, we read not that he taught the people as a prophet, and when and how long he prophesied is very uncertain; it may well be that for a time, either before or after the prophesying of Ezekiel and Daniel, they were in Babylon without any prophet at all amongst them.

Verf. 12. *For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.*] That is, openly in the view of all men all the world over. And hereby the Church encour-

rageth her self in that prayer in the foregoing verse, that God would pluck his right hand out of his bosome to destroy her enemies; namely, because God was her king (however now for a time he afflicted her, and seemed to withdraw himself from her) and so had been of old (see the Note above vers. 2.) and because all the salvation, that had been ever wrought for any upon the face of the earth, was his work; and the same therefore he could doe for his people again. See also the Note Psal. 44. 4.

Verf. 13. *Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength; thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.*] That is, Thou hast destroyed Pharaoh, his Nobles and army: who are termed Sea-dragons or Crocodiles, in allusion either 1. to the cruelty of the Egyptians in slaying the male-children of the Israelites; or 2. to their pursuing them through the red sea; or 3. to the situation of Egypt, that lay close upon the sea, and was besides plentifully watered with that great river Nilus, wherein there were many Crocodiles and Sea-dragons, as is evident by a like expression which the prophet Ezekiel useth concerning Pharaoh, Ezek. 29. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lyeth in the midst of his rivers.*

Verf. 14. *Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, &c.*] That is, of Pharaoh; see Isa. 27. 1, and 51. 9. But why are there many heads here ascribed to Leviathan? I answer, either 1. thereby the better to represent the dreadfulness of this adversary of Gods people, by setting him forth not as an ordinary whale, but as some many-headed monster, or as a Sea-monster, that had a head as bigge as many heads, as the Elephant is for this cause called *Behemoth*, that is, Beasts, see the Note Job 40. 15; or, 2. to expresse hereby the destruction of Pharaohs Princes and Captains together with himself, and that either by tearing them the heads of Pharaoh, or by speaking of them as of so many severall Leviathans, *Thou brakest the heads of the Leviathans*, that is, of every one of those Sea-monsters, Pharaoh and all his great ones with him. *And gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness;* of which expression there are severall expositions given by Interpreters: as 1. that being drowned in the red sea, and so made meat for the fish therein, they hereby became meat also for the people inhabiting the adjacent wilderness, that lived much upon the fish of that sea; or 2. that their dead carcases being cast upon the shoar, (as is expressed Exod. 14. 30.) became meat for the birds and beasts of prey that were in the forementioned wilderness, who are called here *the people inhabiting the wilderness*, as elsewhere *the ants* are called *a people not strong*, and *the conies a feeble folk*, Pro. 30. 25, 26. and the locusts *a strong nation*, Joel 1. 6. and indeed this exposition I conceive very probable; or 3. that the Israelites being gotten safe over the red sea, or the nations that dwelt in the wilderness there, did even glut and satiate themselves with the spoil of their dead carcases, and did long after live upon the wealth which they got by that means.

Verf. 15. *Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood, &c.*] Some understand this of Gods causing fountains and rivers to break forth out of the earth in severall places, for the watering of the ground. But rather it is meant of Gods miraculous

ious cleaving the rocks in the wilderness, that springs and rivers of water might thence break forth for the use of Gods people there, Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11. And so likewise the following clause, *thou driedst up mighty rivers*, some understand of the ordinary drying up of rivers, when God is so pleased: but rather it is meant of Gods dividing Jordan before the Israelites; wherein it is said that he dried up *mighty rivers* in the plurall number, either because many rivers did run into Jordan, or rather because Jordan had at that time overflowed all her banks, and so became as it were many severall rivers.

Verf. 19. *The day is thine, the night also is thine, &c.*] To wit, as being created and governed by thee, and that for thine own service: *thou hast prepared the light and the Sun*; where by the light is meant either the light wherewith the night is enlightened (which was last named in the foregoing clause) to wit, the moon and stars; or else rather that light which God did create the first day, Gen. 1. 3. and which afterwards he placed in the Sun, verf. 13.

Verf. 17. *Thou hast set all the borders of the earth.*] That is, Thou hast created and established the whole world, even to the utmost bounds thereof, East, West, North and South; or, thou hast appointed how far the earth should extend, which is prepared for the habitation of man, the bounds whereof were so established, that the raging seas could not break through them; or, by the borders of the earth may be meant the bounds and borders that God hath set severally to divide one kingdome and country from another, and to allot each nation the limits of their dominion and habitation. However that which the Church would hereby imply, is, that if God were so carefull for the world, they hoped he would be much more carefull for his own peculiar people, and would not suffer strange nations to break through the borders of that land, which he had allotted them for their dwelling.

Verf. 18. *Remember this, &c.*] As if they had said, Though thou passest by other things, yet let not this be forgotten, to wit, this which follows in the next words; *that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people, that is, a base, worthlesse, wicked people, have blasphemed thy name.*

Verf. 19. *O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked.*] That is, the life of thy Spouse, thy turtle-dove: for the Church is here compared to a turtle (as elsewhere to a dove, see the Note Psal. 95. 6.) because it is the least and the most mournfull of all doves, and most constant to her mate. And this (say some Expositours) suits better with the condition of Gods people, when Antiochus made warre against them, than when they were captives in Babylon, because then they were already delivered up into the power of their enemies.

Verf. 20. *Have respect unto the Covenant, &c.*] To wit, whereby thou hast engaged thy self that this land should be given to our fathers; and us their posterity, that thou wouldest protect us and blesse us therein, and that if for our sins we were driven from thence, thou wouldest upon our repentance bring us back again from the utmost coasts of the earth, Deut. 30. 3, 4: *for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty; that is, in those countries where the people enjoy*

enjoy not the light of thy word, and so live without the knowledge of thee the true God, (such as Babylon was, wherein the Jews were held in captivity) there reigneth nothing but cruelty and oppression, every house is a den as it were of beasts of prey, full of robbers and murderers, and in every house they cruelly oppress thy poor people: Or else thus, In those lands which lye under the darknesse of such sore afflictions as ours doth now, being invaded by a barbarous people, and where God hides himself from his people, and so their enemies apprehend that they may as in secret commit what wickednesse they please, all places are filled with the cruelty of bloody enemies.

Verf. 22. *Arise, O God, plead thine own cause.*] The ground of this expression is either, because in any wrong done to Gods people, God was chiefly injured, especially when they were persecuted for Gods sake; or, because the enemy did not only oppress them, but also blaspheme the name of God; or else because the maintaining Gods worship amongst them was the chief thing they desired, and that haply by bringing them again into their own land.

P S A L M LXXV.

Verf. 1. **U***nto thee, O God, do we give thanks, &c.*] Some conceive that this Psalm was composed by David, either when the Jebusites were to be subdued that held the fort of Sion, 2 Sam. 5. 6. or when upon Joabs slaying Abner, that design of Abners bringing in the tribes of Israel to submit to David was like to be hindered, and the kingdom was in danger thereupon to be involved again in a bloody warre; and others conceive that it was composed by Asaph, or some other holy man of God, in the time of the Babylonian captivity. And accordingly these first words may be understood, either as the words of the people, or of David and the people joyntly together, wherein they resolve to praise God even in the saddest times, as being assured of Gods readiness to help them; which is expressed in the next words, *for that thy name is near*, that is, that thou art near at hand to help thy people, *thy wonderous works declare*; and this may be meant, as we may differently conceive of the persons here speaking, either of the works of God in generall, whereby God had in all ages manifested his care over his people; or more particularly of those wonderfull works which God had already wrought in bringing David to the Crown.

Verf. 2. *When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly.*] Many learned Expositours hold, that in these words God answers his people, and that the meaning thereof is as if he had said, When I shall gather my Church and people together again, and shall again receive them into my favour and care, whom for the present I have seemed to cast off, and to deliver them up to the will and power of their enemies, I will then judge justly betwixt them and their enemies, or I will then set all in order that is now out of frame. But because the following part of the Psalm seems clearly to be the words of the Psalmist, as is most evident verf. 7, 8, 9, 10, therefore I conceive so also of this verse, namely that David here speaks, yet perhaps, as elsewhere, in the person of Christ; *When I shall*
receive

receive the congregation, that is, say some, When I shall have gotten mount Sion out of the hands of the Jebusites, which is the place appointed of God for the solemn meetings of the congregation of his people, and is therefore called Isa. 14. 13. *the mount of the congregation*; or rather, When the people shall submit themselves generally to me, then I shall judge uprightly: as if he had said, Hitherto a great part of the tribes of Israel have refused to submit to my government, and so the kingdome hath been wasted with civill wars; but when once the whole congregation of the twelve tribes shall come in and submit to me, then I will govern them with all possible justice: which also implyes a prayer secretly made to God, that he would bring in the people to stoop to his government. And if we take it, as some do, as spoken in the person of Christ, then it must be understood of the justice of his governing the Church gathered in to him by the preaching of the Gospel. And so likewise if we read the words according to the translation in the margin, *When I shall take a set time, I will judge uprightly*, it may be understood, either as spoken by God, or by Christ, to wit, that when the fit season, already set and appointed by Gods decree, should come, he would then take the opportunity to punish his peoples enemies; or else as spoken by David, that when the time appointed of God should come for his being settled in the throne, he would then govern them, as became a good king, with all justice and equity.

Verf. 3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved; I bear up the pillars of it, &c.*] According to the different exposition of the former verse, this also may be understood, either 1. as spoken by God to his people: All things indeed are in a manner ruined and broken to pieces; but were the whole frame of the world dissolved and melted, or put quite out of frame, I by mine almighty power am able to repair it, and support it again. And herein there seems to be an allusion to the Lords bearing up the earth in the place wherein he hath settled it from the first creation: to wit, that as now God bears up the earth hanging in the midst of the air, and standing as it were in the midst of the seas, as firmly as if it were born up by pillars, & doth not suffer it to molder away, though the very waters, that passe continually through it, one would think in reason should be enough to dissolve it; so if the whole world were shattered in sunder, God were able to renew it again and bear it up; and accordingly, though his people were in never so broken a condition, God was able to set all right again. Or 2. as spoken by David: *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved*; as if he had said, By the ill government of Saul, by reason of judgements that God hath brought upon the land, and by the civill wars that have been of late amongst us, the whole kingdome and commonwealth of Israel is in a manner cracked in pieces, and in danger to be utterly ruined: *I bear up the pillars of it*; that is, I endeavour to support this poor land and people in this their tottering estate, to wit, by settling good magistrates amongst them, by maintaining religion & justice, which are the great supporters of every state, and by supporting the righteous, for whose sake and by whose means, not only kingdomes and commonwealths, but even the world it self is continued. And then again if we take the words as spoken by David in the person of Christ, the drift of them then is, that though by sin the

whole world was ruined, yet by Christ all things were repaired and recovered, and set in good order again.

Verf. 4. *I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly, &c.*] Almost all Expositours agree that these are the words of the Psalmist, importing either that upon consideration of that which is said of God in the foregoing verses, concerning his judging the wicked, and defending his righteous servants, he had alwaies said within himself, as deriding the pride of such ungodly wretches, that they were but fools to fight against God, as they did, and haply had expressly said thus to them, as dissuading them from this folly; or else (if we take David to be the penner of the Psalm) that as he promised to judge uprightly for the time to come, being once settled in the throne, so he had alwaies already endeavoured to suppress the insolencies of foolish men against God, and against his righteous servants, and had declared how foolish a thing it would prove to oppose the government which God had settled in him: *and to the wicked, lift not up the horn*; that is, carry not your selves proudly and insolently in the confidence of your great power, persecuting and oppressing Gods people.

Verf. 5. *Speak not with a stiffe neck.*] That is, Talk not so proudly and loftily and peremptorily as you do, as if you would wrestle and fight against God, and as men do that can by no means be brought to yield and to give over any resolution they have taken up. He alludes either to stubborn cattel, that will not stoop to or draw in the yoke; or to the garb of proud persons, whose necks will even swell with anger and wrath, and who are wont to goe with stiffe erected necks.

Verf. 6. *For promotion cometh neither from the East, &c.*] As if he had said, This is a commodity that is to be procured from no countrey in the world. But however the meaning is, that whereas for the helping and advancing of themselves men are wont to look this way and that way, to their severall allies and friends, and the neighbouring nations round about them, all this is to no purpose; and that because it is God alone that raiseth up and casts down whom he pleaseth, and there is none in the whole world that doth it but he. And the drift of these words may be to imply, either 1. that, seeing therefore it was God that advanced him to the throne, it would be madnesse in his enemies to resist him; or 2. that if God did set himself once to ruine the wicked, no power on earth could support them; or 3. that since all promotion comes from God, great ones ought not to use it to serve their lusts, but for Gods glory and his Churches good.

Verf. 8. *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, &c.*] Many Expositours hold, that this is added by way of answering an objection that might be made against that which is before said, concerning the righteousness of the Lord in judging wicked men: for if it be so, might some say, how comes it then to passe, that usually the righteous are so forely afflicted? to which in this verse it is answered; that though outward calamities here befall both good and bad, yet the wrath that is reserved for the portion of the wicked is far more terrible, then that which the righteous suffer: *for in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, &c.* that is, God hath judgements alwaies ready at hand, which he distributes, as he pleaseth, amongst the children of men, see the Notes Psal. 11. 6. and 60. 3. and Job 21. 20. and the

wine is red; and so strong and heady. The ground of this expression is, because the wine of Judea was for the most part red; and is therefore called Deut. 32. 14. *the pure blood of the grape*; and the redder their wines were, of the greater strength and the more violent operation they were. But however the meaning is, that the judgements which God hath in a readinesse are fore and heavy, and such as will soon destroy men. And the same is also implied in the following words, *it is full of mixture*: for though some take those words to be no other in sense then as if he had said, the cup is full of wine made ready to drink, to wit, by mingling it with water, according to that Prov. 9. 5. *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled*; and indeed in reference to that custome of allaying their wine with water, pure wrath is elsewhere tearmed *wine without mixture*, Revel. 14. 10; yet here, because it is joyned with the rednesse of the wine, I rather conceive the meaning to be, that the wine in the Lords cup was mingled with spices, to make it the stronger, and the apter to intoxicate those that drank it, (whence it is that we read of *spiced wine* Cant. 8. 2, and Isa. 5. 22. drunkards are tearmed *men of strength to mingle strong drink*;) yea perhaps that it was mingled with gall, and poison, such things as might make it bitter and deadly to those that should drink of it; and that this is added to imply both the forenesse and variety of judgements that God hath alwaies in a readinesse, and that when he begins to punish ungodly men, he doth usually bring many severall judgements together upon them. *And he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them*: that is, he maketh all, both good and bad, to drink of this cup of his indignation, though indeed to the good it is but as a physicall potion; yea and this cup comes soonest to them from the hand of the Lord, that are nearest to him, *judgement must begin at the house of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 17. he afflicts all promiscuously: but then the wicked shall at last, will they, nil they, drink the dregs even to the last drop, that is, the sorest judgements shall be their portion, especially at the day of judgement, when they shall be cast into hell, and punished there with insufferable torments unto all eternity.

Vers. 10. *All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off, &c.*] That is, I will suppress them, or bereave them of their great power: *but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted*; see the Note 1 Sam. 2. 1. And this the Psalmist addes, in confidence that God would be aiding to his servants against their wicked enemies, as he had alwaies formerly been.

P S A L M LXXVI.

Vers. 1. **I**N *Judah is God known, &c.*] To wit, Not by his word only, but also (which is chiefly here intended) by the miraculous works he hath wrought amongst them; whereby it was clearly manifested not to them only, but even to all the world, that the God of Israel was the only true almighty God, as is implied in the following words, *his name is great in Israel*; concerning which see also the the Notes Psal. 48. 1, 2, 3, &c. a Psalm that is for the matter of it much like to this.

Verf. 2. *In Salem also is his tabernacle, &c.*] See the Note Gen. 14. 18: *and his dwelling-place in Sion*; as if he had said, and therefore no wonder though he be better known there then elsewhere, and though he have shewn great wonders against his enemies there, that have sought to drive him out of that his dwelling-place.

Verf. 3. *There brake he the arrows of the bow, &c.*] That is, He took from the enemy all power of using them against his people, and the meaning is, he utterly destroyed them; see the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 4. and Psal. 45. 9: *the shield and the sword and the battel*; that is, and all other weapons and provisions of war; or the battel-array, or army of souldiers. And because most Expositours conceive that this Psalm was penned upon occasion of that miraculous destruction of the Assyrians, that had besieged Jerusalem in Hezekiahs daies, therefore they conceive also that in these words there may be an allusion to that which the prophet Isaiah then said, 2 Kings 19. 32. *He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, &c.*

Verf. 4. *Thou art more glorious and excellent, &c.*] To wit, for power & prowesse, *then the mountains of prey*, that is, then the robbers in the mountains; or, then the Assyrians, that coming to besiege Jerusalem did pitch their tents upon the mountains round about her; or rather, then all the great kingdomes of the world, which because they are usually gotten by violence, and do exalt and enrich themselves by spoiling the neighbouring nations round about them, are therefore compared to mountains, that harbour ravening wild beasts, that live wholly upon prey.

Verf. 5. *The stout-hearted are spoiled, &c.*] That is, say some, they are bereaved of all wisdom and prowesse; see the Note Job 12. 17: *they have slept their sleep*; that is, through astonishment & fear they were as men asleep, not able to move a hand in their own defence; which is expressed more clearly in the following words, *and none of the men of might have found their hands*. But I rather understand it thus, that the proud enemies being slain, were stripped & spoiled of all they had about them; and thence it is added, *they have slept their sleep*, that is, *the sleep of death*, as it is called Psal. 13. 3. And because God smote the Assyrians by night, 2 Kin. 19. 35. there may be in these words an allusion thereto; as if it had been said, They were smitten sleeping, and so that sleep of theirs proved an eternall sleep, according to that Jer. 51. 39. *I will make them drunken, that they may rejoyce, and sleep a perpetuall sleep, and not awake; And none of the men of might have found their hands*; that is, they were as men without hands, their hands being of no use to resist the stroke of an angel.

Verf. 8. *Thou didst cause judgement to be heard from heaven, &c.*] To wit, say some Expositours, by terrible tempests of thunder and lightening, &c. whereby thou didst execute judgement upon thine enemies: and accordingly they also expound the following words, *the earth feared, & was still*; that is, the earth was shaken with an earthquake, and all things were still, the wild beasts betaking themselves straight-way to their dens; or, the inhabitants of the earth trembled, so that the boldest of the wicked durst not then stir or mutter against God. But I rather conceive the meaning of the words to be this, that the vengeance executed upon the enemies of God was such, (& we may particularly apply it to that of the slaying the Assyrians) and withall so dreadfull and terrible, that it was as manifest that it was from the God of heaven, as if God had by an audible voice from heaven, terrible as thunder,
given

given sentence of judgement against them, that such & such judgements should be executed upon them; and that hereupon *the earth feared, and was still*, the nations round about them were still, as men amazed, not daring to plot or act any thing farther against the people of God.

Verf. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, &c.*] To wit, because 1. the greater their wrath against thy people is, and the farther they proceed, & the more they prosper therein, the more shall thy wisdom and power be magnified in destroying them, & delivering thy people, & in causing all things to work together in the conclusion for their good: and 2. not only thy people shall hereupon praise thee, but others likewise that shall observe this; yea thine enemies themselves shall acknowledge, that they are vanquished & broken by thine almighty power, & that thou art righteous in all thy judgements upon them. *The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*; that is, those that are left alive of thy wrathfull enemies wilt thou curb and restrain; or rather thus, those that have still any malice against thy people, either thou wilt not suffer their wrath to be so great as formerly, or if they go about to recruit their forces, and to set again upon thy people, thou wilt set such bounds to their wrath, that they shall not accomplish their desire, nor shall proceed farther then shall be for thy glory and thy peoples good.

Verf. 11. *Let all that be round about him bring presents to him that ought to be feared.*] Or, *to fear*, as it is in the original; for which see the Note Gen. 31. 42. And by those *that be round about him*, he means, either 1. the Priests & Levites; or 2. the people of God, who only enjoyed this priviledge and favour of drawing near unto him to worship him, & call upon him (and in this expression he may seem to allude to the Israelites encamping round about the tabernacle whilst they were in the wilderness;) or 3. the nations round about, who being indeed convinced by this miraculous judgement of God upon the Assyrians, did thereupon bring *gifts unto the Lord to Ierusalem, and presents to Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 32. 23.

Verf. 12. *He shall cut off the spirit of Princes.*] That is, their lives, or their understanding and courage.

P S A L M LXXVII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, &c.] See the Note on the Title Psal. 39. And because this clause shews, as is there noted, that this Psalm was committed to the posterity of Jeduthun, to be sung by them, this makes it most probable, that the following words in the original, that are in the Title of many other Psalms, should rather be translated, as they are in our Bibles, *A Psalm of Asaph*; then *A Psalm for Asaph*; because it is hard to conceive why it should be said, that this Psalm was intended both for Jeduthuns Quire and Asaphs too.

Verf. 1. *I cried unto God with my voice, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 3. 4; *even unto God with my voice, & he gave ear unto me*. All which may be understood either of that distress whereof the Psalmist speaks in the sequle of the Psalm, the event whereof he shews here at first; to wit, that persevering in prayer he at last got the day, that so others might learn to doe the like in the like conflicts: or else of Gods hearing him in former troubles; & so hereby he seeks to strengthen his faith, that as God had heard him formerly, so he would again.

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Verf. 2.

Verf. 2. *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord, &c.*] Here the Psalmist shews the sad conflict he had within himself for a time, to wit, that at first this course of praying to God seemed to doe him no good at all : *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord*, that is, when I was in grievous distresse, not outward only, but inward too, my soul, because of my afflictions, apprehending that Gods wrath did lye upon me, and that God had utterly forsaken me : *my sore ran in the night, and ceased not*; that is, I could find no help nor ease of my misery, my sorrow seemed incurable. The Hebrew words may be indeed interpreted, as in the margin, *my hand flowed, or was poured forth, and ceased not*; which may be a vehement figurative expression, like that Psal. 62. 8. of pouring forth the heart before God, and may signify, either 1. that his strength did continually waist away; or 2. that his hands did continually drop with tears, which distilled down from his eyes upon his hands held up in prayer, or by frequent wiping his eyes; or 3. that he continually stretched forth his hands to God in prayer. But I rather conceive, that to expresse how hopelesse and helplesse his condition was, he compares his misery or grief to a wound that bleeds and cannot be staunched, or to a sore that runs continually and cannot be healed; *my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted*; that is, though I prayed unto the Lord, yet that yielded me no comfort, because still my misery continued so grievous upon me; my soul was so imbittered hereby, and I became so wayward and heartlesse, that nothing would yield me any joy or comfort.

Verf. 3. *I remembred God, and was troubled, &c.*] That is, I thought of seeking help from God, and so prayed unto him, and yet my trouble still continued, or rather encreased, as being thereby confirmed that God was angry with me, because he regarded not my prayers; or thus, I sought to comfort my self by thinking of God, his goodnesse and mercy, and faithfulness in making good his promises, and the experience I formerly had of his gracious dealing with me; but all this yielded me no ease, because my miseries still terrified me with apprehensions of his wrath, and of his proceeding in a way of severe justice against me. *I complained*, that is, I made my complaints to God; and *my spirit was overwhelmed*.

Verf. 4. *Thou holdest mine eyes waking, &c.*] To wit, by my continuall miseries and disquieting thoughts; or by thine immediate providence withholding rest from me, which alone doth usually ease a grieved mind : *I am so troubled, that I cannot speak*; see the Notes Job 2. 13, and 3. 1.

Verf. 5. *I have considered the daies of old, &c.*] That is, as hoping to comfort and encourage my self thereby, I meditated on thy former mercies, both to thy people in generall, and to my self in particular. But yet because the Psalmist is still relating his temptation, I conceive that his intention is to imply, that even this tended to the encrease of his sorrows, whilst he weighed how far otherwise it was with him at present, then it had been in former times.

Verf. 6. *I call to remembrance my song in the night, &c.*] That is, In the night, as I lye musing by my self, I call to mind thy former favours, for which I have praised thee with a song; or, I call to remembrance thy former mercies, whereby I

was stirred up to sing praises to thee, not by day only, but even by night also: see the Notes Job 35. 10. and Psal. 42. 8. *I commune with mine own heart*, and my spirit made diligent search, to wit, as enquiring what the cause was why the Lord did so sorely afflict me, and what the issue thereof was like to be; whether there would ever be an end of my troubles, and what means were to be used to bring it to passe; or whether it were likely that God had cast me off for ever, as he expresseth his thoughts in the following verses.

Verf. 7. *Will the Lord cast off for ever, &c?*] This the Psalmist speaks, as struggling against his temptation; as if he had said, These things Satan and mine own corrupt heart do suggest to me; but sure it cannot be so.

Verf. 10. *And I said, This is mine infirmity, &c.*] That is, it is but the weaknesse of my faith, and the feeblenesse of my spirit, thus to doubt of Gods goodnesse and faithfulness to his servants: *but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High*; that is, the great works which by his almighty power he hath in all ages wrought for the deliverance of his people. Though the remembrance of these things hath not hitherto prevailed over my doubts and fears, yet doubtlesse when I have seriously laid them to heart, they will at length prevail to strengthen my faith and hope in God.

Verf. 11. *I will remember the works of the Lord, &c.*] That is, Though at first this doth not appease my spirit, yet I will still and still meditate on the great things God hath done for his people, as being abundantly sufficient to comfort me in my sorrows: *surely I will remember thy wonders of old*; see the Note Psal. 25. 6. And hereby he intimates, that as we use not to question the love of an old friend, that hath been many years faithfull to us; so it would be very injurious to question Gods goodnesse and faithfulness to his servants, which had been approved by experience of many generations, in that however he hath afflicted them for a time, yet at last he hath alwaies wrought wonderfully for them.

Verf. 13. *Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary.*] That is, in the Temple, or in the Heaven. However the meaning is, that the works of God are hidden from the eyes of the world, as the holy things of the Temple might not be seen by men; or, which is all one in effect, that the works of God are above the reach of humane reason, as those things in the heaven are only to be discovered by faith, see the Note Psal. 36. 5. Yet some do otherwise understand this expression, as namely that the proceedings of Gods providence amongst his people might be known in the Sanctuary, according to that Psal. 73. 16, 17: concerning which see the Note there.

Verf. 15. *Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, &c.*] To wit, after thou hadst suffered them to be in bondage in Egypt for many years together, as if thou hadst meant to cast them off for ever; for this seems to be alledged to discover his acknowledged weaknesse in those thoughts of his before mentioned verf. 7, 8, 9: *the sons of Jacob and Ioseph*; that is, all the tribes of Israel. But though some conceive that all the tribes are here called *the sons of Ioseph*, because they were all nourished by Ioseph as a father; yet I rather conceive that by the sons of Ioseph are only meant the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh; and that they are

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severally mentioned, either by way of honour to Joseph, by whose means the whole posterity of Abraham was preserved; or out of respect to the future numerousness and dignity of the tribe of Ephraim, by whose name the whole kingdom of the ten tribes was afterwards called; or rather, because the sons of Joseph were born in Egypt, which the other sons of Jacob were not, and yet their posterity, and that as two distinct tribes, were delivered out of Egypt together with the rest.

Verf. 16. *The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid, &c.*] That is, At thy presence they flew back and were divided: *the depths also were troubled*; that is, even the deep sea was divided to the very bottome.

Verf. 17. *The clouds poured out water, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 14. 24; *thine arrows also went abroad*; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 15.

Verf. 19. *Thy way is in the sea, &c.*] That is, Thou canst make a way for thy people through the greatest dangers, as appeared by thy leading the Israelites through the red sea: *and thy foot-steps are not known*; that is, thy wayes in the government of thy Church are not to be discovered by humane reason, as that way through the red sea was a way which no man could have thought of or found out: when God had carried his people that way, there was no following by the track that they left behind them, in regard the waters presently returned, and covered the ground again, so that when the Egyptians would have followed them, they could not passe through.

Verf. 20. *Thou leddest thy people like a flock, &c.*] That is, with all possible tenderness, love and unwearied providence. And by saying that God led them *like a flock*, he implies also, that it was not by their own arms or strength or wisdom that they were protected from dangers as they went, but merely by the watchfull care of God over them. *By the hand of Moses and Aaron*, mean and obscure and contemptible men, no way likely by so high a hand to have carried the people of God out of the dominions of such a potent prince as Pharaoh was.

P S A L M LXXVIII.

Verf. 1. **G**ive ear, O my people, to my law, &c.] That is, to my doctrine, which from God I shall deliver to you, and which must therefore be as a law to you for the ordering of your lives; see the Note Psal. 1. 2: and so the Apostle calls the Gospel which he preached, his Gospel, Rom. 2. 16. As for those words, *O my people*, if we look upon this Psalm as composed by David, it is no wonder that he should call the Israelites his people, he being their king: and if Asaph, or any other holy man of God, composed it, he might term them his people, either as being his country-men, as Jeremy doth Jer. 9. 2. or as being called of God to be their teacher. What may be probably thought concerning the time when this Psalm was composed, see in the following Notes, verf. 9.

Verf. 2. *I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old.*] By the

the opening of the mouth in Scripture is usually meant a beginning to speak; or else to speak after some deliberation, sincerely, and plainly, and freely. And some conceive that the relating and applying of ancient histories is here called *parables* and *dark sayings*, either because (as the Apostle saith 1 Cor. 10. 11.) *all these things happened unto them for types, &c*; or because there are many holy instructions covertly couched under these examples; or because the providences that are here related in Gods continued goodnesse to such a stiff-necked people as Israel was, must needs be riddles to humane reason. But for this see the Notes Numb. 23. 7. and Psal. 49. 4. In Matth. 13. 35. we find this place alledged by the Evangelist, who saith, that Christ taught the people in parables, *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables, &c.* But the drift of those words was not to signify, that the Psalmist did herein prophecy concerning the manner of Christs teaching; his meaning is only this, that in regard of Christs teaching by parables, that might be well said of Christ, which the Psalmist here speaks of himself: only these words here, *dark sayings of old*, the Evangelist renders, *things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world*, because Christ indeed taught mysteries, which from the creation till then had not been so distinctly revealed.

Verf. 5. *For he established a Testimony in Iacob, &c.*] This may be meant of the law in generall, both ceremoniall and morall, together with the promises annexed, which they were bound to teach their children, Deut. 6. 7. and was indeed a testimony of Gods delivering them out of Egypt, and the covenant which thereupon he made with them as his peculiar people, see the Note Exod. 25. 16; and likewise more particularly of that particular charge, that they should teach their children successively the great works that God had done for them, Deut. 4. 9.

Verf. 8. *And might not be as their fathers, &c.*] To wit, As men are naturally prone to be; *a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God*: that is, that set not their hearts sincerely and constantly to trust in God, and to doe that which was right in his eyes.

Verf. 9. *The children of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battel.*] That is, being a warlike people, and well provided for arms, yet they fled before their enemies; which was an evident sign that Gods hand was against them. Some understand this of that slaughter of the sons of Ephraim 1 Chron. 7. 21. whilst they were yet in Egypt. But because the Psalmists intent is clearly, not to set forth the wickednesse of one tribe only, but of all the Israelites, therefore by *Ephraim* here, I conceive, is meant, either the people of Israel in generall, and that they are called *Ephraim*, because that was the most numerous and potent of all the tribes of Israel; or the kingdome of the ten tribes, which is usually in the prophets called *Ephraim*, both for the reason before given, & also because the chief city of that kingdome was in that tribe, & Jeroboam, that was the chief promoter of that great apostacy from the house of David, was also of Ephraim. And accordingly if we understand it of any one particular overthrow, either it must be meant of that great ruine of the kingdome of the ten tribes by the

Assyrians, 2 Kings 17. 5, 6. (and then indeed they might the rather here be called *Ephraim*, because that Idolatry which Jeroboam brought in, and which made them unworthy of the name of Israel, was a main cause of that destruction;) or else of that discomfiture of the Israelites by the Philistines, when the Ark was taken, 1 Sam. 4. 10. And this indeed many learned Expositours do the rather think, 1. because Shiloh, where this overthrow was given them, was in the tribe of Ephraim, and so probably the army of Israel might chiefly be gathered out of that tribe; and 2. because it seems by the later part of the Psalm, that the drift of the Psalmist herein is to set forth how Shiloh was rejected, and Sion the city of David was chosen to be Gods dwelling-place in stead thereof: and so hence it is that first here he shews how God was offended with the Israelites for their sins at that time, when the Ark was taken from Ephraim; and then, to aggravate their sins, in that the great works that God had formerly wrought for their fathers, were no better remembred by them, and improved to make them carefull to please God, he makes a large recitall of those wonders which God had done for them; and so in the close of the Psalm he returns again to shew, how God in his displeasure removed the Ark from Ephraim, and in favour to David removed it to Sion in the tribe of Judah.

Verf. 12. *Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.*] That is, in the countrey of Zoan, a chief city in Egypt; see Numb. 13. 22, and Isa. 30. 2, 3, 4. the same that was also called Tanais.

Verf. 14. *In the day-time also he led them with a cloud.*] See the Note *Exod. 13. 21*. This figured Christs guiding his Church, till he hath brought them to their heavenly inheritance; and thence it is that Paul makes this cloud a representation of Baptisme, 1 Cor. 10. 2. *and they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*

Verf. 15. *He clave the rocks in the wilderness, &c.*] The word *rocks* in the plurall number implyes, that this was done twice; see the Notes *Exod. 17. 6*, and *Numb. 20. 11*. As before he clave or divided the sea, so now with as much ease he clave the rocks; and as before he made the waters to stand on heaps like rocks, so now he made the rocks to dissolve as it were into water. *And gave them drink as out of the great depth*; that is, in great plenty; see the Notes *Exod. 17. 6*.

Verf. 17. *And they sinned yet more against him, &c.*] To wit, even after God had wrought such wonders for them: *by provoking the most High in the wilderness*; to wit, when their late deliverance out of Egypt was yet fresh in memory, where they had many miraculous signs of Gods presence amongst them continually in their eye, and where their daily dangers and wants might well have made them afraid to provoke God.

Verf. 18. *And they tempted God in their heart, &c.*] See the Note *Exod. 17. 2*: *by asking meat for their lust*; see the Note *Numb. 11. 4*. for of that murmuring the Psalmist seems to speak here, their first crying for meat *Exod. 16. 3*. being before the first fetching water out of a rock, which this was not, as is clear *vers. 20*. *Behold, he smote the rock, &c.*

Verf. 19. *They said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*] That is, Can he

he provide us meat, yea variety and delicacies, as we had in Egypt?

Verf. 20. *Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, &c.*] It is not necessary we should conceive that the Israelites spake these words; but that the Psalmists drift is to imply, that their murmuring for flesh was all one in effect, as if they had thus said. And that which is here charged upon them may either be, that they questioned the will of God, *Behold, he smote the rock, &c. can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?* as if they had said, He that brought water out of the rock, might he not also, if he would, if he loved us and took care of us, give us bread and flesh likewise to eat? or else that they questioned the power of God, *Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out;* as if they had said, This is not so great a matter, since water doth naturally in many places flow out of rocks: but *can he give bread also?* that is, bread-corn (for at that time they had none but manna) or meat; as the following words expresse it, *Can he provide flesh for his people?*

Verf. 21. *So a fire was kindled against Jacob, &c.*] That is, the wrath of God, as it is explained in the next words, *and anger also came up against Israel.* But yet see the Note Numb. 11. 1.

Verf. 23. *Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the gates of heaven.*] To wit, to give them manna in great plenty, as out of his store-houses. And therefore having formerly done this for them, they had no cause to murmur for flesh.

Verf. 24. *And had rained down manna upon them.*] This expression is used to imply in what plenty the manna was given, and because it fell together with the dew.

Verf. 25. *Man did eat angels food.*] So their manna was called, either 1. because it was provided and sent by the ministry of angels; or 2. because it seemed to come down from heaven, the dwelling-place of the angels; or 3. to set forth the excellency of this bread, that it was meat as one would say fit for angels, if angels needed meat. And so indeed the exceeding glory of Stephens countenance is set forth by this, that *they saw his face, as if it had been the face of an angel*, Act. 6. 15. and Paul calls an excellent tongue, *the tongue of angels*, 1 Cor. 13. 1. See also the Note Numb. 16. 35.

Verf. 26. *He caused an east-wind to blow, &c.*] See the Note Numb. 11. 31.

Verf. 28. *And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, &c.*] That is, the flesh mentioned in the foregoing verse; to wit, the quails, which being fat and heavy fowls, and having their wings moistened with the South-east wind, fell upon the earth, and so were gathered by the Israelites. See the Notes Numb. 11. 31.

Verf. 30. *They were not estranged from their lust, &c.*] That is, Having the quails continued to them, they still glutted themselves therewith, though they had already eaten greedily on them; and then the wrath of God fell upon them. See the Note Numb. 11. 33.

Verf. 31. *The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, &c.*] See the Notes Job 15. 27, and Psal. 22. 29, and Numb. 11. 33.

Verf. 32. *For all this they sinned still, &c.*] To wit, when they refused to enter the

the land of Canaan : *and believed not for his wondrous works*; that is, sincerely and constantly, though now and then for the present they seemed to be strongly convinced by the mighty works of God, Exod. 14. 31.

Verf. 33. *Therefore their daies did he consume in vanity, &c.*] That is, say some, they were presently consumed, as some vain thing that is gone on a sudden. But I rather think it is meant of that sentence which God pronounced against them, that they should all perish in the wilderness, that they spent their whole life in fruitlesse labours, wandring up and down, and being still travelling towards Canaan, but all in vain, in regard they never came to that land, in hope whereof they were brought out of Egypt. *And their years in trouble*; to wit, they lay still under Gods displeasure, and were still afflicted with many and divers troubles all the time of their being in the wilderness.

Verf. 34. *And they returned, and inquired early after God.*] That is, They presently seemed to repent and turn to God.

Verf. 38. *But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity.*] In regard of those that did but feignedly repent, there can be no more intended hereby, but that the Lord did upon their seeming repentance withdraw his plagues and judgments; yet withall we may be sure that God was truly reconciled to those amongst them that did truly repent, and did indeed fully acquit them of all their transgressions.

Verf. 39. *For he remembered that they were but flesh, &c.*] That is, 1. corrupt, naturally prone to sin; and 2. weak and frail, unable to bear the full wrath of the Lord, if it should be poured upon them, yea such as were subject to many calamities, and sure ere long to die of themselves, and therefore a fitter object of pity, then of continuall displeasure. And that this last is indeed chiefly intended, is the more probable, because of the following clause, where he adds also, that they were *a wind that passeth away, & cometh not again*; that is, such as would be soon irrecoverably gone.

Verf. 41. *Yea, they turned back, &c.*] That is, After some shews of repentance, when the hand of God was upon them, they soon turned back to their former evil waies: *and tempted God*; see the Notes Exod. 17. 2. & Deut. 6. 16: *and limited the holy one of Israel*; to wit, by prescribing God what he must doe, or else they would not believe in him; or by conceiving of God after the manner of men, that this he could doe, & this he could not doe, & so robbing him of the glory of his omnipotency.

Verf. 45. *He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them, &c.*] To wit, by their extreme annoyance, and the mischief they many waies did them; see the Notes Exod. 8, 21: *and frogs which destroyed them*; to wit, in that they were also severall waies very mischievous to them, and when they lay dead in heaps, both air, earth and water were infected and corrupted therewith.

Verf. 47. *He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost.*] Or, *with great hail-stones*. The meaning is, that the hail did not only beat off the leaves and fruit of their vines & other trees, or otherwise marre them, but that it did even kill the very roots of the trees, that they never grew more; see the Note Exod. 9. 23.

Ver. 49. *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath & indignation & trouble, &c.*] That is, many supernaturall & dreadfull plagues, that came thick upon them, & were clear evidences of Gods indignation against them: & that by sending evil angels among them;

them; that is, Angels by whose ministry these plagues were inflicted on them: & therefore there is no necessity that this should be meant of devils: the good angels may be called *evil*, with respect to the sore evils they inflicted then upon the Egyptians. I know that some Expositours hold that the Egyptian plagues were inflicted by devils; & they ground their opinion wholly upon this passage of the Psalmist. But because (as St. Augustine argues well) the devils sided with the Egyptian forcerers against Moses & Aaron, in working their magick miracles, it is no way probable that they were imploied on the other side too in plaguing the Egyptians. And therefore either it was by the ministry of the holy angels, that all these evils were brought upon Egypt; or else we must say that it is the judgements themselves, or the inferiour creatures by whom these judgements were inflicted, that are here called figuratively, because they were sent of God, *evil angels*.

Verf. 50. *He made a way to his anger, &c.*] To wit, i. by giving way to bring greater judgements upon them then hitherto he had done, even to the taking away of the life both of man & beast, from which hitherto his compassion had restrained him, & providing that nothing should hinder the just execution of his wrath herein; & thus I conceive the following words do explain this first clause, shewing how he gave way in his anger to the slaying of the first-born in Egypt: *he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence*. Yet this last clause may be read, as in the margin of our Bibles, *but gave over their beasts to the murrain*; which must then be understood of that plague Exod. 9. 3. for which see the Notes there.

Verf. 51. *And smote all the first-born in Egypt, the chief of their strength, &c.*] See the Note Gen. 49. 3: *in the tabernacles of Ham*; that is, of the Egyptians, for Egypt is in the Hebrew called Mizraim, of Mizraim the son of Ham, Gen. 10. 6. who first peopled that country.

Verf. 52. *But made his own people to go forth like sheep, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 77. 20.

Verf. 53. *And he led them on safely, so that they feared not.*] That is, they had no cause to fear, the Lord going along with them as their guardian. Or the meaning may be, that though through weakness & infidelity they were sometimes afraid, as we see Exod. 14. 10: yet by the mighty works of God they were still at last heartned & encouraged again.

Verf. 54. *And he brought them to the border of his Sanctuary, &c.*] That is, to the land where he had determined to dwell amongst them in his Sanctuary: *even to this mountain which his right hand had purchased*; to wit, mount Sion, or the land of Canaan, a land of mountains and valleys, Deut. 11. 11. See the Note Exod. 15. 17.

Verf. 56. *Yet they tempted, &c.*] To wit, by sinning against God; see the Note Deut. 6. 16: *and provoked the most High God, and kept not his testimonies*; to wit, in that they kept not Gods command for destroying the Canaanites; see the Note Psal. 19. 7.

Verf. 57. *They were turned aside like a deceitfull bow.*] That is, like a bow that shoots awry, & not whether the archer that useth it aims to shoot; to wit, because whereas they ought to have been guided by God, after all their fair professions & promises of being faithful to God & their pious judges, such as those to Joshua, Josh. 1. 16, 17. *All that thou commandest us we will doe, &c.* they perfidiously fell off, & went awry, & did not order their waies as God expected & required; and particularly whilst they pretended to worship only the true God, they suddenly turned aside to the worship of idols.

Verf. 60. *So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, &c.*] To wit, in that the Ark, the sign of his presence, was carried thence into captivity by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 4. 11.

and the Tabernacle also was thence removed, see the Note 1 Chron. 21. 1. and neither of them were ever brought back thither again: *the tent which he placed among men*; It is not among the Israelites, but *among men*, to imply Gods abasing himself to dwell amongst such base and wretched creatures as men are.

Verf. 61. *And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies hand.*] That is, the Ark; see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 11. 2 Chron. 6. 41, and 1 Sam. 4. 21, 22. Yet some understand it of Gods giving up the strongest and chiefest of the people to be slaves to the Philistines.

Verf. 63. *The fire consumed their young men, &c.*] That is, The force or heat of the battel, or the fire of Gods wrath, mentioned in the foregoing verse, did suddenly make an end of them: *and their maidens were not given to marriage*; to wit, by reason there was such a scarcity of young men after that battel; or because those that were betrothed to them were slain. It is in the originall, *their maidens were not praised*: but the meaning is, that they were not praised with Epithalamiums or marriage-songs, as Brides at their weddings used to be.

Verf. 64. *Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation.*] The meaning is, either 1. that being overwhelmed with sorrow they could not weep; or 2. that being in captivity amongst the Philistines they were not suffered to lament the death of their husbands; or 3. that dying with grief they lived not to make any lamentations for them at their funerals; or 4. that they were so taken up and oppressed with their own miseries, and especially with the miseries of the Church and people of God in generall, that they had not leasure to bewail their husbands: of both which last we have a clear instance in the wife of Phinehas in particular, 1 Sam. 4. 19, 20. who dying made no mention of her husband.

Verf. 65. *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, &c.*] To wit, as one fallen fast asleep after much wine drunk, as the following words do imply, *and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine*. However the drift of this expression is to imply, that as one that was looked upon to be in a dead sleep, he did the more unexpectedly fall upon them, and as one that had forborn them a while, he did with the more fury and severity break forth upon them.

Verf. 66. *And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts; he put them to a perpetuall reproach.*] This is meant of the Lords smiting the Philistines with emerods, see the Note 1 Sam. 5. 6. the shame whereof was made perpetuall by those golden images of their emerods, which they sent to the Israelites, see the Note 1 Sam. 6. 4. Yet some do also include herein the shame that was done them in the Lords casting down their Idol Dagon, and breaking it in pieces upon the threshold; the memory of which reproach became the more perpetuall by that superstitious practise, which upon that occasion they took up, of never treading after that upon the threshold: See the Note 1 Sam. 5. 5.

Verf. 67. *Moreover he refused the Tabernacle of Ioseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim.*] To wit, 1. in that he would not let the Ark be any longer there (for that this is chiefly meant here is evident by that which is added verf. 69. concerning the building of the Temple) (see the foregoing Notes verf. 9. and 60; and 2. that

that the supreme magistracy was not continued in that tribe, though it began there, when Joshua, who was of that tribe, was made their Ruler.

Verf. 68. *But chose the tribe of Judah, &c.*] To wit, that the place of Gods worship and the supreme magistracy should be settled in that tribe: *the mount Sion which he loved*; that is, which he chose, not for any other cause, but of his own free grace, because he was pleased to set his love upon it.

Verf. 69. *And he built his Sanctuary like high palaces; like the earth which he hath established for ever.*] That is, that it might be the settled place of his worship, even unto the coming of the Messiah; who should then establish it in the Church, the true Sion, unto the end of the world.

Verf. 71. *He brought him to feed Jacob his people, &c.*] To wit, David; see the Note 2 Sam. 5. 2: *and Israel his inheritance*; see the Note Deut. 4. 20.

Verf. 72. *So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, &c.*] To wit, as sincerely seeking the peoples good: *and guided them by the skilfulnesse of his hands*; to wit, in that he did all things in the administration of his kingdome, as became a wise and skilfull governour. Yet in this expression there seems to be an allusion to the hook which shepherds used to carry in their hands, therewith to order their sheep.

P S A L M LXXIX.

Verf. 1. **O** God, *the heathen are come into thine inheritance, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 15. 17: *thy holy temple have they defiled*; to wit, by spoiling it, by shedding blood in it, and by bringing profane and wicked persons and things into it. Most Expositours say that this was spoken of the destruction of Jerusalem, either by the Babylonians, or by Antiochus in the time of the Maccabees. But the first is far most probable; because in relating the miseries the Jews endured by the persecution of Antiochus 1 Maccab. 7. 16, 17. the words in the 2. and 3. verses of this Psalm are cited, which shews that this Psalm was extant among the people long before those troubles.

Verf. 3. *Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem, &c.*] That is, 1. in great abundance; and 2. without pity; their enemies having no more remorse for the shedding of their blood, then they would have had for the pouring out of so much water, nor no more fearing to be called to an account for the one then for the other: *and there was none to bury them*; to wit, because the enemy would not, and their near friends were either all slain, or durst not goe out to doe it.

Verf. 4. *We are become a reproach to our neighbours, &c.*] To wit, the Babylonians and others amongst whom they lived; or rather the Edomites and other bordering nations, as the following words do expresse it, *a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.*

Verf. 8. *O remember not against us former iniquities, &c.*] To wit, ours or our fathers: *let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us*; that is, let them prevent our utter ruine, by helping us speedily.

Verf. 9.

Verf. 9. *Help us, O God of our salvation, &c.*] That is, who hast undertaken to save us, who canst only save us, and hast often saved us: *for the glory of thy name*; that is, that thy glorious attributes, thine infinite power and goodnesse, &c. may be known, that thy people may praise thee for them, and that the blaspheming mouths of thine enemies may be stopped: *and deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy names sake*; see the Note Psal. 23. 3.

Verf. 11. *Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee, &c.*] This may be understood either of all the captives in generall (for all such are in a kind prisoners;) or of such particularly as were besides imprisoned: and so the following clause, *preserve thou those that are appointed to die*, may be meant of all in captivity, who were continually in danger of death; or else of those whom they had intended to put to death.

Verf. 12. *And render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosome, &c.*] That is, Repay them abundantly *the reproach wherewith they reproached thee*, O Lord. There seems to be in this phrase an allusion to those, that in giving any thing do pour it into the laps of those to whom they give it, and do not stand to measure it. Yet it may well be also, that in this expression of rendering *into their bosome*, he might also imply his desire that God would pay them home, even to the vexing and terrifying of their consciences within them; or that he would recompence them according to the evil purposes they had harboured in their breasts against them.

P S A L M LXXX.

Verf. 1. **G**ive ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that ledest Ioseph like a flock, &c.] That is, that hast undertaken as a shepherd to protect and guide thy people, and hast hitherto faithfully done it; see the Note Psal. 23. 1. and 77. 20: *thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth*; that is, manifest thy presence, or the glory of thy power, or thy grace and favour to us, chearing and reviving our hearts by delivering us out of our captivity. Many Expositours conceive this is spoken of the Babylonian captivity. Indeed because there is only mention made here of *Israel* and *Ioseph*, (for which see the Note Psal. 77. 15.) and in the following verse of *Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh*, some do rather think that this Psalm was composed as a prayer for the use of the ten tribes, when they were carried away captives by the Assyrians, amongst whom their might be many that had not bowed their knees to Baal: and accordingly they say also that the Psalmist useth that expression, *thou that dwellest between the Cherubims*, purposely to hint unto the Israelites, that if they expected that God should hear their prayers, they must, in their desires at least, embrace that only pure way of Gods worship, which God had established in the Temple at Jerusalem. But this I conceive is no convincing argument, and that because there was a remnant even of the tribes here mentioned, that had joyned themselves to Judah, that they might enjoy the pure ordinances of God in the Temple, who accordingly returned with the Jews out of Babylon, as is evident 1 Chron.

9. 3: and therefore these may be here mentioned in stead of all the rest of the tribes. And though the Temple was destroyed in the Babylonian captivity, yet this expression of Gods dwelling between the Cherubims might be used in reference to that way of worship which God had formerly established amongst them.

Verf. 2. *Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, &c.*] That is, Before all the tribes of Israel rouse up thy power, which hath for a time been laid asleep, against our potent enemies. Some conceive that in those words, *Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh*, there is an allusion to that which is said Numb. 2. 18. that these three tribes had their Tents on the west of the Tabernacle, and so had the Ark, which was in the west end of the tabernacle, continually before them; for which see the Note there. But though this were so, yet it well may be, that under these three tribes here named all the other may be comprehended.

Verf. 3. *Turn us again, O God, &c.*] That is, Bring us back out of our captivity into our own country, and settle us there again in our former state and condition; for so we see the like expression is used, Psal. 126. 1. *When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.* Yet under this phrase there may be also included a request, that the Lord would turn their hearts to him by unfeigned repentance, that so they might be fit for deliverance. *And cause thy face to shine*; see the Notes Psal. 4. 7. and 67. 1.

Verf. 4. *How long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?*] Thus they complain, because even after their prayers things were worse with them then they were before.

Verf. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 42. 4.

Verf. 6. *Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours.*] That is, They are continually striving with us and fighting against us, according to that of the Prophet Jer. 15. 10. *woe is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth*: or, Being all our enemies, they even strive amongst themselves, who should first invade us, prevail against us, and make a prey of us.

Verf. 8. *Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt, &c.*] The Psalmist in these words may seem to allude to the precious account which men make of vines that are brought out of forraign countries.

Verf. 9. *Thou preparedst room before it, &c.*] To wit, by casting out the heathen thence, (as he had said in the foregoing verse) even as men digge up and cast out stones, and roots, and briers and thorns, and whatsoever may hinder the prosperous growing of their vines: *and didst cause it to take deep root*; to wit, in that thou didst firmly settle thy people in that land for many years, that so they might flourish the more.

Verf. 10. *The hills were covered with the shadow of it, &c.*] That is, The whole land was subdued and inhabited by them; not so much as the very hills but were full of people. And besides hereby also may be implied, how exceeding glorious this people should be for riches, power, and extent of their dominions, that other kingdomes which are usually compared to hills in the Scripture should be subdued by them, and that the glory of other kingdomes should

should be obscured by their glory. And the like may be said of the following clause, *and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.* Yet this some understand of those great and glorious men that should grow up in this nation, such as David and Solomon, &c.

Vers. 11. *She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.*] See the Note Psal. 72. 8.

Vers. 12. *Why hast thou then broken down her hedges?*] To wit, by withdrawing thy protection.

Vers. 13. *The bear out of the wood doth wast it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.*] That is, the savage and unclean heathens, both princes and people, to wit, the Assyrians or Babylonians.

Vers. 14. *Look down from heaven, &c.*] As if they should have said, Though we enjoy not the Ark, the outward sign of thy presence, amongst us, yet from heaven we know thou wilt hear our prayers, and there is help to be had, though there be none upon earth; see also the Note Psal. 76. 8: *and behold, and visit this vine;* that is, send help to thy people.

Vers. 15. *And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, &c.*] Herein there seems to be an allusion to the precious account men are wont to make of those vines or trees which they have planted with their own hands: *and the branch which thou madest strong for thyself;* that is, the people whom thou didst establish, that they might be thine own peculiar people, and for thine own honour and glory. And in this expression there seems also to be an allusion to the custome of strengthening young vines, by driving stakes into the earth whereon they might grow up.

Vers. 16. *It is burnt with fire and cut down, &c.*] To wit, the vineyard or the branch mentioned in the foregoing verse: and the meaning is, that the Israelites were destroyed with fire and sword.

Vers. 17. *Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, and upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.*] That is, By thy power protect that people, that hath been formerly dear to thee and carefully protected by thee, see the Note Gen. 35. 18. For those words, *the man* and *the son of man*, must be understood, I conceive, collectively, as comprehending the whole body of the people of Israel. Yet there are some that conceive, and that upon very probable grounds, that this prayer is particularly made for the king and people of Judah, whom God had hitherto defended and maintained, and that were at present the only remainders of Israels desolations; see also the Note before vers. 15.

Vers. 18. *So will not we goe back from thee, &c.*] That is, We will not any more, as we have done, revolt from thy truth, worship and service; but will trust in thee, and yield obedience to thee in all things: *quicken us;* that is, chear us up, by delivering us; see also the Note Psal. 71. 20: *and we will call upon thy name;* that is, we will praise thee and worship thee continually.

P S A L M LXXXI.

Verf. 3. **B**low up the Trumpet in the New-moon, &c.] That is, the New-moon of every moneth; for which see the Notes Numb. 10. 10, and 28. 11: *in the time appointed on our solemn feast-day*; that is, upon every one of our solemn feast-daies, for the service whereof it seems this Psalm was composed: or both clauses may be meant of one and the same time, to wit, the new-moon of the seventh moneth, which was indeed a *solemn feast-day*, and called *the feast of trumpets*; for which see the Note Lev. 23. 24.

Verf. 5. *This he ordained in Ioseph, &c.*] That is, in Israel; see the Note Psal. 77. 15: *for a testimony*; that is, for a law, see the Note Psal. 19. 7; or for a memoriall of the mercy in the following words mentioned: *when he went out through the land of Egypt*; to wit, when he led his people thence with an out-stretched arme; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *when he went out against the land of Egypt*; that is, when he went forth as a captain before his angels, that were to execute his judgements upon the Egyptians. As for the following clause, *where I heard a language that I understood not*, it is spoken, I conceive, by the Psalmist in the name of the people of Israel. And though some understand it thus, that when God had carried them out of Egypt, they did hear a language which they had never been acquainted with, to wit, the voice of God speaking from mount Sinai; yet I doubt not but the meaning is this, that in Egypt they heard a language which they understood not, and that this is added by way of aggravating the misery of their bondage there, from which God delivered them, and that because for the same reason we see this very particular alledged elsewhere, as Psal. 114. 1. *when Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language*: see also the Notes Deut. 28. 49.

Verf. 6. *I removed his shoulder from the burden; his hands were delivered from the pots.*] That is, from making pots; or from filling and carrying pots laden with water, straw, clay, bricks, mortar, &c. all which may be comprehended in that generall expreffion, Exod. 1. 14. *And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field.* However, clear it is, that from hence to the end of the Psalm God is brought in as expostulating with his people.

Verf. 7. *Thou calledst in trouble, &c.*] To wit, when after their deliverance out of Egypt (of which he had spoken in the foregoing verse) Pharaoh had pursued them to the red-sea; see Exod. 14. 10, 15: *I answered thee in the secret place of thunder*; that is, out of the pillar of fire and of the cloud from whence I thundered upon the Egyptians, see the Notes Exod. 14. 24. Now this might be tearmed an answering them *in the secret place of thunder*, 1. because the thunder came out of the pillar of the cloud, which though it gave light on one side to the Israelites, yet it was a cloud of darknesse to the Egyptians, Exod. 14. 20: 2^{ly}, and especially, because though God did not visibly then appear to them, yet the thunder was a clear evidence of his hidden presence there, and that however before he had seen

med to hide himself from them for a time, yet he was in a readinesse to help and deliver them: and it may well be that this is spoken in reference to that which is said Exod. 14. 20. that *the Lord looked to the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians.* And some understand it also of Gods speaking to the people from mount Sinai by a voice like thunder, which came from the thick cloud that was upon the mount. As for the following clause, *I proved thee at the waters of Meribah,* to wit, by the thirst they endured there, this is doubtlesse added to shew, that it was of Gods free grace that he did thus deliver them from the Egyptians, seeing so shortly after they did by their murmuring at Meribah discover how unworthy they were of this mercy. See also the Note Exod. 15. 25.

Verf. 8. *Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee, &c.*] See the Note Deut. 4. 26. But this must be understood as spoken by God to the Israelites when he had newly carried them out of Egypt, as is evident by that which follows ver. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice, &c.* see the Notes also Exod. 15. 25.

Verf. 10. *Open thy mouth wide, &c.*] That is, Ask freely and largely, even whatever you will, yea ask still greater and greater things, and that with full assurance of faith, pressing your requests with fervency and importunity: *and I will fill it;* that is, I will fulfill all your desires. But yet this last clause some understand particularly of Gods supplying them liberally with food and sustenance, whereto that may seem to agree which is added ver. 16. *He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, &c.* and some, of Gods filling their mouths with his praises, for which see the Note Psal. 71. 8. And however in the expression here used there seems to be an allusion to the manner of birds feeding their young ones.

Verf. 15. *The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him, &c.*] Hereby is implied, that on the contrary, because of his peoples sins, he had chosen to prosper those that hated him, rather then not punish his peoples rebellion against him. See the Note also 2 Sam. 22. 45.

P S A L M LXXXII.

Verf. 1. **G**od standeth in the congregation of the mighty, &c.] That is, He is present among the great judges and Potentates of the world, and president over them, see the Notes 2 Chron. 19. 6. and Deut. 1. 17: *he judgeth among the Gods;* see the Note Exod. 22. 28. The meaning is, that they are but his vicegerents, and that he will therefore judge them, according as they carry themselves in judging others. And hence it is that in the following verses he expostulates with them as his subjects and vassals, *How long will ye judge unjustly? &c.*

Verf. 5. *They know not, &c.*] As if he had said, But, alas, it is in vain to speak to these men, *They know not,* that is, Being blinded with gifts, corrupt affections, and their greatnesse in the world, they know nothing of this which I have spoken to them of; they know not what is just and what is unjust, nor what belongs to them to doe: *neither will they understand;* that is, they are wilfully ignorant, and will not be taught: *they walk on in darknesse,* they proceed on in their waies of ignorance,

rance, sin and folly. And then for the last clause, *all the foundations are out of course*, in the originall *are moved*, either it doth simply declare the evil that came by the injustice of these judges, to wit, that for want of justice and judgement, which are the foundations of kingdoms & commonwealths, all things were out of order and went to wrack; or else it is added to imply the obstinate blindness of the judges, who though they might see that all things were brought into confusion, & were like to be utterly ruined by their unjust doings, yet they would not be convinced of the evil of their waies. But see the Notes Psal. 11. 3, and 75. 3.

Verf. 6. *I have said, Ye are Gods, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 22. 28: *and all of you are children of the most High*, to wit, because God had conferred part of his sovereignty and judiciary power upon them, as Princes are wont to leave theirs to their children; and because withall they should be, if they would carry themselves as they ought to do, most dear to God, as children are to their father.

Verf. 7. *But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*] That is, ye shall be cast down from your places of dignity and power, (according to that Luk. 1. 52, *he hath put down the mighty from their seats*) like as other Princes before you have been, or as it hath been with the princes of other nations; or, ye shall die by some violent death, as usually tyrants are wont to do.

Verf. 8. *Arise, O God, judge the earth, &c.*] As if he had said, Seeing the judges on earth are every where so unjust, do thou from heaven take this work into thine own hands; do thou free the oppressed, and punish the oppressours, with their unjust judges: *for thou shalt inherit all nations*; that is, by this means all nations shall submit themselves to thee, and shall worship and fear thee; or, thou art and alwaies shalt be the supreme judge of all nations, neither can any tyrants wrest this power out of thine hands. Yea some conceive that this is spoken in reference to Christ.

P S A L M LXXXIII.

The Title. **A** *Song or Psalm of Asaph.*] Most Expositours hold that this Psalm was penned when Jehoshaphat was invaded by a mighty army, made up of many severall nations, 2 Chron. 20. 1. which agreeth with that which is here said, vers. 6, 7, 8. and because it is said that the people of God sung as they were going out against this army, 2 Chron. 20. 21, 22. therefore some conceive that this was the very Psalm which they then sung.

Verf. 1. *Keep not thou silence, O God, &c.*] To wit, whilst thine enemies make such a noise, as it follows in the next verse. But see also the Note Psal. 28. 1.

Verf. 3. *They have taken crafty counsell against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*] That is, thy saints and servants, whom thou dost hide as a precious treasure from the rage of their enemies, and who are not known nor owned to be such as they are by the men of this world, their life being hid with Christ in God.

Verf. 5. *For they have consulted together with one consent, &c.*] And thus, though these nations were usually at deadly enmity one against another, yet now they could unanimously combine together against the people of God.

Verf. 6. *The tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagarens.*] See the Note 1 Chron. 15. 10. It seems some of Ishmaels posterity were from their father called Ishmaelites, and others of them from their grandmother Hagar were called Hagarens; yet others conceive they were the posterity of some other children, that Hagar had by some other husband after Abraham had put her away.

Verf. 7. *Gebal.*] See the Note 1 Kings 5. 18.

Verf. 8. *Affur also is joyned with them, &c.*] That is, The Assyrians also, though a people of a far countrey, were joyned with them: *they have holpen the children of Lot;* to wit, the Moabites and Ammonites, who were, it seems, the first and chief movers of this invasion of the land of Israel, whereof the Psalmist speaks, and so they were in that invasion in Jehoshaphats daies, 2 Chron. 20. 1.

Verf. 9. *Doe unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sifera, as to Iabin, &c.*] That is, as to the army of Jabin: but see also Judg. 4. 24.

Verf. 10. *Which perished at Endor, &c.*] For they were destroyed at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo, Judg. 5. 19. and Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo were neighbouring towns, Josh. 17. 11: *they became as dung for the earth;* that is, they were trodden under foot like dung, and their carcases lying unburied were as dung to fatten the earth, according to that Jer. 16. 4. *they shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth.*

Verf. 12. *Who said, Let us take to our selves the houses of God in possession.*] To wit, in that they sought to subdue the land of Canaan, which was Gods inheritance, and to get possession of the cities and towns of Judea: which might be called *the houses of God*, because there God dwelt amongst them, and where the people of God are, there God is present with them; and withall because God had given them this land for their inheritance; whence is that of Jehoshaphat 2 Chron. 20. 11. *Behold how they reward us, so come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.*

Verf. 13. *O my God, &c.*] This may be taken as spoken by the Psalmist, either in his own name, or in the name of the people of God as one man. *Make them like a wheel;* that is, Let them, through the volubility and inconstancy of their condition, be suddenly and violently carried down headlong from their lofty estate, not finding any resting place, till they and their designs be utterly ruined, even as when a wheel is turned about, the top of it is suddenly underneath; or, Let them be continually driven about with divers calamities, and never be at rest in a settled condition; or, Let them be stricken with a spirit of giddiness, unstable and inconstant in all their consultations and imaginations, and so thereby unable to hurt thy people: *as the stubble before the wind;* see the Notes Job 21. 18, and Psal. 35. 5.

Verf. 14. *As the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire.*] That is, the stubble, or rather the trees on the mountains, which being set on fire, no skill or industry of men can yield any help for the quenching of them.

Verf. 15. *So persecute them with thy tempest, &c.*] See the Notes Job 27. 20, 21. and Psal. 35. 5, 6.

Verf. 16. *Fill their faces with shame, &c.*] To wit, for their great disappointments in their hopes and attempts against thy people (see also the Note Psal. 44. 15.) and the great contempt that is fallen upon them, who had wont to hold their heads so high, and to be adored of all men: *that they may seek thy name;* that is, that they may be forced, though feignedly, to cry unto thee for help; see the following verses.

P S A L M LXXXIII.

Verf. 1. **H**ow amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!] That is, How desirable and delightfull a thing is it to enjoy thine Ordinances there in the assemblies of thy people! see also the Note Psal. 43. 3.

Verf. 2. *My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 42. 1, 2. And he saith *the courts of the Lord*, because none but the Priests might goe in any further then the courts. *My heart & my flesh crieth out for the living God;* see the Notes Psal. 42. 1, and 63. 1.

Verf. 3. *Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for her self, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, &c.*] That is, in and about the Temple where thine altars are, to wit, the altars for incense and burnt-offerings. But however this is clearly inserted with respect to his desire of being where Gods altars were.

Verf. 4. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, &c.*] To wit, the Priests and Levites; but see the Note Psal. 23. 6: *they will be still praising thee;* the joy they take in being there yielding them matter of continuall praise; and so they shall be blessed both in that their holy and happy imployment, and in the benefits they shall reap by being there, which shall continually fill their mouths with thy praises.

Verf. 5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, &c.*] That is, say some expositours, that by thy grace and providence receives that strength and vigour, both of body and mind, that he can come from the place of his abode to thy Temple to keep thy solemn feast there, or that relies upon thee, that thou wilt strengthen him to goe up to thy temple. But I rather conceive the meaning to be this, that the man is blessed that doth rely upon God for strength and help in every thing whatsoever; that makes account that all his strength depends merely upon God; & so thereupon (as is implied in the following words) desires much to be in Gods Temple, to wit, that he may thereby strengthen his faith, and may seek Gods face and favour, who is his strength. *In whose heart are the waies of them;* to wit, the waies of them whose zeal in going up to the house of God is described in the following verse; that is, who doth from his heart desire, and delight, and purpose and resolve to be going in those waies that lead to thy house, that he may enjoy thy presence there, so that the thoughts of his heart are continually upon that. Yet some understand this last clause of those whose hearts are set to walk in the waies of Gods commandements.

Verf. 6. *Who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well, &c.*] That is, who do

do chearfully passe through any difficulties which they meet with in the way, as they goe up to Gods house. Some think that there was a valley, through which some of the Israelites were to goe as they went up to Zion, that was called *the valley of Baca*. But because the word *Baca* may be rendered *tears* or *mulberry trees*, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, the meaning of these words seems to be this: *who passing through the valley of tears*, to wit, by reason of the many troubles and difficulties they meet with in their way, or, *through the valley of mulberry trees*, that is, through dry and sandy desarts, because in such places mulberry trees are wont to grow; *make it a well*, that is, forget their thirst, by reason of their eagernesse to goe up to Gods house; and that dry valley is to them all one, as if it were a valley full of springs and wells of water: or they *make it a well*, that is, rather then they will be hindered from going up to Gods house, with much labour they dig wells and springs of water all the way as they goe, for the refreshing of themselves, and the encouragement of others that are to goe that way; and where the ground will not yield any springs, they digge pits, or make cisterns, for the receiving and keeping of rain-water, so that all the way along it seems to be as a well. It may also be rendered, *who passing through the valley of mulberry trees, make him a well*; and then the meaning must be, that the remembrance of God, to whom they are going, is to them as a well of living waters to refresh their spirits; it makes them not mind their thirst, but goe chearfully on through all difficulties. *The rain also filleth the pools*; that is, through Gods grace and favour to them, the pits and cisterns they have digged and made are filled with rain; or, by their longing desire and hope of meeting with their God in Zion, they are refreshed, as with showers of rain.

Verf. 7. *They goe from strength to strength, &c.*] That is, In stead of being wearied with their journey, they shall rather gather strength as they goe, and grow stronger and stronger; so eager they shall be in going up to Gods house. It may also be rendered, *they goe from company to company*; and then the meaning is, that they goe up by troops or companies; or that as they goe along, one troop doth ever and anon overtake another; or that out of the great alacrity of their spirits as they goe along, sometimes they joyn themselves to one company, sometimes to another, that they may hear Gods praises, and talk together of Gods mercies, till they all meet together at last in Zion.

Verf. 8. *O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer, &c.*] To wit, for bringing me again to enjoy thy presence in thy Sanctuary. And because he calls God here *the Lord God of hosts*, some hereby are induced to think that David composed this Psalm, when by following his wars abroad he was hindered from resorting to Gods house, as at other times he was wont to do.

Verf. 9. *Look upon the face of thine anointed.*] That is, Look favourably upon me, whom thou hast anointed to be king. Yet because David was a type of Christ, there may be also a request included in these words, that God would be favourable to him in and through the mediation of that his promised Messiah.

Verf. 10. *I had rather be a dore-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickednesse.*] That is, I had rather be in the meanest condition where I might

might daily worship God, then to be in the highest place of honour and power, or in the stateliest habitations of the great ones of the world, or any other, where wickednesse reigns. Yet some also think, that the word *tenis* is used to imply their unstable and flitting condition. However it may well be, which some say, that this is the rather added for the encouragement of the sons of Korah, to whom this Psalm was committed, as appears in the Title, who were porters or door-keepers in the house of God, as is clear 1 Chron. 9. 19, and 26. 1.

Verf. 11. *For the Lord God is a Sun.*] To wit, in that he doth enlighten and enliven his Church, when as all the world besides lye under darknesse and the shadow of death, and in that he doth chear and warm and comfort the hearts of his people by his lightesome countenance, and is the fountain from whence all blessings and comforts are derived to them.

The Lord will give grace and glory.] That is, saving grace here, and the glory of heaven hereafter: or, he will receive them into his grace and favour, and afterward raise them to great dignity and honour.

Verf. 12. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.*] To wit, though he be for a time deprived of thy presence in the Sanctuary.

P S A L M LXXXV.

Verf. 1. **L**ord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land, &c.] That is, Thou hast formerly of thine own free grace shewed mercy to thy people, whom thou didst plant in the land of Canaan, and amongst whom thou wert pleased to dwell there: *thou hast brought back the captivity of Iacob*; that is, thou hast formerly delivered thy people out of bondage. And it may be meant either of their deliverance out of Egypt (if this Psalm were composed for the use of the faithfull, when they were under the Babylonian captivity;) or else of their deliverance out of Babylon, (if it were composed after that when they were under the tyranny of Antiochus;) or else in generall of all former deliverances, when their enemies about them had brought them into bondage. See also the Note Psal. 14. 7.

Verf. 4. *Turn us, O God of our salvation.*] See the Note Psal. 80. 3.

Verf. 6. *Wilt thou not revive us again? &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 71. 20, & 80. 18.

Verf. 7. *Shew us thy mercy, O Lord.*] As if they had said, Be mercifull to us; for on thy mercy alone we depend, and yet hereof for the present there is not the least appearance. But see the Notes Psal. 4. 6. and 50. 23.

Verf. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak, &c.*] This may be taken, either as spoken by the Psalmist in his own name, or in the name of all the faithful jointly together, as if they were one person. And it is added by way of correcting that which went before, as if he had said, What do I mean thus to complain? I will rather patiently with still silence wait upon God, & carefully observe what God will now doe for us by way of answering our prayers, according to the promises which he hath made to us in his word. *For he will speak peace to his people &c. to his Saints*; that is, doubtless he will hear their prayers, & by doing them good will give an answer of

peace: but let them not return again to folly; to wit, as being warned by their former sufferings.

Verf. 9. *Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, &c.*] That is, God will soon and speedily save those that fear him: *that glory may dwell in our land*; that is, that whereas for a long time together we have been in a very low and dishonourable condition, our land hath lain untilld, our towns and cities have been desolate and ruined, our religion, laws and government have been overturned, and our people have been held under bondage, despised and derided, and looked upon as a people abhorred of God; now we may in all these things recover our former glory, especially that the worship and service of God may be again set up amongst us in the purity of all his Ordinances, that so we may glory in the glorious presence of God amongst us, and all men may extoll our happinesse in these regards, as in former times. This is I conceive the full drift of these words. But yet many Expositours refer them to the time of Christs coming into the world, to accomplish the work of mans salvation; *Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land*, that is, that Christ may dwell in our land, whose glory was as of the only-begotten of the Father, Joh. 1. 14. and who was indeed the glory of his people Israel, Luk. 2. 32: not only because he descended from their stock, and because the Gospel went forth from them into all the world; but especially because through faith in him they had cause of glorying in his righteousness, according to that of the Apostle 1 Cor. 1. 31. *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*; and because by the word and spirit of Christ, that glorious image of God, whereof they were deprived by sin, Rom. 3. 23. was renewed in them *from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. 3. 18.

Verf. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together, &c.*] Here the Psalmist sets forth how it shall be with the people of God, when God shall have wrought salvation for them, and restored them to their former glory, as is expressed in the foregoing verse. And almost all Expositours refer this to the time of Christs kingdome. *Mercy and truth are met together*; that is, They shall then be both mercitull and true and faithfull: *righteousnesse and peace have kissed each other*; that is, they shall also be both just in all their dealings, and of a peaceable disposition one towards another. And these phrases, of meeting together and kissing each other, are used to imply, that these graces shall every where abound, and be found joyntly together amongst the people of God, and that one of them cannot be without the other; as we see by experience, that without justice there can be no peace, &c. Or else the meaning may be this, that as God shall shew mercy to men, so men shall be true and sincere in their carriage of themselves towards God; and as God shall be righteous in performing all that he hath promised to his people, so his people shall enjoy secret peace of conscience in regard of God; and so these severall expressions may tend to set forth the perfect reconciliation that shall be wrought betwixt God and his people. And then again they may be understood of the work of mens redemption by Christ. For therein it may be said 1. that *mercy and truth are met together*, both because the truth of God in his threatnings against man for sin was made good in the sufferings of Christ, and yet with all mercy

cy was shewed to the sinner, in that satisfaction was not required of him in his own person; and also because in this great act of mercy which was wrought for poor man, there was a declaration of Gods truth in the full performance of all the promises, which concerning this he had made to the fathers, see Rom. 3. 25, 26. and Luk. 1. 72, 73: and 2ly, that *righteousnesse and peace have kissed each other*; both because by Christ peace was wrought betwixt God and the poor sinner, and yet withall Gods righteousness in the punishment of sin was fully satisfied, and likewise because by the merits of Christ all believers do obtain righteousness for their justification, and peace of conscience, which must needs follow thereupon.

Verf. 11. *Truth shall spring out of the earth, &c.*] Some Expositours do understand this also of the person of Christ: *Truth*, that is, Christ, who is *the truth* Joh. 14. 6. *shall spring out of the earth*; that is, shall be born upon earth, or shall be conceived and born of a woman: *and righteousness shall look down from heaven*; that is, Christ, who is the righteousness of God, and *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. shall come down unto us out of heaven from his Father. But I take it rather to be a prophecy, either 1. of the accomplishment of Gods promises concerning our redemption by Christ: *Truth shall spring out of the earth*; that is, the truth of God in his promises concerning the Messiah, which for a long time seemed to be as seed that is buried under ground, shall at last spring up and appear upon earth, that being there done which God had promised: *and righteousness shall look down from heaven*; that is, the righteousness of God in making good that promise concerning Christ, which was long withheld, shall at length appear; or the righteousness which God hath appointed for the justification of sinners shall at length be discovered to men from heaven; or 2. rather of the happy condition of Gods people, when God should deliver them from their enemies, but especially under the kingdome of Christ, to wit, that *truth*, which seemed formerly to be extinct, should then spring up again; and that *righteousnesse* should, through the grace of God, be again found amongst men: yea that these graces of *truth and righteousness* should so abound amongst men, as if the earth brought forth nothing but truth, and the heavens rained down nothing but righteousness; so that the Church hereby shall be in as flourishing and joyfull a condition, as the earth seems to be, when being blessed from heaven it is filled with a rich and a plentiful increase. But yet some do understand the first clause of the *truth* that is in man, and the second of the *righteousnesse* of God. *Truth shall spring out of the earth*, that is, men shall become eminently true and faithfull, both in word and deed: *and righteousness shall look down from heaven*; that is, the Lord discerning this shall righteously make good his promises to them, and command a blessing upon them from heaven.

Verf. 12. *Yea the Lord shall give that which is good, &c.*] That is, Together with these spirituall gifts he shall also give them every outward blessing that may be good for them. Yet some restrain this to that particular good of the earths increase, which is expressed in the following clause, *and our land shall yield her increase.*

Verf. 13. *Righteousnesse shall goe before him, &c.*] That is, Righteousnesse shall
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then flourish, and have a free course and passage in every place. For as the Prophet sets forth the corruption of those times wherein he lived by this, that there was no place for justice, Isa. 59. 14. *judgement is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter:* so here the Psalmist sets forth the prevailing of righteousness in those times, when God should return in mercy to his people, by this, that righteousness should have a free course amongst men, so that they should generally walk in the waies of righteousness, & do that which is just and right in Gods eyes. Only we must know, that by this phrase of righteousness going before him, is implied, that this change God would make, when he came to visit his people, & when Christ came with his Gospel to set up his kingdom amongst men; or that by his righteousness wrought in them the hearts of men should be prepared for God to dwell there. Yet some understand it of the righteousness of Christs government, that look as the glory of Princes is manifested by the pomp of those that go before them to make way for them, so Christs glory should be manifested by the righteousness of his government. But the first exposition I take to be the best, as by the following words we may gather, *Righteousness shall goe before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps;* that is, shall cause us to walk in his waies. But see also Psal. 89. 14. and Isa. 58. 8. where the like expressions are used.

P S A L M LXXXVI.

Verf. 1. **H**ear me, for I am poor and needy.] See the Note Psal. 40. 17.

Verf. 2. *Preserve my soul, for I am holy.*] That is, Thou hast sanctified me in some measure by thy spirit, I have consecrated myself wholly to thy service, and do endeavour to walk in all holiness before thee: neither am I therefore such a one as mine enemies would make me to be, nor have I by any injury done to them deserved to be used by them as I am.

Verf. 9. *All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, &c.*] This may be meant, either of the forced acknowledgement of the greatness of the God of Israel, whereto all nations should be brought by observing his mighty works; or rather of the conversion of the Gentiles: and it may well be that David might hence encourage himself, that if God would shew mercy to them, much more to him, who was one of his own peculiar people. As for that clause, *which thou hast made*, either it is added the more fully to expresse that all nations, none excepted, should come and worship before him, there being no nation under heaven that received not their being from God; or else rather to imply a reason, why it might well be thought that God would in time to come call in all nations to fear and praise him, namely, because they were the work of Gods hands as well as the Jews, and therefore it was fit that they also should know and worship their Creatour.

Verf. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 25. 4: *unite my heart to fear thy name;* that is, unite my heart to thee, cause me in sincere and fervent love to cleave unto thee, make me with a full resolution to set my heart to fear

fear and serve thee only, that my heart may not be drawn away to doe any thing but what is according to thy will; or, which is indeed all one in effect, Cause my heart to be united within it self, that it may not be divided and distracted with divers corrupt affections, that I may not be carried this way and that, as double-minded men are wont to be, that so I may fear & serve thee with my whole heart; and that because such only as are thus affected thou art wont to help.

Vers. 13. *Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.*] or, *the lowest grave.* That is, from the most desperate dangers of death, wherein my condition seemed as hopelesse, as is the condition of one that is buried deep under ground; or, By pardoning my sins, thou hast delivered me from that desperation I lay under, the terrours of Satan, & the tortures of an evil conscience, yea even from the very pit of hell. And indeed because the remembrance of his sins might well bring these terrours upon David when he was in such dangers, it is most probable that this was chiefly intended in that which he saith of his soules deliverance *from the lowest hell.*

Vers. 16. *Give thy strength unto thy servant, &c.*] That is, By thy strength do thou help and support me, both that I may prevail over my strong adversaries, & that I may not sink under the terrours that lye upon my spirit: *and save the son of thine handmaid;* that is, me, who have been even from my mothers womb thy household servant, as being born in thy family, of thy servant, born of faithfull parents, and so by birth-priviledge under the Covenant, and consequently under thy care and tuition.

Vers. 17. *Shew me a token for good.*] That is, By some notable and wonderfull sign wrought for my preservation and deliverance, make it evident both to my self and others that thou art tenderly carefull of my good and welfare, however for the present thou art pleased to hide thy self from me.

P S A L M LXXXVII.

Vers. 1. **H**is foundation is in the holy mountains.] It seems probable by the manner of the Psalmists expressing himself here, that having been long meditating with himself of the happinesse of Zion, in that it was the city of God, hereupon he breaks forth abruptly thus, *His foundation is in the holy mountains;* that is, The foundation of the temple or city Jerusalem, which he hath chosen and built for his own settled dwelling-place, he hath laid *in the holy mountains:* whereby may be meant, either particularly the hills of Sion and Moriah, whereon the Temple and city of David were built; or generally the mountains in and about Jerusalem, according to that Psal. 125. 2. *the mountains are round about Jerusalem:* which he calls *holy mountains*, because they were sanctified & set apart to be the lace of Gods spirituall presence & worship. And doubtlesse this which is here said of the situation of Zion in the mountains, is to imply the strength & stability thereof. It is the judgement of divers learned Expositours, that this Psalm was composed for the encouragement of Gods people, when after their return out of Babylon they had been many years opposed & hinder'd in rebuilding the city & temple,

ple, & were at last stirred up by the prophets Haggai & Zachary again to set upon the work: Though they were poor and but few in number, & had many mighty adversaries, and though the foundation that was laid for the Temple gave not the least hopes that ever it would equal the glory of the former Temple, Ezr. 3. 12; yet the Psalmist wills them to consider, that it was God that had laid the foundation, both of the Temple and city, as the prophet Isaiah saith also Isa. 14. 32. *the Lord hath founded Zion*, and that too in the place which himself had chosen for his holy habitation, and for the habitation of his people; and therefore they need not fear but he would prosper their work, and that he would strengthen and establish it for ever. But however it is evident in the Psalm, that the chief drift of it is to set forth the strength and glory of the Church of Christ, that spiritual Sion; and this therefore is here principally intended, that this holy Jerusalem, which God built and not man, had her foundation in the holy mountain, not only because it must needs be invincibly strong, as being founded upon Christ, so that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it* Matth. 16. 18; but also because it was out of Zion that the Gospel and Church of Christ did first come forth, & spread it self over all the world.

Verf. 2. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more then all the dwellings of Jacob.*] That is, say some Expositours, more then all the synagogues in the land, or more then all the places wherein God had formerly dwelt in tabernacles among his people. But I rather take it thus, that God loved Sion more then all the towns and cities, which God had given the seed of Jacob in the land of Canaan for their habitation, and that because he had chosen that for his settled dwelling-place.

Verf. 3. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.*] As if the prophet had said, (speaking in reference to the sad estate of Gods people and the city Jerusalem, after their return from the Babylonian captivity,) O thou city of God, Though thou art now in a poor and low and despised condition, and there may seem to be little or no hope for the present that ever it will be better with thee; yet certainly in the writings of the prophets, and by the prophets too that are now living, *glorious things are spoken*, that is, foretold concerning thee, that shall in time to come befall thee. Yet some, I know, do understand it thus, *glorious things are spoken of thee*, that is, are every where reported of thee.

Verf. 4. *I will make mention of Rahab, &c.*] That is, of Egypt; for Egypt is usually called Rahab in the Scripture, as Psal. 89. 10. and Isa. 51. 9; and that either from her strength and pride (which the word *Rahab* signifyeth) by reason of her exceeding great riches and power, or because of some chief city in Egypt that was so called. Some Expositours conceive, that in this and the following verse Zion is preferred before all the nations here mentioned, for the many famous men that should spring up there; and accordingly they understand the words thus, *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me; behold Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia; this man was born there*, as if he had said, I will to my country men and friends, with whom I conferre, talk of the glory of Egypt and Babylon, and likewise of Philistia and Tyre and Ethiopia; and so perhaps in talking of them, some one man in these nations may be found, of whom it may be said,

said, by way of extolling him for his eminency, *This man was born there* : but now in Zion, as it follows in the next verse, many such men of renown shall be found, *of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her*. But doubtlesse these words contain a prophecy of the bringing in of all nations to be joyned to the Church and people of God; these being here expressed by name in stead of all, either because these were best known to the Jews; or because these were the greatest and richest of nations in those times, or the most notorious for superstition and all other wickednesse whatsoever, and usually the greatest enemies to the people of God; and therefore most unlikely to be joyned to her; this being much for the honour of Zion, that those that formerly sought her ruine, should now count it their greatest glory to be numbred amongst her children. Accordingly therefore these words must be understood, and that either as the words of the Psalmist, or as spoken in the name of the Church, glorying as it were in her great enlargements: *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me*; that is, to those that are already knit to me, to those that are my familiar friends, or that are already citizens of Zion, I will speak of the Egyptians and Babylonians upon occasion of their coming in to joyn themselves to us. I will make honourable mention of them and of their piety & worthy deeds; or, In speaking to those that are fellow-citizens of Zion, I will take in and make mention of, not the Jews only, but even the Gentiles also: and the meaning is, that their conversion should be famously known and spoken of. *Behold Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia*; as if it had been said, I will also make mention of these nations, or these also shall be numbred amongst the citizens of Zion: of them it shall be said, *this man was born there*, that is, these before-mentioned were born there, for the Scriptures do usually speak of whole nations as of one man, as in Psal. 25. 22. *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles*. However the meaning is this, that divers of these nations should joyn themselves to the Church, being there begotten again by the immortall seed of the Word, and so should renounce their former countreys, counting it their greatest honour to be new-born citizens of Gods spirituall Zion; or that those that shall be thus converted from heathenisme and joyned to the Church, should be in all respects as those that are born there.

Verf. 5. *And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her.*] That is, whereas now the inhabitants of Zion are very few, then many and many of divers nations and countreys and conditions shall day after day be added to the Church, and it shall be counted an honour to be numbred amongst the citizens of Zion. The like expressions we have elsewhere in the prophets concerning the calling of the Gentiles, as Isa. 44. 5. *One shall say I am the Lords; and another shall call himself by the name of Iacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel*: and so likewise Isa. 54. 1. See also the foregoing Note.

Verf. 6. *The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.*] That is, The Lord himself, the king of Zion, yea the king of the whole world, shall to their great honour, when he takes notice of all the inhabitants of the world, own them as true members of his Church, and enroll them in
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the Register of the citizens of Zion, as those whose names were from all eternity written also in the book of life. The Psalmist alludes to the custome of kings, that are wont to take the number and to keep a register of the names of their subjects: and the drift of the words is to imply, that God, to whom all nations are exactly known, and at whose disposing they are, shall every where bring into his Church those he desires to honour, and shall readily own them for his people.

Verf. 7. *As well the singers, as the players on instruments shall be there, &c.*] That is, So great shall the blisse of Sion be, that it shall be a place of continuall joy, the inhabitants still seeking to praise God for his goodnesse, and to extoll the happiness of his city and people. *All my springs are in thee*, that is, all from whence any good or comfort comes flowing into my soul is in thee, O city of God; from the presence of God and his holy Ordinances there, all saving knowledge, grace and comfort, those living waters that can only refresh my soul, come flowing in to me, see the Note Psal. 68. 26; or, *all my springs are in thee*, that is, whatever is within me, that can contribute any thing to the setting forth of thy praise, O Zion, shall be spent upon thee; all the thoughts and affections of my heart, all my skill in musick, and the vein that I have for poetry, shall be poured forth in thy praises, and shall continually send forth new and fresh praises of thee. Either of these waies this last clause may be most probably understood. Yet some take it thus, *All my springs are in thee*, that is, all my delights are set upon thee, all my affection is to thee, O Zion; or, as if it were spoken to God, All my thoughts are on thee, O God, all my delight and hope is in thee, and all my affection is to thee.

P S A L M LXXXVIII.

The Title. **T**O the chief Musician, upon Mahalath Leannoth, &c.] See the Note on the Title Psal. 53. of which what is there said may be also said here: *Maschil*; see the Note on the Title Psal. 32. of Heman the Ezrahite. There was one Heman, that was one of the three chief Singers, and who was likewise Davids Seer, as is before noted 1 Chron. 25. 1. 5, and therefore some conceive that he was the authour of this Psalm, and his brother Ethan the authour of the following Psalm. But why these should be called Ezrahites, I find no clear reason given. And therefore others do rather conceive, that these were those Heman and Ethan of the tribe of Judah mentioned 1 Chron. 2. 6. & 1 Kings 4. 31. for which see the Notes there.

Verf. 5. *Free among the dead, &c.*] That is, I am as one amongst the dead, free of that company, or free from all the cares and affairs of this life; as if he should have said, I am in a manner dead to the world: *like the slain that lye in the graves*; that is, and I have been brought into this condition by a violent hand, as those that are slain in war; or, I am no more regarded, then those that are slain in the warre, that are presently tumbled into a pit, no man pitying them or being solicitous for them: *whom thou remembrest no more*; that is, of whom thou takest no more care, to wit, for the things of this life: *and they are cut off from thine hands*; that is, from thy

thy providence; thou dost no more govern and protect them, nor dispose of them, or provide for them, as thou dost for living men. Yet some conceive that these words are uttered by the Psalmist out of a distempered spirit, as one transported by passion through the extreme troubles and miseries he was in. And some read the last clause, as it is in the margin, *and they are cut off by thine hand*; and so conceive that hereby the Psalmist would imply, that he was as one that was cut off by a hand of divine justice.

Verf. 6. *Thou hast layd me in the lowest pit, &c.*] That is, in the grave; see the Note Psal. 86. 13. and the same may be intended also in the following words, *in darknesse, in the deeps*. Yet some conceive that here he compares himself, & that with respect to his desperate condition, and the many terrours that lay upon him, to a man that is cast into a deep dungeon.

Verf. 8. *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me, &c.*] See the Notes Job 19. 13. and Psal. 31. 11: *I am shut up, and I cannot come forth*; that is, there is no hope of freeing my self from the troubles I am in, see the Note Job 19. 8. Yet some understand this literally of the Psalmists imprisonment or banishment; or of his shutting up himself close at home, as being overpressed with sorrow and shame, to see how all men abhorred his company.

Verf. 9. *I have stretched out my hands unto thee.*] See the Note Job 11. 13.

Verf. 10. *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? &c.*] As if he should have said, Unless help come presently, I shall be past hope of praising thee: see the Notes Job 7. 8, 9. Psal. 6. 5, and 30. 9.

Verf. 11. *Shall thy loving kindnesse be declared in the grave? &c.*] See the Notes Job 26. 6. and 28. 22.

Verf. 12. *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?*] That is, in the grave, where the dead forget the living, the body lying there without all sense or remembrance of any thing, see the Note Job 14. 21. and where being laid they are in a manner quite forgotten by others, see the Notes Job 24. 20. and Psal. 31. 12.

Verf. 13. *In the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*] That is, I will betimes seek unto thee, before extreme necessity constrains me thereto; or, early, even before thou causest the morning light to shine upon me.

Verf. 18. *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 8: *and mine acquaintance into darknesse*; that is, they hide themselves from me; or, if they come where I am, they will not know me.

P S A L M LXXXIX.

The Title. **M** *Aschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.*] See the Note on the Title Psal. 88. Considering the sad complaints that are made in the later part of this Psalm verf. 38, &c. concerning the dolefull condition whereinto the seed of David & the kingdome of Judah were fallen, it may seem very questionable whether that Ethan, the brother of Heman, mentioned 1 Kings

4. 31. and 1 Chron. 2. 6. could be the author of this Psalm. And indeed if we understand those complaints of the times of the Babylonian captivity, when Jehoiachin was there cast into prison, or of the declining times of Judahs kingdome a little before the captivity, all that can be said is, that Ethan might by the spirit of prophesy thus foretell the desolations that were to come upon the kingdome of Judah. But I rather encline to think, that the following relation in this Psalm of the dolefull condition of Judahs kingdome is meant of Rehoboams daies: for though many expressions therein seem to imply a greater desolation, which that kingdome was brought into, then that was in Rehoboams time; yet if we consider what an astonishment it must needs be to the faithfull in the land, to see that kingdome, which God had promised should continue in the seed of David to the end of the world, so presently torn in pieces, by the revolting of ten of the twelve tribes from Davids family to Jeroboam, and by the civill wars which followed thereupon, and how thereupon the land was invaded and spoiled by Shishak king of Egypt 1 Kings 14. 25. and 2 Chron. 12. 2. (all which Ethan surviving Solomon might live to see) it cannot seem strange that Ethan should with respect to those times so bemoan the kingdome of Judah, as in a manner lost and ruined in the eye of reason.

Verf. 1. *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, I will sing of the mercies of God, which continue for ever, which are therefore called *the sure mercies of David* Isa. 55. 3: *with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations*; that is, thy faithfulness which continues to all generations. But I rather conceive that this is spoken in the name of the Church, who undertake that they will for ever extoll the mercies and faithfulness of God; or, by the Psalmist in his own name thus, *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever*, that is, as long as I live; or by this Psalm, which shall be continued in the Church for ever, I will convey the praise of thy mercy to all generations. However the drift of the Psalmist in these words is, to imply his confidence that God would not cast off his people for ever.

Verf. 2. *For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever, &c.*] That is, I have concluded on this within my self, that however things goe, and though it may seem otherwise to the eye of reason for the present, yet Gods mercy to the seed of David and to his people Israel shall never fail, but shall continue and be carried on to all generations, till it be perfected at last in eternall glory: *thy faithfulness shall thou establish in the very heavens*; that is, though thy promises may seem to fail, yet from the heavens thou wilt make good thy faithfulness and perform all thy promises; or, thy faithfulness shall be established, as surely as the heavens are established, and shall be perfected in the glory of thy Saints in heaven.

Verf. 3. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, &c.*] We must understand this, as if it had been expressed thus, And the ground of this my confidence is, that thou hast said; *I have made a covenant with my chosen, &c.* for here the Psalmist brings in the Lord asserting the covenant he had made with David, because this was that whereon he grounded his confidence mentioned in the foregoing verses: *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant*; that is, I have

have made a sure and irrevocable covenant with him, to wit, concerning the stability of his seed and throne; for which see the Note 2 Sam. 23. 5. and likewise 2 Sam. 7. 12, 13.

Verf. 5. *And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord, &c.*] That is, The angels, seeing the wonderfull works thou doest for thy Church, shall praise thee for them: *thy faithfulness also in the congregation of thy Saints*; that is, they shall also, in the assembly of those holy spirits, praise thy faithfulness in making good thy promises to thy people, see the Note Job 15. 15; or the second clause may be understood of the angels publishing the faithfulness of God to his saints and servants upon earth. But now some by *the heavens* do understand, not the angels only, but also the holy servants of God in this world, men of heavenly minds and conversations, who shall praise God upon earth, as the angels do in heaven. And some also understand the whole verse of the visible heavens, as a place parallel with that Psal. 19. 1. (for which see the Note there) adding this, that *the heavens* may be said to praise Gods faithfulness in the congregation of the Saints, because they are instrumentall in conferring those blessings which God hath promised to the righteous, as rain and fruitfull seasons, &c. which only the Saints do acknowledge to be from God. But the first exposition, I conceive, is the best. However, the drift of this, and divers of the following verses, is to shew how safely we may rest upon Gods faithfulness in performing what he hath promised to his people, and that in regard of his power to doe whatever he pleaseth.

Verf. 6. *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? &c.*] To wit, among the angels and blessed spirits there? *who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* that is, among the mighty ones of the earth? see the Note Psal. 29. 1. Yet this last clause may be also understood of the angels, who may be called *the sons of the mighty*, as elsewhere they are termed *the sons of God*, Job 1. 6.

Verf. 7. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the Saints, &c.*] That is, as almost all Expositours understand it, in the assembly of the angels; even those glorious spirits, whose power is so terrible to men, do themselves tremble and fear before God, and as dreading his Majesty, are alwaies obsequiously ready to doe whatever he enjoyns them: *and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him*; to wit, the angels, that are continually about him, as souldiers about their generall, and servants about their master, whom therefore they have all cause to reverence, as infinitely excelling them in glory. Yet I see not, but this may be most probably understood of the Saints on earth, to wit, that God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his people, in regard of his protecting them, and the dreadfull judgements he executes upon their enemies in their defence; *and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him*, that is, of all his people; or, as some say, of all the heathen round about; see the Note Psal. 76. 11.

Verf. 8. *Who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?*] That is, Who amongst all those that are round about thee are like to thee for faithfulness? or rather, Who is like unto thee, who art faithfull to all that are round about thee, or who art every way faithfull, who discoverest thy faithfulness

nesse in all things round about thee, or who art clothed with faithfulness round about thee, as with a garment?

Verf. 9. *Thou rulest the raging of the sea, &c.*] To wit, by keeping it within its bounds, and making it calm at thy pleasure; see the Notes Job 9. 8, and 26. 12, and 38. 8, &c: or, thou quellest the pride of tyrants and nations, that are like the raging sea. But that in these words the Psalmist doth particularly intend Gods dividing the red sea before the Israelites, is evident by that which follows verf. 10.

Verf. 10. *Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, &c.*] That is, Egypt; see the Note Psal. 87. 4: *as one that is slain*; that is, thou hast broken the Egyptians with a deadly blow, destroying them with the waves of the sea, as when a man is slain with a sword, and with as much ease as a man is slain.

Verf. 12. *The North and the South thou hast created them, Tabor and Hermon shall rejoyce in thy name.*] As if he had said, All parts of the world, East, West, North and South, were created by thee, and do chearfully serve and praise thee their creator: for *Tabor*, a mountain in the West of Canaan, and *Hermon* in the East, are here put for the East and West.

Verf. 14. *Justice and judgement are the habitation of thy throne, &c.*] That is, Thy throne is seated in the midst of justice and judgement; thou dost order all things with most exact justice, both by way of protecting and blessing thy people, and by way of punishing thine and their enemies. Or, if we read it, as it is in the margin, *Justice and judgement are the establishment of thy throne*, then the meaning is, that Gods kingdome on earth is upheld and magnified, and made conspicuous in the world, by his justice and judgement. *Mercy and truth shall go before thy face*; that is, they shall be continually with thee and in thy presence: see the Note Psal. 85. 13.

Verf. 15. *Blessed is the people that know the joyfull sound, &c.*] That is, who though they be in never so great distresse and danger, yet they can rejoyce in that God is graciously present amongst them, as their God and king, and so can quietly rest on his favour and protection: for in this expression the Psalmist alludes to the sounding of trumpets, that was used amongst the Israelites upon divers occasions in the time of the Law, & that still as a sign of Gods favourable presence amongst them, which who so understood, they could not but exceedingly rejoyce therein; for which see the Notes Numb. 10. 2, 9, 10, and 23. 21. Yet withall consequently hereby must needs be implied the happiness of those that enjoyed the holy & solemn assemblies of Gods people, and that understanding the meaning of those sacred signs there used, were refreshed with those spirituall joys that were signified thereby. *They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance*; that is, they shall rejoyce in thy favour, see the Notes Psal. 4. 7. and Numb. 6. 25, 26. & through thy favour they shall go on prosperously in all their waies.

Verf. 16. *In thy Name shall they rejoyce all the day, &c.*] That is, They shall continually rejoyce in thee, or in thy favour, and the daily effects thereof; or in that they are thy people called by thy name: *and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted*; that is, through thy faithfulness, or in the confidence of thy faithfulness to them, their spirits shall be lifted up with joy, or they shall be encouraged against all ad-

verities and enemies; or, through thy faithfulness they shall prosper & flourish, and become eminently great above others. Some also understand this of the imputed righteousness of Christ, to wit, that thereby they shall be spiritually and eternally exalted.

Verf. 17. *For thou art the glory of their strength, &c.*] That is, Thou givest them that strength, whereby they glory and triumph over their enemies, or whereby they become glorious; or, thou dost make thy self glorious in their strength; or, the glory of their strength consists in this, that thou art their strength: *and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted*; see the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 1.

Verf. 18. *For the Lord is our defence, &c.*] Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *our shield*, that is, our king (see the Note Psa. 47. 9.) *is of the Lord*; that is, the Lord made him king, he did not exalt himself to that dignity: which is more plainly expressed in the next words, *and our king is of the holy one of Israel*; see the Note Psal. 71. 22. And all this is meant of David, but principally of Christ: see the Notes 1 Sam. 16. 1.

Verf. 19. *Then, &c.*] That is, When thou hadst appointed David to be king (as was touched in the foregoing verse) for the good of thy people: *thou spakest in vision to thy holy one*; to wit, Gad or Nathan, 2 Sam. 7. 4, 5, &c. or rather to Samuel, 1 Sam. 16. 1: *and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty*; that is, I have set apart one to be king for the help of my people, whom I have furnished with eminent gifts and graces of my spirit, and so have made him a mighty man of valour & wisdom, & every way exceeding able for that government and service: *I have exalted one chosen out of the people*; that is, out of the common sort of people. But all this, with that which follows, is chiefly meant of Christ: see the Notes 1 Sam. 16. 1. and Deut. 17. 15.

Verf. 20. *I have found David my servant, &c.*] And so Christ, who is also called David, Ezek. 34. 23. is termed Gods *chosen servant* Isa. 42. 1: *with my holy oyl have I anointed him*; see the Notes 1 Sam. 16. 1. and Psal. 45. 7.

Verf. 21. *With whom mine hand shall be established, &c.*] That is, I will be so with him, that I will never forsake him: *mine arm also shall strengthen him*; that is, my full power, not mine hand only, but mine arm also, shall be put forth for his help.

Verf. 22. *The enemy shall not exact upon him, &c.*] To wit, by forcing taxes or tributes from him, or otherwise oppressing him in his estate: *nor the son of wickedness afflict him*; that is, they shall not prevail over him, how bold and desperate soever they be. But now as we referre this promise to Christ, it must be understood of his triumphing over all the enemies he grappled with: see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 10.

Verf. 24. *But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him, &c.*] That is, He shall be faithful & merciful, which shall be the chief ornaments of his kingdom; or rather, I will make good my promises to him notwithstanding his infirmities, wherein mercy shall be shewed him: *and in my name shall his horn be exalted*; that is, in the confidence of my help and favour he shall lift up his head with courage; or rather, by me, or to the end my name may be glorified, shall his kingdom be advanced; and chiefly was this accomplished in the transcendent glory of Christs kingdom: but see also the Notes Psal. 20. 1. and 1 Sam. 2. 1.

Verf. 25. *I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.*] That is, so far shall he extend his dominions by his sword: which in David was accomplished, when he vanquished the Philistines that inhabited by the sea, and the Syrians unto the river Euphrates, see 2 Sam. 8. And indeed we must understand this promise much as that concerning Solomon Psal. 72. 8. for which see the Note there.

Verf. 26. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father.*] That is, 1. He shall be my son in a speciall manner, as being a figure of Christ, for which see the Notes 2 Sam. 7. 14. and Psal. 2. 7. 2^{ly}, He shall receive the kingdome, not by succession from his earthly parents, but ^as by adoption from me. 3. He shall call upon me & depend on me, and shall every way carry himself as a son to me.

Verf. 27. *Also I will make him my first-born, &c.*] As this is meant of David it implies, 1. that God should highly esteem of him: 2. that he would honour him above all his people (though he were the youngest amongst his fathers sons) by conferring the kingdome upon him: yea and 3. that he should be exalted in dignity above all the kings of the earth, to wit, in that he was set apart to be a type of the Messiah: see also the Note upon a like expression Exod. 4. 22. But now in Christ this was most clearly accomplished, in regard of the dignity of his person and office, being King of kings and Lord of lords, and therefore called *the first-begotten* Heb. 1. 6. *the first-born amongst many brethren* Rom. 8. 29. and *the first-born of every creature* Col. 1. 15.

Verf. 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, &c.*] To wit, that mercy promised concerning the perpetuity of Davids seed and kingdome: see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 15.

Verf. 29. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, &c.*] That is, the posterity of David, see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 16: which is clear by the following clause, *and his throne as the daies of heaven*; that is, as long as the world shall last, see the Note Deut. 11. 21; or as long as the heavens shall last: for though the heavens shall be changed, Psal. 103. 26. *as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*; yet they shall not utterly be destroyed, but being renewed shall continue forever, 2 Pet. 3. 13. But yet by *his seed* in the first clause, we may also understand the seed of Christ, to wit, true believers, who are as it were born again to God, by the sorrows of Christ upon the Crosse, which were as the pains of a woman in travell; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 51.

Verf. 30. *If his children forsake my law, &c.*] For this and the two following verses see the Note 2 Sam. 7. 14.

Verf. 34. *My covenant will I not break, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though they break my statutes, yet will not I break my covenant: for this seems to have reference to that before verf. 31. *If they break my statutes, &c.*

Verf. 35. *Once have I sworn by my holinesse.*] That is, By my self, who am holy and cannot lie, and of whose holinesse the Sanctuary, where I dwell amongst them, is an evident sign, As for that expression, *once have I sworn*, it is as if he had said, And that is enough: for such an expression we frequently use, to imply the certainty of what we say, Once for all I tell you, that so and so it is.

Verf. 36.

Verf. 36. *His seed shall endure for ever, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 29: and *his throne as the Sun before me*; that is, to the end of the world, see the Note Psal. 72. 5. for to these heavenly bodies he compares the kingdome of David and Christ, 1. because they are more stable, and lesse subject to change, then the things here below; 2. to give a hint of the splendour and glory of this kingdome; and 3. to imply that we must look up to heaven for the accomplishment of what is promised concerning this kingdome, and not expect it upon earth.

Verf. 37. *It shall be established for ever as the moon, &c.*] That is, As the moon, though it sometimes waxeth, and sometimes waneth, and sometimes seemeth to be quite gone, yet it alwaies continues settled in the heavens, so shall it be with Davids kingdome, and with the Church and kingdome of Christ, though it be subject to variety of changes, yet it shall certainly continue for ever. And then for the following clause, *and as a faithfull witnesse in heaven*, though some understand it of the rain-bow, thus, that as the rain-bow is a faithfull witnesse concerning Gods promise, that he will never drown the world any more, so it shall be also as a faithfull witnesse in heaven concerning the perpetuity of Davids kingdome; yet because the rain-bow doth seldome appear, and when it doth appear, it soon vanisheth again, and the Psalmist seems to speak here of that which might constantly be a visible witnesse of the perpetuity of Davids kingdome, therefore the most of Expositours do understand it of the moon, thus, *It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithfull witnesse in heaven*, that is, The kingdome of David shall as surely be established upon earth, as the moon is settled and established in heaven, which as it is a witnesse of times and seasons, so it shall for ever be a witnesse in heaven of the stability of this my promise; according to that Jer. 33. 20, 21. *Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne: or, of the stars, and other the lights of heaven in generall, It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithfull witnesse in heaven*, that is, and as any other of the faithfull witnesses in heaven, to wit, the stars, which are established as witnesses in the heavens, faithfully to distinguish between times and seasons, Gen. 1. 14.

Verf. 38. *But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.*] Because it is not clear at what time this Psalm was penned (for which see the Note before on the Title of this Psalm) we cannot expressly say, whether this be meant of Gods being wroth with Jehoiachin, or Zedekiah, who were carried captives into Babylon; or with Rehoboam, in whose time the kingdome of Israel was first broken in pieces; or of his being wroth with David in his successors in generall. However, clear it is that the drift of the Psalmist is to shew, that Gods dealing with them seemed, in outward appearance, to crosse all the severall branches of the promises before recited: for as this which he saith here of Gods casting off and abhorring, and being wroth with his anointed (and consequently with his people too) is opposed to that promise verf. 21, *with him mine hand shall be established, &c.* so is it likewise in all the following branches of his complaint.

Yet

Yet his meaning was not to charge God with breach of promise, but only to be-moan himself to God, by shewing how contrary all things seemed to be for the present to that which God had promised to David.

Verf. 39. *Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant, &c.*] See above verf. 34: *thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground*; that is, thou hast utterly brought down the glory of his kingdome, and exposed it to contempt and derision, as if he had not been the Lords anointed: see 2 Sam. 1. 21.

Verf. 40. *Thou hast broken down all his hedges, &c.*] That is, say some Expofitions, his walls and strong holds. But see the Note Psal. 80. 12.

Verf. 41. *He is a reproach to his neighbours.*] That is, they reproach and flout at him, Is this that glorious king, whose kingdome was to continue as long as the sun and moon endured? see also the Note Psal. 79. 4.

Verf. 45. *The daies of his youth hast thou shortened, &c.*] Some understand this of the destruction that was made amongst the people; as if it had been said, Thou hast cut off the young men amongst his people in the flower of their age: others understand it of the king himself; *The daies of his youth hast thou shortened*, that is, Through much misery and sorrow he is become old in the prime of his youth; or, thou hast betimes cut off the daies of his reign, even in his very youth. And indeed of Jehoiachin this might well be said, who at eighteen years old began to reign, and when he had reigned in all but three moneths and odde daies, was taken by Nebuchadnezzar and carried captive into Babylon, 2 King. 24. 8, 10. But I conceive it may best of all be understood of the kingdome it self figuratively; *The daies of his youth hast thou shortened*, that is, That eternall kingdome, which thou didst promise to the seed of David, is waxen old, decayed and broken in its very youth, so soon as it began to flourish, before it was come to its full ripeness; for thus the prophet Hosea speaks likewise of the decaies of Israels kingdome, Hos. 7. 9. *gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.* As for the next clause, *thou hast covered him with shame*, either it is meant of his and his peoples being carried into captivity; or of the failing of their hopes, in that the kingdome, which they expected should have continued for ever, was so quickly broken and ruined.

Verf. 47. *Remember how short my time is, &c.*] As if he had said, Therefore come in to the help of me and other thy servants, before it be too late; or, Make not our lives shorter by cutting us off in thy displeasure; or, Do not make that little while we have to live, so continually and extremely miserable, see the Notes Job 10. 9, and 14. 5. and Psal. 39. 4, 5. *Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* as if he had said, Surely thou didst not make so glorious a creature as man is in vain, but with a purpose to make them tast thy goodnesse and loving kindnesse, and that hereby they might be stirred up to serve and praise thee; thou didst not make them merely that when thou hadst made them thou mightest destroy them again, for then thou mightest seem to have made them in vain, yea it had been better for them, if they had never been made: and therefore why dost thou not manifest thy love to us thy people? were it not better to let us live that we might praise thy name, then to cut us off, as if we (and consequently all man-kind

kind, if it be so with thine own people) were only made that we might be again destroyed?

Verf. 49. *Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?*] As if he had said, Thou hast formerly shewn thy self gracious to thy servants, according to thy promises made to David; oh, let it be so again.

Verf. 50. *Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants, &c.*] To wit, because in their reproach thou also art reproached: *how I do bear in my bosome the reproach of all the mighty people;* to wit, in that either 1. I take the reproaches of thy servants and thine anointed, as if they reproached me in mine own particular; or 2. in that they lye so heavy upon my heart; or 3. in that I am resolved quietly to endure them, and to swallow them down in silence, as not being indeed able to shake them off; because in the eye of reason our condition is at present so contrary to what we waited for; or 4. in that their reproaches came not to his ear by hear-say only, but were openly to his face cast as it were into his bosome.

Verf. 51. *Wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.*] See the Note Psal. 56. 6. They may be said to have reproached the footsteps of Gods anointed; either 1. because they scoffed at the delay of the coming of their promised Messiah, Where, say they, is your long-expected Redeemer? whence is it that he is so long a coming? and indeed elsewhere by the footsteps or feet of men is meant their coming, as Isa. 52. 7. *How beautifull upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings?* &c. that is, How acceptable and welcome is the coming of those that are sent to preach the Gospel? or 2. because they derided the holiness of the conversation of him that was then their king; or his counsels and actions; or the very sad condition whereinto he was fallen; or 3. because they made a mock of all the monuments & memorials of the former glory of their kingdom: or 4. because they derided the peoples endeavouring to tread in the steps of David, & comforting themselves in the promise that God had made to him and to his seed. But the two first reasons seem to me the most probable.

Verf. 52. *Blessed be the Lord for evermore: Amen and Amen.*] See the Note Psal. 41. 13. Thus the Psalmist closeth this Psalm as he began it, to wit, with an expression which implyes, that he knew God would in the conclusion cause all things to work together for the glory of his name, and for the good of his people. See the Note above verf. 1.

P S A L M X C.

The Title. **A** *Prayer of Moses the man of God.*] See the Note Deut. 33. 1. Many Expositours hold that this Psalm was not composed by Moses, but by David. But there being no great strength in the reason they chiefly build upon, namely, that it is not probable that Moses, who lived himself 120 years, Deut. 34. 7. should reckon threescore & ten, or at the most fourscore years, to be the utmost extent of mans life, as it is here v. 10. expressed (for this might be the common age that men lived to in those times, though Moses & some others had their days lengthened out to a far longer period;) therefore I see no

reason why we should not understand this Title, as the words do plainly hold forth, to wit, that this Psalm is a prayer composed by Moses, that *man of God*. Yea and very probable I judge it to be, which many say, that it was composed by Moses for the use & comfort of the Israelites, after God had pronounced that sentence against them, that they should all die in the wilderness, that were twenty years old & upward when they came out of Egypt, save only Joshua and Caleb, Numb. 14. 29. and when, according to that sentence, he found the people for many years together mouldering away: in regard whereof he might well bewail, as here he doth, the mortality of man, and pray to God, as it is vers. 15. *Make us glad according to the daies wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.*

Vers. 1. *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.*] As if he had said, Though as strangers we travell from one place to another, and have yet no settled dwelling-place; yet to our fathers in this very condition thou hast been in all generations a dwelling-place, a house of refuge, yea so thou hast hitherto been to us; thou hast alwaies provided for them and us a place of shelter, where we might repose our selves, and be provided for; thou hast been as a little Sanctuary to us, Ezek. 11. 16. and therefore be so still.

Vers. 2. *From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.*] This is here inserted, either 1. to shew that it was no wonder that God should be a refuge to them in all generations, as he said vers. 1. seeing he was God from all eternity before ever the world was; or 2. because the consideration of Gods eternity doth make us the more sensible of mans frail and transitory condition, of which he intended now to treat; or 3. because the eternity of God doth imply that all things had their being from God, and both have been alwaies and are still governed by God, so that he is the supreme cause of all the changes that are in the creatures, himself in the mean season being subject to no change, as all things here below are; and therefore to whom should men flee for help, but to God?

Vers. 3. *Thou turnest man to destruction, &c.*] That is, to death, which is the dissolution of soul and body; or to the grave, see the Notes Job 26. 6, and 28. 22. It is as if he had said, Whilst thou continuest eternally the same, thou dost suddenly bring man back to the earth, from whence he was taken, according to that sentence which thou didst passe against all mankind in Adam, Gen. 3. 19. *dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* And to the same purpose is that which follows, *and sayest, Return ye children of men;* that is, By a word of thy mouth, when thou pleasest, thou callest men back, to wit, their bodies to the earth, and their spirits to God that gave them, Eccles. 12. 7: and to whom therefore should we seek for preservation but to thee? I know many do otherwise understand this last clause, to wit, that having turned men to the very brink of the grave, God often calls them back, as it were, to continue longer in the world. But the first exposition is doubtlesse the best.

Vers. 4. *For a thousand years, &c.*] As if he should have said, I may well say that man is suddenly turned to destruction; for suppose a man should live a thousand years, (which yet no man ever did, see Gen. 5. 27.) alas, a thousand years in thy sight, that is, before thee, or in comparison of thine eternity, or with thee, as Saint

Saint Peter alledgeth it 2 Pet. 3. 8. *are but as yesterday when it is past* (which then is nothing; and besides man judgeth better of the shortnesse of time when it is past, then when it is passing) *and as a watch in the night*, that is, the space of three hours: for by that Matth. 14. 25. *And in the fourth watch of the night Iesus went unto them*, it appears that of old they divided the night, consisting of twelve hours, into four watches, which seem to be intended by those four distinct tearms Mark 13. 35. *at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning*. And it may be also that he the rather mentioneth *a watch in the night*, either because time seems to slip fastest away when men lye slumbering, scarce knowing whether they be asleep or awake; or else because he would also thereby covertly give a hint how full of darknesse the life of man is, by reason of his ignorance and manifold miseries. However, that which Moses intends here is the same that David saith Psal. 39. 15. *mine age is as nothing before thee*. For so Peter alledgeth this, to prove that Gods staying long before he came to judgement was no delay with God, seeing a day and a thousand years were all one with God, 2 Pet. 3. 8. *But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*.

Verf. 5. *Thou carriest them away as with a flood, &c.*] That is, so that there is no memoriall left of them, no more then there is of a flood, which overfloweth all for a time, but suddenly glideth away, & it is quite gone; or, they are suddenly swept away by a violent death, see the Note Job 22. 16; besides that every mans life doth soon passe away, (as is expressed in the foregoing verses) men are oft cut off by sudden casualties and judgements: *they are as a sleep*; to wit, that suddenly passeth away; or, *as a sleep*, that is, as a dream when one sleepeth, see the Notes Job 20. 8. and Psal. 73. 20. As for the following clause, *In the morning*, that is, in their flourishing age, their childhood or youth, *they are like grasse which groweth up*, if we read it, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *they are like grasse which is changed*, it may be understood of that change that is in grasse, when being sprouted out of the earth, it becomes more and more fresh and flourishing, and shooteth up with a flour; and then it intendeth the same with that translation which is in our Bibles, to wit, that men in the morning of their years do usually flourish like grasse, that hath not yet felt the heat of the sun. But commonly they that thus translate the words, do understand it of the change that is wrought in grasse when it withereth; *in the morning they are like grasse which is changed*, that is, they are like grasse, which though it be fresh in the morning, yet presently by the heat of the sun it begins to flag, to change and wither.

Verf. 7. *For we are consumed by thine anger, &c.*] Divers things might by the Psalmist be intended in these words: as 1. that it was Gods just anger against the sin of Adam and Eve, that did first bring us to be subject to death; 2. that it was the same anger of God against the sins of men, that caused him so exceedingly to shorten mens daies, in comparison of what they were before the flood; and 3. that this was likewise the cause why the Israelites were daily consumed in the wilderness, see the Note Psal. 78. 33, and that they must needs perish, when poor creatures, so frail by nature, had also the wrath of God lying so heavy upon

them. And the same is also repeated again in the next clause, *and by thy wrath are we troubled*. Yet some would have this understood of their being troubled with being continually in fear of death; or of the minds terrours through the fear of eternall torments after death.

Verf. 8. *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, &c.*] That is, Thou dost not only know all our transgressions, but thou dost also take notice of them, to punish us for them. For thence is this phrase of Gods setting their iniquities before him, to wit, as men set up marks to shoot at; or as men are carefull to set those things which they would not fail to remember, where they may be sure to have them alwaies in their eye; or rather as judges are wont to set offenders before them, and to cause their offences to be openly laid forth and declared before they pronounce sentence against them. *Our secret sinnes in the light of thy countenance*; that is, those sins which we hide from others, or which we our selves are ignorant of, are clearly discovered before thy lightsome countenance, where the hidden things of darknesse are as visible, as those things that are done in the sight of the Sun. And indeed this, when God begins to punish men for these sins, they are wont to see and acknowledge, though they would not before.

Verf. 9. *For all our daies are passed away in thy wrath, &c.*] That is, Thy wrath lyeth heavy upon us all our life long: *we spend our years as a tale that is told*; that is, they passe away in an instant; even as when a man speaks, his words continue no longer then they are speaking, but as fast as they are uttered they passe away with a breath, and vanish into the air, and can by no means be recalled again; yea as when men tell some foolish tale, which is not worth the remembring, and which men forget as fast as it is told.

Verf. 10. *The daies of our years are threescore years & ten, &c.*] See the Note upon the Title of this Psalm. It is as if he had said, If to lengthen out the time of our lives, we reckon them by the daies we live, which will soon indeed amount to many thousands, alas, all this will make but threescore and ten years; that is the usuall time of mens lives now, whereas before the flood we see the Patriarks lived many hundred years. *And if by reason of strength they be, fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow*; that is, if some, by reason of more then ordinary strength of their constitution, do live to fourscore years, yet notwithstanding this their strength, or even when they are in their greatest strength, their lives are usually full of toil and trouble, and manifold miseries and sorrows: *for it is soon cut off, and we slee away*; that is, the strength of men is soon decayed, and then we are gone in an instant.

Verf. 11. *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? &c.*] This may be understood as spoken, either 1. by way of bewailing the sad discovery of Gods anger against the Israelites in the wilderness, as if he had said, Who is able to conceive or expresse how heavy the wrath of God lyeth now upon us? Or 2. by way of admiring the infinite and incomprehensible power of God, manifested generally in the judgements wherewith he contends in his wrath against those that sin against him; or rather the wonderfull power that is in the wrath of God to awaken and terrify the children of men; *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?*
that

that is, Who is able to expresse or think how terrible thy wrath is to such poor creatures as men are, when once thou makest it manifest that thou art offended with them? As long as thou hidest thy displeasure, they are fearlesse, and proudly exalt themselves against thee: but when thou makest them see thou art angry with them, then they tremble, and their spirits fail them. Or else 3. by way of exclaiming against the stupidity of men; *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* as if he had said, Alas, How few are there that know or consider, or seriously lay to heart the power of thine anger! nothing will make men fear thy wrath; but even when thy wrath is discovered against them, yet they rush headlong upon the pikes of thy displeasure. And accordingly we must also understand the following clause, *even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath*, one of these two waies: to wit, either 1. that there is as much danger and terrour in Gods wrath, as men can possibly fear: or 2. that according as men fear God, so they are sensible of his displeasure: they that fear not God, care not for any discoveries of his anger against them; but they that fear God, are tenderly fearfull of every token of his displeasure, and very ready to humble themselves under his hand.

Verf. 12. *So teach us to number our daies, &c.*] See the Note Psal 39. 4.

Verf. 13. *Return, (O Lord) how long? &c.*] This doubtlesse is spoken with respect to the wandring of the Israelites so many years in the wilderness; (if not also to their long bondage in Egypt) as appears by the following words, *and let it repent thee concerning thy servants*: see also verf. 15.

Verf. 14. *O satisfy us early with thy mercy, &c.*] That is, By shewing us mercy speedily, satisfy our souls with the assurance that thou hast pardoned our sins, and dost love us and own us as thy people: see the Note Deut. 33. 23.

Verf. 16. *Let thy work appear unto thy servants, &c.*] That is, Make it appear by thy working for us, that thou art pacified towards us; or rather, Let that which thou wilt doe for thy servants, or which thou hast promised our forefathers that thou wilt doe for us, appear and be made manifest before our eyes; let us see it done. And most probable it is, that this is particularly meant of that great work which God had promised to doe for them, to wit, that he would give them the land of Canaan for a possession: so that it is in effect as if he had said, Let it appear that thou hast not brought us out of Egypt in vain; perfect the work begun by bringing us into the promised land. Yet by these words *thy work* may be meant any speciall work of mercy; because that is Gods chief work, yea his proper work, in regard of his Church. When the Lord hides himself from his people, and punisheth them, he appears then as an enemy, rather than a father; and so that may be called his strange work, as it is Isa. 28. 21: but when he doeth them good, that is his own proper work: and hence, say some, is this expression, *Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children*; that is, Glorify thy self by the greatnesse of thy mercy to them, and the great and glorious works thou shalt doe for them. And this also may be meant particularly of his carrying them into the land of Canaan.

Verf. 17. *And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, &c.*] That is, his grace & favour: which is called here the beauty of the Lord, either because the special grace which

God affords his people in protecting & blessing them, &c. renders him beautifull & amiable in their eyes, yea causeth his glory to shine forth in the eyes of all men, making it manifest that he is the only true almighty God; (& so did particularly his carrying the Israelites into the land of Canaan, which seems to be here desired by Moles;) or else because Gods favour to his Church and people is their beauty and glory, it makes them to be admired and highly esteemed by those that take notice of it; whereas if God withdraws himself, and shines not favourably upon them, they become an obscure and base despised people. *And establish thou the work of our hands upon us;* that is, direct and make good, and prosper in us and to us what we shall undertake; by thy spirit direct us to yield obedience in all things, and then let thy blessing be upon our endeavours: *yea, the work of our hands establish thou it;* that is, let thy continued ayd and blessing carry on what we undertake, even unto the end.

P S A L M XCI.

Verf. 1. **H**E *that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, &c.* That is, He that lyes hid under the protection of the most high God; or, He that puts his whole confidence in God alone, and makes him his only refuge: *shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;* that is, he shall dwell quietly in a sure and safe place, and needs not fear any danger whatsoever. By the *secret place of the most High* is meant Gods secret preservation, which is not discerned by a naturall man; and it may allude to a mans being kept close, as it were, in Gods bosome: but see the Note Psal. 27. 5. And by *the shadow of the Almighty* is implied not only safety, but also that sweet refreshing of mind they find, that can repose themselves upon Gods protection, such as men meet with when they come into some shadowy place, to cover themselves from the scorching heat of the sun. But see also the Notes Ruth 2. 12. Judg. 14. 9. Psal. 17. 8, and 57. 1. Now this Psalm is probably thought to have been composed by David upon occasion of that pestilence, which destroyed such multitudes in the space of three daies, 2 Kings 24. see vers. 3. and 6. of this Psalm.

Verf. 2. *I will say of the Lord, &c.* To wit, at all times, and in all distresses whatsoever: *He is my refuge, &c.* that is, my sure protectour. Now this we may conceive to be spoken in the person of any righteous man, so safe-guarded as is above said, *under the shadow of the Almighty.* But yet I rather conceive, that this the Psalmist inserts concerning himself, that by his own example he might encourage others to trust thus in God.

Verf. 3. *Surely he shall deliver thee, &c.* This may also be taken, either as spoken by the Psalmist to every righteous man, that wholly depends upon Gods protection, or else as spoken to himself; which I the rather approve, both because of the dependance of this upon the foregoing verse, and because that which follows verf. 9. cannot well be otherwise understood. *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noysome pestilence;* that is, from the secret contrivances of all enemies, bodily or spirituall, lying in wait to destroy, and from

from the noysome, hurtfull, destroying pestilence. And so under these two particulars there may be also a promise implied of deliverance from all dangers and evils whatsoever, whether they come from men or from God, from all the devices of men, and from all desperate sicknesses and sudden destruction. But then again many learned Expositours do understand both clauses of the pestilence; holding that by *the fowler* David meant that destroying angel 2 Sam. 24. 16. and that the pestilence may well be compared to *the snare of the fowler*, because men are suddenly taken with it, when they never think on any such thing, as the bird is caught whilst it is skipping about and singing, and never thinks of any danger.

Verf. 4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 1: *his truth shall be thy shield and buckler*; that is, his faithfulnesse, or his promises, when thou applyest them to thy self for thy comfort.

Verf. 5. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terrour by night, &c.*] That is, of no affrightments that use to terrify men and women in the night; and then we are subject to most dangers, and our terrors are alwaies greatest: *nor for the arrow that flyeth by day*; nor for any sudden and unexpected dangers. The meaning is, that he that trusteth in God shall be secure from all dangers, by night and by day, from all open and secret dangers; not only from all evil that open adversaries can bring upon us, but also from the stroke of invisible spirits, which cannot be avoided. But now many Expositours do understand both these clauses of the pestilence; holding that it is called *the terrour by night*, because it is a disease so full of terrour, especially in the night, and *the arrow that flyeth by day*, because the infection will suddenly spread so far off, especially in the heat of the day. And so likewise they understand that which is added in the next verse.

Verf. 6. *Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darknesse, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.*] The plague is here called *the pestilence that walketh in darknesse*, because even in the dead of the night it spreadeth and passeth from house to house, when all people are at rest, and stir not abroad, and that with great force and strength to destroy; yea and some say too, because it proceeds from secret unknown causes, and so is the more hardily suppressed or cured: and it is called also *the destruction that wasteth at noon-day*, because it destroyeth such multitudes of all sorts of people, and rageth most when the sun is hottest.

Verf. 8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.*] That is, Thou shalt see this done, and thine eyes shall be pleased with the sight; or, This shall be done, thou doing nothing therein, but only looking on.

Verf. 9. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation.*] See the Note Psal. 90. 1. This may be taken as spoken to the man that trusteth in God, whoever he be. But those words, *which is my refuge*, do rather induce me to think, (as is before noted verf. 3.) that the Psalmist here speaks to his own soul.

Verf. 11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, &c.*] Why the devil urged this as a promise made particularly to Christ Matth. 4. 6. we may see by that which is noted Gen. 28. 12.

Verf. 13. *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder, &c.*] That is, they shall be as
so

so many worms under thy feet. But I take it to be a generall promise made to those that shall trust in God, as is before expressed, to wit, that no adverse power of any creature whatsoever, whether of beasts, men or devils, shall be able to hurt them; that God would deliver them from their most desperate dangers, and dreadfull enemies, whether by open violence or secret policies seeking their hurts; yea that they should not only be delivered from them, but should also vanquish them, and subdue them, and trample them under their feet.

Verf. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, &c.*] This is spoken in reference to that which went before; as if the Lord had said, Because by his trusting in me he hath thus manifested that he truly loves me and knows me, therefore I will not fail to deliver him. For it is clear that here the Lord is brought in engaging himself by promise to him that trusts in him. And some conceive that this is added, as Gods charge given to his angels, whereof mention is made before verf. 11.

Verf. 16. *With long life will I satisfy him, &c.*] To wit, not in this world only, see the Note Gen. 25.8. but especially also in the world to come, see the Note Psal. 21.4. And some conceive that this is particularly promised in reference to the foregoing promises of preservation from the pestilence. *And shew him my salvation;* see the Note Psal. 50.23.

P S A L M XCII.

The Title. **A** *Psalme or Song for the sabbath day.*] See the Note on the Title Psal. 30.

Verf. 1. *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, &c.*] To wit, especially on the sabbath, this being one of the chief holy services of that day.

Verf. 2. *To shew forth thy loving kindnesse in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.*] That is, To praise thee night and day, even continually without ceasing. Yet these words may also have respect to the set times that were appointed in those daies for the service of God.

Verf. 3. *Vpon the harp with a solemn sound.*] It is in the Hebrew, *Higgaion*: for which see the Note Psal. 9.16.

Verf. 4. *For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work, &c.*] To wit, in that by thy works thou dost clearly discover all thy glorious excellencies, and especially thy fatherly providence over thy poor children. And this may be meant, both of the work of creation, (for the remembrance whereof the sabbath was instituted, when on the seventh day God rested from all the work that he had made, Gen. 2. 2.) and likewise of Gods works of providence towards his Church and people.

Verf. 5. *O Lord, how great are thy works! &c.*] That is, how wonderfull and unsearchable! It may be meant of Gods works, both of creation and providence, in generall. But I conceive that this is prefixed particularly with respect to that which follows, concerning the flourishing of the wicked for a time, that they

they may be destroyed for ever, and the misery of the righteous for a while followed with great prosperity and glory. *And thy thoughts are very deep*; that is, incomprehensible: see the Note Psal. 36. 6.

Verf. 6. *A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this.*] To wit, *this* which was said before, concerning the greatnesse and unsearchablenesse of Gods works and counsels, and of the delight which may be taken therein, verf. 4; or else rather *this* which followeth verf. 7.

Verf. 7. *When the wicked spring as the grasse, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.*] That is, As the grasse, the faster it grows & the more it flourisheth, the sooner it is cut down; so the more the wicked prosper, the nearer they are to their ruine. But then in this their condition is worse, because they shall never spring again, as the grasse doth, but *shall be destroyed for ever*. See also the Note Psal. 37. 2.

Verf. 8. *But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.*] This is added to imply that though wicked men might flourish for a time, & seem to carry all before them; yet these things came not by chance, but were ordered justly & wisely, though in waies which are far above our reach: for all this may be clearly inferred from this, that the Lord is *most high for evermore*; & that because being such, he sees all & orders all that is done in the world, & being the supreme judge, & not subject to change, as all things here below are, he must needs be constantly alwaies alike an enemy to the wicked, and sure therefore to repay them according to their ways: neither is it any wonder, though he defers a while the punishment of the wicked here in this world, seeing he hath eternity before him wherein to doe it hereafter; nor that we cannot understand how all things tend to these holy ends, seeing his waies are farre above our waies, yea farre above our understanding.

Verf. 9. *For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for lo, thine enemies shall perish, &c.*] The Psalmist repeats this again and again, to imply that so it shall certainly be; and for the greater assurance of this, he also speaks of it, as of a thing which men might behold even done already.

Verf. 10. *But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an Unicorn, &c.*] A beast which cannot be subdued and taken, see Job 39. 9, 10. And therefore most Expositours conceive that this was spoken of the great glory and invincible power of Davids kingdome, see the Note Deut. 33. 17. 1 Sam. 2. 1, 10. Numb. 23. 22. and Psal. 75. 10: *I shall be anointed with fresh oyl*; that is, I shall be cheared with Gods favour, endued with the graces of Gods spirit, and shall abound with all outward blessings: see the Notes Psal. 23. 5, and 45. 7. And it is like it was spoken with reference to Davids being anointed king.

Verf. 11. *Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, &c.*] As if he should have said, They shall be certainly and soon destroyed. But see also the Notes Job 22. 19. Psal. 22. 17, and 37. 34, and 91. 8.

Verf. 12. *The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree, &c.*] To wit, whereas the wicked shall be as the grasse, as was said before v. 7. And I conceive that the righteous are compared to this tree, because it is always green & flourishing, & lives very long;

as for the same reasons they are also compared to cedars in the following clause, *he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon*, see the Notes Numb. 24. 6. and Psal. 1. 3. Yet some conceive that they are compared to the palm-tree likewise, because this tree yields most sweet fruit, and though it have never so great weight laid upon it, yet it will thrive and prosper, and as it were raise up it self the higher (whence it was that the branches of this tree used to be worn in garlands, and carried in mens hands, as signs of victory, see Rev. 7. 9.) and so the righteous prosper under afflictions and oppressions; and that they are compared to cedars, because the wood of these trees is of a sweet savour, and not subject to rot or decay with age, and used much in the building and adorning of princes palaces. However, doubtlesse the chief drift of the words is, to signify that though the righteous may be brought very low, yet they shall rise and grow up & flourish again exceedingly.

Verf. 13. *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.*] The reason is here given, why the righteous are sure thus to flourish; to wit, because they not only live in the Church, where they enjoy the means of grace, but also are by a lively faith rooted in Christ, of whom the Temple was a type: see the Notes Numb. 24. 6. and Psal. 1. 3. Why the courts of Gods house are expressly here mentioned, see in the Note Psal. 84. 2.

Verf. 14. *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, &c.*] To wit, the fruit of holiness and righteousness; and so likewise they shall be blessed of God, and shall be as a flourishing tree that decays not with age: yea old age shall be to them but a renewing of their vigour, in that they shall live for ever in Gods house in heaven, even in his kingdome of glory; see Isa. 65. 20.

Verf. 15. *To shew that the Lord is upright, &c.*] As if he had said, And thus, by destroying the wicked in the conclusion, and blessing the righteous, he sheweth forth clearly, that he is just and faithfull in all that he doeth, whatever men may think to the contrary, because they see that it is but for a time that God prospers the wicked, and afflicts the righteous; or, this shall be the fruit mentioned in the foregoing verse, which the righteous shall bring forth in their old age, to wit, that they shall declare and set forth that the Lord is just and upright, and that there is no iniquity in him.

P S A L M XCIII.

Verf. 1. **T***He Lord reigneth, &c.*] As if he had said, In the midst of all those confusions and hurly-burles that are in the world, which seem to threaten the utter ruine of the Church, the Lord, who is the God and king of Israel, governeth the whole world, and so is the sure defence of his people: *he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself;* that is, he hath by his works manifested himself to be glorious in majesty and power, as a king clothed with his royall robes, and is alwaies as one that is ready prepared for battel: *the world also is established, that it cannot be moved;* as if he had said, And hence also it comes to passe, that the whole world and all things therein are established, that it cannot be moved: that is, that the world by

by the supporting providence of God is firmly settled, according as it was at first established by the law of creation; and consequently also, that the Church throughout the world is firmly settled and preserved, that it should not be rooted up. But now many understand this Psalm throughout of Christs exercising his kingly power Matth. 28. 18. for which see the Note Psal. 22. 28.

Verf. 2. *Thy throne is established of old, &c.*] It is in the Hebrew *from then*, and so the meaning may be, that even from the first creation and settling of the world, of which he had spoken in the foregoing words, God had established the heaven for his throne, as it is elsewhere called Psal. 11. 4. And it is very probable, that having spoken before of Gods establishing the earth, so here he should also speak of his establishing the heaven. But yet the words may be understood thus, *Thy throne is established of old*, that is, Thy kingdome and government hath been from the beginning, yea from all eternity, as thy self art, according to that which follows, *thou art from everlasting*.

Verf. 3. *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice, &c.*] That is, they rage and make a mighty tumult. But, alas, God doth at his pleasure overrule and awe them, as it follows in the next verse, *The Lord on high is mightier then the noise of many waters, yea then the mighty waves of the sea*: for which see the Note Psal. 89. 9. For this may be understood literally of the swelling waves of rivers and seas, see the Note Psal. 65. 7; or of the rage of the enemies of Gods people, see the Note Psal. 46. 3.

Verf. 5. *Thy testimonies are very sure, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 19. 7. Having in the former verses spoken of Gods governing the world in generall; here he adds that speciall mercy, that God had given them his Word, which was sure and faithful; and then also that he had taken them to be a holy people unto himself, establishing a covenant of life eternall with them, which was their excellency & their glory above all other nations: all which many learned Expositours conceive is implied in that next clause, *holinesse becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever*. But then again we may probably conceive otherwise of the inference of these words upon that which went before, to wit, that herein the Psalmist shews, that by the Lords quelling those proud waves which had beaten so furiously upon his Church, whereof he had spoken in the two foregoing verses, he had approved the faithfulness of his promises; and that because these his testimonies were so very sure, therefore it could not be, but that the Church must be preserved against the rage of all her enemies: And then for that last clause, *holinesse becometh thine house for ever*, either the meaning must be, that Gods approving his holinesse and faithfulness, by the defence of those that fled to his house for shelter, did well become his house for ever; or that God, to make good his faithfulness, was engaged to preserve his Temple and Church from being polluted and profaned by her enemies; or that because of Gods faithfulness, it became Gods people to carry themselves always before God in a holy manner, but especially in the holy assemblies. As for those that understand this Psalm of Christ, they take this as spoken in reference to Gods faithfulness in performing all his promises concerning the Messiah, and particularly in preserving his Church from being polluted.

P S A L M XCIV.

Verf. 1. **O** Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, &c.] See Deuter. 32. 35 : O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thy self; that is, appear in this which belongs to thee, by executing vengeance on those that oppresse thy people. It is in the Hebrew, *shine forth*, for which see the Note Psal. 80. 2.

Verf. 2. *Lift up thy self, thou judge of the earth, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 7. 7.

Verf. 4. *How long shall they utter and speak hard things? &c.*] That is, grievous things, as the word is translated Psal. 31. 18. for which see the Note there. He means proud and insolent speeches, and cruell threatnings against men, and blasphemies against God, hard and terrible to be heard, but much more to be endured.

Verf. 6. *They slay the widow and the stranger, &c.*] And so likewise all other that are destitute of humane help. Neither is this only meant of direct murdering them, but likewise of slaying them by bereaving them of their outward means & livelihood, through extortion and oppression.

Verf. 7. *Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 14. 1.

Verf. 8. *Vnderstand, ye brutish among the people, &c.*] That is, all you that are thus brutish; or, you that are the ringleaders amongst the people in this impiety; or, you that professe your selves to be Gods people, & yet are thus brutish. Yea, because it is most probable, that they are the great oppressours of the poor people that he here speaks to, these words *among the people* were haply added, either by way of vilifying them, as being no whit better in Gods eye, then any other of the people; or else to imply, that all their eminency above others was, that they were more brutish then the rest of the people.

Verf. 9. *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? &c.*] The force of this argument lyes in this, that in Gods giving to man the sense of hearing, & his planting the ears of man so fitly and admirably, as the instruments of hearing, (& so likewise in the framing of mans eye) there is such a clear discovery of Gods infinite wisdom, that it were absurd to think that he should not both hear and see what is done by his creatures: whatever excellency is in his work, must needs be far more eminently in him that made it: the fire that gives heat to other things must needs have much more heat in it self, &c.

Verf. 10. *He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not correct? &c.*] That is, Seeing we see by continuall experience, that he punisheth the heathens in all nations, for the wickednesse which he sees in them, can you think that he will not much more punish you, that professe your selves to be his own peculiar people? Yet some give the meaning of the words to be this; Seeing God often punisheth whole nations together, think you that he will let a few such insolent wretches as you are to escape? *He that teacheth man knowledge*, to wit, by the light of nature, which he hath implanted in mens minds, or by the teaching of his spirit; *shall he not know?* to wit, what is done in the world by the children of men.

Verf. 11.

Verf. 11. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.*] As if he had said, Though the Lord may forbear to punish wicked men for a time; yet he knows, not their words & deeds only, but their very thoughts also, & the vanity of them. Now this may have respect to the wickednesse and vanity both of those thoughts whereby they plotted mischief against the righteous, which God could easily frustrate, and also of those thoughts whereby they chuckled themselves, as if God did neither know nor mind what they did. And thus he derides the vanity of those men, that applauded themselves in the wisdom of these conceits, whereby they sought as it were to mock God, and to hide themselves from his all-seeing eye: whence it is that the Apostle citing this place, expresth it thus, *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain*, 1. Cor. 3. 20.

Verf. 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.*] Here the Psalmist passeth from expostulating with the wicked oppressors of Gods people, to the comforting of the faithfull servants of God, that are thus oppressed by them, pronouncing them blessed, when God doth withall teach them by his Word and Spirit: because then they shall know that which by their own reason they would never apprehend, to wit, that the wicked are but the rods whereby God doth chastise them, and that in love, and for their eternall good. And thus the wisdom which the righteous attain by the law of God, is opposed to the vanity of the carnall mans thoughts & reason, mentioned in the foregoing verse.

Verf. 13. *That thou mayest give him rest from the daies of adversity, untill the pit be digged for the wicked.*] This is the benefit which redounds to the man that is chastised by the Lord, & withall taught out of the law; & it may be understood two severall waies: to wit, either 1. that hereby he is so far purged & every way bettered in his spirituall estate, that he shall not only escape the condemnation of the wicked, when they shall be thrown into the pit of hell, which is already beforehand preparing for them, but shall also be delivered from his present distresses, and shall at last be received into Gods eternall rest; or 2. that hereby he is enabled quietly and patiently to bear what he suffers, in that he is encouraged to wait upon God, as being assured that there is a pit digged for the wicked, whereinto they shall fall, and so he shall be delivered.

Verf. 15. *But judgement shall return unto righteousness, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, The times shall change, & judges shall execute righteous judgement again, which now they do not: *and the upright in heart shall follow it*; that is, all good men shall promote & practise it; or, whereas now judgement is usually perverted, at the last day all unjust sentences shall be repealed & made void, and righteous judgement shall be pronounced by him in every cause, *and the upright in heart shall follow it*, that is, all the Saints shall approve of it. But I rather, with the most and best Expositours, understand it thus; *But judgement shall return unto righteousness*, that is, whereas in the outward administration of things, there may seem to be for a time neither judgement nor justice observed, but both may seem to be banished from the earth, in that neither the wicked are judged & punished as they ought to be, nor yet are the righteous rewarded & prospered,

as justice required, these should be restored again according to the exact rule of justice, and so should meet together; judgement being executed upon the wicked, and the righteous exalted. Or rather thus, whereas Gods judgements may not seem to be just, justice may seem to be separated from his judgements, in that wicked men prosper, trample upon and afflict the righteous, God will at length reduce things into a right order again, pouring forth his wrath upon the wicked, and abundantly blessing his righteous servants: which may be meant either of this life, or of that which is to come. And then for the next clause, *and all the upright in heart shall follow it*; if we refer the former clause to the judgement of the last day, then the meaning of it must be, that all the upright shall earnestly long for this, and follow after it in their desires, or shall cleave to it, and approve of it; or if we referre it to that which God will doe here in this world, then the meaning must be, that when the righteous shall see judgement thus executed upon wicked men, they shall the more chearfully follow after Gods favour in a way of righteousness, though for a time they suffer therein, as seeing that in the conclusion God will not fail both to reward the righteous, and punish the wicked.

Verf. 16. *Who will rise up for me against the evil doers? &c.*] To wit, to help me? It is as if he had said, No man will, none but God, as it follows in the next verse, *Vnlesse the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.* And thus the Psalmist proves here by his own example what he had said before verf. 13. that God would not utterly forsake his people.

Verf. 18. *When I said, My foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.*] That is, When I apprehended my self in some danger; or, when I gave my self for lost, at least my carnall heart began to conclude within me, Well, I am now gone, there is no hope of escape. He compares himself to a man standing on the very brink of some deep precipice, or to a man flying before his enemies, where the very slipping of the foot is enough to cause his utter ruine. See also the Notes Psal. 38. 17. and 56. 13.

Verf. 19. *In the multitudes of my thoughts within me, &c.*] That is, In the midst of those many and manifold griefs and cares and fears that perplex my spirit, whilst I silently within my self think of many things, concerning mine own innocency and miseries and dangers, the prosperity and wickednesse of mine enemies, and thy displeasure against me; *thy comforts delight my soul*, that is, the comforts which I take in thee, or which thou hast given me in thy Word, and dost work in me by thy spirit, do cheare me up even in the midst of these perplexities. And one of these comforts may be that which follows in the next verse.

Verf. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?*] That is, say some Expositours, Dost thou judge as wicked tyrants do? are thy proceedings in judgement any way like to theirs, that oppress men under a pretence of law and justice? Doubtlesse that cannot be: and therefore it cannot be that thou shouldest forsake or oppress thy people. But I rather take it thus, Though oppressours in the throne sit in thy seat & represent thy person, yet when they abuse the law to injure men, canst thou favour such men, or approve such waies? Doubtlesse thou dost abhorre them the more because they sit in the throne, see Psal. 5. 5.

Verf. 23.

Verf. 23. *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, &c.*] That is, the evil which they have unjustly sought to bring upon others; which is farther expressed in the next clause, *and shall cut them off in their own wickednesse*: see also the Note Psal. 7. 16.

P S A L M XCV.

Verf. 1. **O** *Come let us sing unto the Lord, &c.*] That this Psalm was penned by David, though it be not here expressed, is evident by that of the Apostle, Heb. 4. 7.

Verf. 2. *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving.*] To wit, in the Tabernacle, the place of Gods spirituall presence. It is in the Original, *let us prevent his face*; which may also imply, a making hast to get thither, every one striving who should be there first; or a going thither to praise God freely and of their own accord, before God did any way exact it of them, or force them to it.

Verf. 3. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great king above all Gods.*] See the Note Deut. 10. 17.

Verf. 4. *In his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also.*] Or, *the heights of the hills are his also*. The meaning is, that the whole earth, even from the centre and the lowest foundation thereof to the tops of the highest mountains, is born up, ordered and governed, by his power and providence, and consequently all things high and low, hidden and apparent, as being all the work of his own hands.

Verf. 6. *Let us kneel before the Lord our maker.*] To wit, not only in respect of our naturall being, as we are his creatures; but also in respect of our spirituall being, as he hath made us his adopted children, and regenerated us by his spirit, and made us new creatures, as *we are his workmanship created in Christ Iesus to good works* Eph. 2. 10. For that this last is included, the following verse may probably induce us to think. See also the Note Deut. 32. 6.

Verf. 7. *For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand, &c.*] That is, his peculiar people, whom he hath engaged himself in a speciall manner to feed, guide, govern and protect, as a shepherd doth his flock; yea and that not merely by the hand of a servant, but by his own immediate power and providence: whence is that of our Saviour Joh. 10. 27, 28. *my sheep hear my voice, &c. neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand*: see also the Notes Psal. 77. 20, and 23. 1, 2, 3, 4. And indeed it is probable that the Psalmist did purposely thus expresse himself; not *we are the sheep of his pasture, and the people of his hand*, which might seem most proper, but *we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand*; to imply 1. that Gods people were indeed as unable to help and provide for themselves, as sheep were without a shepherd: and 2. that though they were Gods flock, yet they were a rationall flock, and ought therefore to take notice of the care of their shepherd, and to praise him for it. As for the last clause, *To day if ye will hear his voice*, that must be joyned to that which follows in the next verse, *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, &c.* yet withall it seems

to be added with reference to that which went before, to wit, to imply 1. that the speciall interest they had in God, and the speciall care he took of them, was evident, in that the voice of his Word and law, instructing them in the way of life, was daily heard amongst them; and 2. that therefore by hearing this his voice, they were to approve themselves to be truly his sheep. Yea and some learned Expositours do, because of these words, *To day if ye will hear his voice*, hold it the more probable, that this Psalm was composed for the sabbath day, when the Jews used to meet together to hear Gods word; and that the Apostle doth the rather from these words of the Psalmist draw that inference Heb. 4. 9. *There remaineth therefore a rest, (or, a keeping of a sabbath) to the people of God.*

Verf. 8. *Harden not your heart, as in the provocation (or in the contention) and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.*] This may be meant of the whole time of their provoking and tempting God whilst they were in the wilderness, see Psal. 78. 17, 18. Yet doubtlesse in the expressions here used, the Psalmist hath speciall relation to those particular murmurings of the Israelites, by occasion whereof the places where they so murmured were called *Massah*, that is, *temptation*, and *Meribah*, that is, *chiding or contention*; see Exod. 17. 7. and Numb. 20. 13. and Deuter. 16. 16.

Verf. 9. *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.*] That is, When they would needs try and prove whether I could doe what they desired should be done, notwithstanding they had seen so many wonderfull works that I had wrought amongst them, that were clear evidences of mine almighty power. Yet others, I know, do otherwise understand those last words, *proved me, and saw my work*; to wit, that when they so tempted him, they found by proof in the works that he wrought how infinite his power was, yea and that they found it to their cost in the punishments he brought upon them. What is meant by tempting God, see in the Notes Exod. 17. 2. and Deut. 6. 16.

Verf. 10. *It is a people that do erre in their heart, &c.*] That is, a fottish and brutish people, void of all reason, and that have not the understanding of men in them, see the Note Deut. 32. 28; or, a perverse, stubborn people, whose heart is not upright towards me their God, see the Note Psal. 78. 8: *and they have not known my waies*; that is, they have not learnt and loved and observed my laws and instructions, and they have not seriously observed and understood the wonderfull works I have wrought amongst them, they have not observed the justice, mercy and faithfulness that hath been in all my waies towards them, that so they might trust in me; they have not understood the way of my government, and so they have disliked and despised it, because it was not agreeable to their desires.

Verf. 11. *Vnto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.*] So was the land of Canaan called Deut. 12. 9. *ye are not yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you*, and 1 Chron. 23. 25. *David said, The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Ierusalem for ever*; and that because after the uncertain peregrination of the Patriarchs there, the exile and bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, and their many years wearisome travels

travels through the wilderness, God did at last by Joshua give them a settled resting place in this land, as in their inheritance; yea and himself in the Ark did there take up his own settled habitation amongst them: see the Note 2 Chron. 6. 41. And of this doubtlesse David speaks here. But now the Apostle, in the epistle to the Hebrews chap. 3, and 4. taking it for granted 1. that David speaks those words, *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, &c.* not only to the people then living, but also to the people of God in all succeeding generations, especially in the daies of the Gospel, when God by his son doth more fully & clearly reveal his will to us; & 2. that Davids urging this oath, which God sware concerning the Israelites in the wilderness, that they should not enter into his rest, upon the people of God, both in his own daies, & in all succeeding times, doth clearly imply a threatning of the like punishment upon them, and consequentlv also a promise that they should enter into Gods rest, if they did hearken to his voice: hence he concludes, that there is a rest still remaining to the people of God, which he makes to be their spirituall resting from sin, which is begun here, but especially that eternall sabbath of rest, whereinto they shall be received in the kingdom of heaven.

P S A L M XCVI.

Vers. 1. **O** Sing unto the Lord a new song, &c.] See the Note Psal. 33. 3. This Psalm is a part of that Psalm which was sung by David and the people, when they carried the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the house which David had prepared for it in Jerusalem: for which therefore see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 23, &c.

Vers. 7. Give unto the Lord, (O ye kindreds of the people) give unto the Lord glory and strength, &c.] For this and the three following verses, see the Notes also Psal. 29. 1, 2.

Vers. 10. Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth, &c.] This is a prophesy of the setting up of Christs kingdom amongst the Gentiles by the preaching of the Gospel: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved; to wit, say some Expositours, by bringing men to be of one mind and of one will; but see also the Note Psal. 93. 1: he shall judge the people righteously; see the Note Psal. 45. 6, 7.

Vers. 11. Let the heavens rejoyce, and let the earth be glad, &c.] Some understand this of the joy of the creatures for their being delivered from the bondage of corruption, Rom. 8. 21. But see the Notes 1 Chron. 16.

P S A L M XCVII.

Vers. 1. **T**He Lord reigneth, &c.] See the Notes Psal. 93. 1, & 22. 28, & 96. 10. But because the Apostle alledgeth the last clause of the 7. verse of this Psalm, as spoken of Christ Heb. 1. 6. it is evident that this also is to be understood of Christs taking upon him the exercise of his regall power, after he had vanquished & subdued his spirituall enemies; there being an allusion therein to the acclamations that are made to kings at their inaugurations & coronations: and therefore

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as foretelling that the heathens should submit to Christ, and partake of the joy of his kingdome, he adds, *let the earth rejoyce*; that is, all the inhabitants of the earth: *let the multitude of isles be glad thereof*; that is, the Gentiles, even in the remotest islands; for thus also that which is Isa. 42. 4. *and the isles shall wait for his law*, is render'd by the Evangelist Matth. 12. 21. *and in his name shall the Gentiles trust*. Yet withall it may well be, which some Expositours think, to wit, that some glorious victory of David over his enemies, wherein he was a type of Christ, was an occasion of his penning this Psalm.

Verf. 2. *Clouds and darknesse are round about him, &c.*] As if he should have said, This great Lord and king of the Church is exceeding terrible to those that will not submit to his government: for here he sets forth Christ, as it were appearing from heaven to pour forth his wrath upon his enemies in the black darknesse of some stormy cloud; much according to that description which we have of Gods proceeding in judgement against men, 2 Sam. 22. 8. for which see the Notes there. And the drift of this is, partly to make his people the more fearfull of disobeying his commands, and partly to let them see how able he is to confound at his pleasure both his and their enemies. I know some do understand this of Christs coming in the clouds with power and great glory to judge the world, Matth. 24. 30. but I see no reason why we should restrain the words to that. As for the next clause, *righteousnesse and judgement are the habitation of his throne*; the meaning may be, that the Lord Christ will make men holy, just and righteous, yea by the imputation of his righteousness, perfectly such, and that by his Word and spirit he will cause them to doe that which is just and right in all their waies. But see also the Note Psal. 89. 14.

Verf. 3. *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.*] That is, His judgements, like a consuming fire, shall destroy all his enemies: see again the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 8, 13, 15. Psal. 50. 3.

Verf. 4. *The earth saw and trembled.*] This may be meant either of the earth itself, or of the inhabitants of the earth, who shall, will they, nill they, see the irresistible power and wrath of the Lord Christ, and tremble at it. See the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 8. Psal. 46. 6, and 60. 2, and 76. 8.

Verf. 5. *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord.*] To wit, by the fire and lightnings mentioned in the foregoing verses. And this also may be meant, either of the hills literally, to wit, that the Lord in his wrath can quickly consume them; or else of the great ones of the world, or those whose hearts do most swell and rise against God, that they shall faint and fade away, when the Lord breaks forth in his wrath against them. See the Note Psal. 22. 14.

Verf. 6. *The heavens declare his righteousness, &c.*] That is, the angels; or the judgements of God manifested from heaven, whether by tempestuous storms, thunder and lightening, or otherwise; see the Note Psal. 50. 6: *the people see his glory*; to wit, as it is manifested in his righteousness and judgements. And this implies the calling of the Gentiles.

Verf. 7. *Confounded be all they that serve graven images, &c.*] Upon the consideration of the glory and divine majesty of Christ, the king of the Church, the Psal-

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mist breaks forth into this expression of his detestation of all idol-worship, and his desire of the enlargement of Christs kingdome: and it is as if he had said, Let the glory of this king make all idolaters ashamed and even confounded for their former brutish folly, and so come in and submit to him; or else let them be confounded and destroyed. And herein there is also a prophesy implied, that when Christs kingdome was erected by the preaching of the Gospel, this should be done. As for the last clause, *worship him all ye gods*, the Apostle doth expressly understand it of the holy angels, Heb. 1. 6. where to prove that Christ was preferred above the angels, he cites this place, *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let the angels of God worship him.* But though the angels are included, (and thence the place is so cited by the Apostle) yet it may be also extended to all that are called gods, see the Note Exod. 22. 28. yea to the heathens idol-gods, *worship him all ye gods*; as if he had said, Let every thing that is falsely esteemed and worshipped as God, yield and submit it self to this true God and king of his Church.

Vers. 8. *Sion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Iudah rejoyced, because of thy judgements.*] That is, they heard, by the preaching of the Gospel, of Christs coming into the world to erect his kingdome in his Church, after he had vanquished all his and their spirituall enemies, and of his governing his Church with all exact righteousnesse, and particularly of the confusion and ruine of idolaters, and the spreading of his kingdome throughout the world; and this was matter of great joy to them. Now though this may be truly said of the whole Church, yet this joy is here particularly ascribed to the Jews, both because they were to have the first fruits of this joy, and likewise because the Gospel of the kingdome was to goe out from them into all the world. And then also it is said, *Sion heard*, rather than *Sion saw*; both because they were to rejoyce in the hope hereof, before it was accomplished, in that it was revealed to them before-hand by the predictions of the Prophets; and also because the kingdome of Christ was to spread it self so into the farthest parts of the world, that they should rather hear the report of it, then see it. But see also the Note Psal. 48. 11.

Vers. 9. *For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth, &c.*] To wit, as having all things throughout the whole earth in subjection under thee: *thou art exalted far above all gods*; that is, *far above all principality and might and power and dominion, &c.* Eph. 1. 21. See also the Note Deut. 10. 17.

Vers. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, &c.*] Upon the promise made in the foregoing verse, *he preserveth the souls of his saints, &c.* because it might be objected, that they are often in a very afflicted condition, by way of preventing this objection, the Psalmist adds these words; *Light*, that is, joy, see the Note Esth. 8. 16. *is sown for the righteous*, that is, it is promised to, and in and through Christ it is prepared for the righteous, and in good time they shall be sure of it: though for a time no such thing may be seen, as it is with seed when it lyes covered under ground, according to that Col. 3. 3. *ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God*, and that 1 Joh. 3. 2. *it doth not yet appear what we shall be*; yet at last it shall spring up, and shall by degrees, as the corn doth, grow and encrease, and as the

light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18. till at last they shall reap a full harvest of joy in heaven.

Vers. 12. *Rejoyce in the Lord, ye righteous, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 32. 11: and give thanks at the remembrance of his holinesse; that is, give praise to his holy name, acknowledge that all the good you enjoy comes from him. But see the Note Ps. 30. 4.

P S A L M XCVIII.

Vers. 1. **O** Sing unto the Lord a new song, &c.] See the Note Psal. 33. 3: for he hath done marvellous things. This may be understood both of some wonderfull victory that God gave David over his enemies, which might be the occasion of composing this Psalm; and likewise chiefly of the marvellous things which were done in and by Christ, in the work of our redemption; as his Incarnation, that new thing the Lord created in the earth, Jer. 31. 22. and his miracles, but especially his victory over Satan, sin, death and hell, whereof Davids were types. His right hand and his holy arme hath gotten him the victory; that is, merely by his own immediate almighty power, in the Lord Christ he hath prevailed over his and his Churches enemies, whose cause indeed is his own. And most probable it is, that this word (holy) his holy arme hath gotten him the victory, is purposely added, because it was by reason of his holinesse that he prevailed over these his enemies; according to that Joh. 14. 30. the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me: see also Heb. 7. 26, 27.

Vers. 2. *The Lord hath made known his salvation, &c.*] According to the exposition of the foregoing verse, this also may be meant of some glorious deliverance which God had given his people, the same whereof was spread amongst the nations afar off; but chiefly it is meant of the Lords making known the way of eternall life and salvation, by the preaching of the Gospel, amongst the heathen: to which purpose also is the following clause, his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen; see the Note Psal. 22. 31.

Vers. 4. *Make a joyfull noise unto the Lord all the earth, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 66. 1.

Vers. 7. *Let the sea roar, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 96. 11. and 1 Chron. 16. 31.

P S A L M XCIX.

Vers. 1. **T**He Lord reigneth, &c.] See the Note Psal. 93. 1. as likewise Psal. 97. 1. where the same expression is used concerning Christ, as some also conceive it is here: let the people tremble; that is, all that are enemies to Gods people: he sitteth between the Cherubims; that is, he is, as their king, present amongst his people: let the earth be moved; that is, let all the inhabitants of the earth quake for fear: see the Note Psal. 60. 2.

Vers. 2. *The Lord is great in Zion, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 48. 1: and he is high above all people; see the Note Psal. 97. 9.

Vers. 3. *Let them praise thy great and terrible name, for it is holy.*] That is, Let thy sub-

subjects praise thee, O king, even when their enemies rage most against them, as knowing that thou wilt approve thy self a great God, terrible to thine and their enemies, and holy in making good all thy promises unto thy people. Yet some take this as spoken of all people mentioned in the foregoing verse, and as expressing the Psalmists desire, that all nations might come in and submit to this king, and so might extoll his great and glorious name.

Verf. 4. *The kings strength also loveth judgement, &c.*] Some Expositours conceive that this is prefixt as a generall sentence, and is as if he had said, The strength of a king consists in executing justice, and that then in the next words this is applyed to God, *thou dost establish equity*. But generally these first words are understood as spoken of God, the king of his Church; only they may be understood three severall waies: as 1. that the Lord in undertaking to be the strength of his people, doth also love to have his people walk in all righteousness and judgement before him, and that he undertakes to be their strong defence only upon that condition, that they shall be righteous and just in all their waies; and then the following clause must be understood accordingly, *thou dost establish equity*, to wit, in thy law, wherein thou hast settled an equall form of government amongst thy people, and hast strictly enjoyned them to observe equity & judgement in all their dealings: 2. that though the Lord be of unresistable strength, yet he withall loveth justice & judgement, and doth not abuse his power to oppression, as other kings do; nor will doe whatever he can doe, but only what is just to be done: or 3. that God loves to imploy his strength in executing justice and judgement, both by defending his people, and by cutting off those that rebell against him, and that are enemies to him and to his people; which may be also intended in the next words, *thou dost establish equity*, that is, thou doest all things equally and justly, thou hast determined that all things shall be managed in the government of thy Church with most exact equity and judgement. And this last I take to be the best exposition, both because it best agrees with the generall scope of the Psalm, which is to encourage Gods people, by putting them in mind that the Lord is their king and protectour; and especially because this is so clearly here expressed in the last clause, *thou executest judgement and righteousness in Iacob*.

Verf. 5. *Worship at his footstool, &c.*] That is, by bowing down to the very ground; for there may be an allusion in these words to the custome of mens presenting themselves before kings, which they were wont to doe with bowing their faces down to their very footstools: or, Worship in or towards his temple, or with your faces bowed down to the very pavement of the temple: or, Worship towards the Ark, which is often in Scripture called Gods footstool, for which see the Note 1 Chron. 28. 2; for we must not think that they were enjoyned to worship the Ark, but only to worship God with their faces toward the Ark. And therefore if we read the following clause, not as it is in our Translation, *for he is holy*, but as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *for it is holy*, we must know that the holiness of the altar is only alledged, to shew why they should resort thither to worship God, to wit, because that was the sacred sign of Gods presence amongst them.

Verf. 6. *Moses and Aaron among his priests, &c.*] The meaning of this, I conceive,

is the same with that which follows, *and Samuel among them that call upon his name*, to wit, that these were chief amongst those that were appointed of God to be mediators, as it were, and intercessours for the people, and that did accordingly upon all occasions solemnly call upon God in their name, and on their behalf, and found therein great acceptance with God. For though other reasons may be given why Moses is here numbred amongst the Priests; as 1. because he did once execute the Priests office, for which see the Note Exod. 29. 11; or 2. because Moses was of the tribe of Levi, as Samuel also was, and the office of the Levites was to attend upon the sacrifices; yet the true reason why he is here mentioned among the Priests is, because he, together with Aaron and Samuel, as mediators between God and the people, blessed the people in Gods name, and by their prayers did appease Gods displeasure when he was offended with them, and so did as it were uphold and preserve the covenant betwixt God and them: whence it is that Moses and Samuel are joyned together, as Gods chief favourites in this regard, Jer. 15. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people.* But however this is here alledged to stir up the people, both to worship God, as he had exhorted them to do in the foregoing verse, and also to trust in him as their Lord and king, namely, from the example of these holy men of God in former times, that were eminent for their piety in calling upon God, and from the manifestation of Gods love to his people, both in raising up such men to intercede for them, and in his readinesse to hear them when they prayed to him; as it is exprest in the following words, *they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.* Yet some also adde to this, that the Psalmist intended herein to imply, that if God shewed so much favour to his people upon the intercession of Moses and the Leviticall priesthood, much more ought Christ to be extolled, by whose eternall priesthood men are perfectly reconciled unto God.

Verf. 7. *He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar.*] To wit, which was upon the Tabernacle. See for Gods speaking to Moses and Aaron there, Exod. 33. 9, 10, 11. and the Notes Numb. 12. 5, and 16. 19.

Verf. 8. *Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God, &c.*] To wit, Moses and Aaron, to whom the Lord returned a gracious answer, when they interceded for the people: yea and Samuel may be here included also, though that which is said in the foregoing verse, of Gods speaking to them in the cloudy pillar, were meant only of Moses and Aaron. As for that which follows, *thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions*, I conceive it is spoken of the whole body of the people, and that the meaning is, that when God had threatned, or was many a time ready utterly to destroy the whole people for their rebellions, yet upon the intercession of Moses and Aaron and Samuel, he yielded to spare them for their sakes, and so forgave them, and still preserved the body of the people; though withall he did often take vengeance on many particular persons, when they committed idolatry, or otherwise followed their own hearts lusts, though therein they did manifestly transgresse the commandements of God. For I see no reason why we should limit this which is said here of *their inventions*, as some do, to their plots and conspiracies, which they devised against Moses and Aaron
and

and Samuel. Nor doth that exposition seem so probable which some Expositours give of these words, *thou wast a God that forgavest them*, to wit, Moses and Aaron, *though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions*, that is, though thou didst punish them for their sins, by not suffering them to goe into the land of Canaan.

P S A L M C.

Verf. 1. **M***ake a joyfull noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*] This implyes a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles. But see the Note Psal. 66. 3.

Verf. 3. *It is he that hath made us, and not we our selves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*] See the Notes Psal. 95. 6, 7.

Verf. 4. *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.*] See the Note Psal. 84. 2.

P S A L M C I.

Verf. 1. **I***Will sing of mercy and judgement, &c.*] Two severall waies this promise of David is expounded by Interpreters, and both seem very probable: to wit, 1. that David doth here promise to praise God for his goodnesse and mercy to his penitent servants, and for his judgements executed upon the obstinate and rebellious; or more particularly for the judgement which God had executed upon Saul, (for some conceive that this Psalm was composed when Saul was newly cut off by the Philistines) or which he knew God would execute upon him, and the mercy which he had shewn to himself, in preserving him from the rage of Saul, and haply for opening such a fair way for the settling of him in the throne of Israel; or at least the mercy which he knew God would shew him, in bringing him to the kingdome long since promised him: and then the following clause is clear; *unto thee, O Lord, will I sing*, that is, I will speak of these things to thy praise and glory: Or 2. that David doth here undertake, that he would in this Psalm, as it were by way of a vow to God, and a solemn protestation before all the Church, declare with what clemency and justice he meant to govern the kingdome, when he should be settled in the throne; how gentle and good every way he would be to the good, and how zealous to punish the wicked. And if we take it thus, which seems most agreeable to the sequelle of the Psalm, then the meaning of the following clause seems to be this; *unto thee, O Lord, will I sing*, that is, I will in my song thus engage my self, out of a desire thereby to glorify thee, by whom only I was appointed to so great honour, and by whose grace only I hope to be enabled thus to govern the kingdome.

Verf. 2. *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way, &c.*] To wit, by avoiding what ever is evil with all possible circumspection. And indeed this is expressly affirmed of David in his private life, 1 Sam. 18. 14. *And David behaved himself wisely in all his waies.*

O when wilt thou come unto me?] To wit, to assist me with thy grace herein; or rather, to settle me in the kingdome promised me, that I may then make good what:

what I now promise. As for the following clause, *I will walk within mine house with a perfect heart*, that which is intended thereby seems to be this, that he would walk holily and righteously, not in publick only, but even within his own walls, his court or his private house, so that even those of his own family should not be able to lay any evil to his charge; yea and that he would be watchfull to keep his own household too from every scandalous way.

Verf. 3. *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.*] That is, say some, I will not make any evil course of other men a pattern for me to follow. But rather I take it thus, *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes*, to wit, neither by desire, nor purpose, no, nor by suffering it, so near as I can, to come into my thoughts.

Verf. 4. *A froward heart shall depart from me, &c.*] The meaning of this may be, that he would not allow in himself that perverse, rebellious spirit, whereto naturally he was enclined; or else, that he would not converse with those that were of a froward spirit; which indeed agrees best with the following clause (according to our translation) *I will not know a wicked person*, that is, I will not own any such, nor shew them the least respect or favour.

Verf. 5. *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off, &c.*] To wit, by casting them out of his house, or out of his court, yea and in some cases by putting them to death, according as was by Gods law appointed, Deut. 19. 16, 21. And though David speaks here only of some particular vices, which he would not endure in those that were about him; (and he instanceth in those that are most pernicious in such persons as are about kings) yet under these all other wicked men are comprehended.

Verf. 6. *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithfull of the land, that they may dwell with me, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, I will be watchfull over such for their defence, that they may dwell safely with me in my kingdome. But rather the meaning of these words is, that he would be very circumspect not to take any, but such as were known faithfull men, to be his familiar friends, his counsellors, officers of state, or household-servants: not resting merely in the choice of these upon the report of others, but diligently observing himself who were such; and then taking them, of what parentage and condition soever they were, to be employed by him, both in his publick and domestick affairs. For hereto agrees the following clause, *he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.*

Verf. 7. *He that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my house, &c.*] That is, Though such may get into my court or private family, yet being discovered they shall not stay there.

Verf. 8. *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, &c.*] To wit, all such malefactours as commit wickednesse worthy of death; I will not only banish such out of my court, but will utterly destroy them: *that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord*; that is, from the Church of God; or, if we understand it of Jerusalem, then doubtlesse the drift of these words is to imply, that his chief end in resolving to cut them off was, that such vile wretches might not pollute Gods dwelling-place, when all Israel was to resort thither from all places of the land, and so bring a reproach upon the Name of God, his truth and people. And indeed

indeed some think that expression, *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land*, is used in allusion to the custome of womens sweeping their houses every morning, or to that of magistrates sitting in the judgement-seat betimes in the morning, of which some understand that place Jer. 21. 12. *O house of David, saith the Lord, execute judgement in the morning, &c.*

PSALM CII.

The Title. **A** *Prayer of the afflicted, &c.] Or, for the afflicted.* And indeed most probable it is, which most Expositours hold, that this Psalm was composed by Daniel, or some other prophet of those times, for the use of Gods afflicted and oppressed people, a little before the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity were expired, teaching them how to pour out their complaints before God, and to seek to him for the reedifying of the city and temple of Jerusalem; as it may be gathered from that vers. 13. *Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come;* and many other passages in this Psalm. As for the following words, *when he is overwhelmed*, see the Note Psal. 61. 2: *and poureth out his complaint before the Lord;* see the Note 1 Sam. 1. 15.

Vers. 3. *For my daies are consumed like smoke, &c.]* See the Note Psal. 37. 20. & Job 30. 30.

Vers. 4. *My heart is smitten and withered like grasse, &c.]* To wit, like grasse that is smitten with the heat of the sun, or like grasse that is mowen down, and then withereth: *so that I forget to eat my bread;* to wit, as being so overwhelmed with sorrow, that I mind not mine ordinary food.

Vers. 5. *By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.]* That is, By reason of my long-continued miseries, which cause me to spend my daies in continuall groaning, I am become nothing but skin and bones. See the Note Job 30. 29.

Vers. 6. *I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owle of the desert.]* By comparing himself to these dismal birds, that abide usually in desolate places, as he would imply his restless condition, and his continuall dolefull cries and lamentations, so also especially his solitarinesse, not only in that he was forsaken of all, but also in that through bitterness of spirit he declined the society of men, and the very light of the day was irksome to him. But see the Note Job 30. 29.

Vers. 7. *I watch, &c.]* That is, Through my continuall miseries & cares and sorrows, I am still kept waking & cannot take any rest: *and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top;* that is, sad & solitary, as a sparrow that sits solitary & mourning upon the house top, being cast out of her nest, or that is deprived of her young ones or her mate. But now again some understand this verse thus: *I watch*, that is, I wait for deliverance; but, alas, all in vain, continuing still in a sad desolate condition: *and am as a sparrow, &c.*

Vers. 9. *For I have eaten ashes like bread, &c.]* Having said in the foregoing verse, *mine enemies reproach me all the day*, here he shews the extreme misery he was in, which gave his enemies occasion to insult over him and reproach him; *for I have eaten ashes like bread*, that is, I find no more savour in my food,

then if I fed upon ashes; as indeed extreme grief will cause men even to loath their food, so that they shall find no relish in any thing they eat. Or else the meaning may be only, that he lay groveling in ashes with his face upon the ground, as if he had been feeding upon ashes, which agrees with that phrase of licking the dust, for which see the Note Psal. 72. 9; or, that whilst he lay upon the ground covered with sackcloth and ashes, being regardlesse what he fed on, as he lay in that condition, what he did eat was mingled with ashes: which some Expositours do the rather approve, because it seems to agree with the following clause, *and mingled my drink with weeping*, for which see the Note Psa. 42. 3. The expression here used seems to be taken from the custome of mens mingling their wine with water.

Verf. 10. *Because of thine indignation and thy wrath, &c.*] The meaning of these words may be, either that Gods indignation was the cause of his misery; or, that his sorrow was not so much for the distresse he was in, as from this apprehension, that God in his wrath had brought these miseries upon him: *for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down*; that is, thou hast dashed me in pieces with all thy might, as when one lifts up any thing on high, that he may throw it down upon the ground with the greater force and violence; or, having formerly exalted me to a great height of prosperity, thou hast now cast me down to a great depth of misery, which makes my present misery far the more grievous. And doubtlesse this is spoken with reference to that glorious estate, whereto God had raised the Israelites in the daies of David and Solomon, compared with the sad condition they were then in, being captives in Babylon, according to that Lam. 1. 1. *How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princeesse among the provinces, how is she become tributary!* But see also the Note Job 30. 22.

Verf. 11. *My daies are like a shadow that declineth.*] That is, They passe apace away, and are almost at an end; it fares with me as with the shadows when the sun is going downward, & ready to set, which do then decline apace, & are stretched forth longer & longer, so that every moment there may be a change discerned in them, which cannot be at noon-day. Now this he speaks in regard, not of old age, but of the miseries the people endured in their bondage in Babylon, which brought many of the strongest of them to their end; so that as the evening shadows are then nearest to an end when they are longest, so were many of Gods people nearest to their end, when in the eye of reason they seemed likeliest to live long. And this the Psalmist speaks as in the name of all Gods people in Babylon.

Verf. 12. *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, &c.*] To wit, without any change; and consequently, thou art the same still in power, and therefore alwaies able to help thy people; and thou art stedfast and unchangeable in thy goodnesse and mercy and truth, and wilt not therefore fail to perform the covenant and promise whereby thou hast engaged thy self to them, as that thou wilt be their God, and dwell amongst them for ever, &c: *and thy remembrance unto all generations*; that is, thy Name, according to that Hos. 12. 5. *the Lord is his memoriall*, and that Exod. 3. 15. *the God of Abraham, &c. this is my Name for ever, and this is my memoriall unto all generations*; or thy fame and renown by reason of thy great works shall be for ever;

ever; or thy word, thy promises, thy covenant, and whatsoever thou hast revealed to thy Church concerning thy self, whereby they know thee, and are still kept in remembrance of thee, shall continue to them unto all generations; thou hast covenanted with them that thou wilt for ever dwell amongst them, and this thou, that art a faithfull and unchangeable God, wilt surely make good unto them.

Verf. 13. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 68. *for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come;* that is, the time when thou hast expressly promised to bring back thy people out of Babylon, to wit, after seventy years of their captivity here, is now nigh at hand, yea it is in a manner come already: see the Note 2 Chron. 36. 21.

Verf. 14. *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.*] That is, Thy faithfull people do still love and delight in thy Zion, though now it be nothing but heaps of stones and rubbish, more then they do in all the stately palaces of Babylon: and that both as remembring what it hath been, and not doubting but that God according to his promise will build it up again: it pities them to see her lye in the dust, and they long to see her reared up again.

Verf. 15. *So the heathen shall fear the Name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.*] That is, When the heathen, and their kings, shall see how miraculously thou hast delivered thy people out of Babylon, and hast carried on the building again of thy Zion, they shall fear and serve thee; at least they shall tremble at this discovery of thy might and majesty: which agrees with that Psal. 126. 2. *Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them;* and was partly accomplished in the confessions which Cyrus and Darius made of the true God. But yet because this redemption and reedification of Sion was not perfected till Christs coming, therefore these words may be also understood of the calling of the Gentiles, which followed thereupon, and so may likewise the following verses.

Verf. 17. *He will regard the prayer of the destitute.*] That is, the poor captives in Babylon.

Verf. 18. *This shall be written for the generation to come, &c.*] That is, for all succeeding generations, both before and after Christ: *and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord;* that is, the people which shall hereafter be born. Yet this may be meant particularly, either 1. of the Jews that were delivered out of Babylon, whose restitution to their own land might well be reared a new creation, because being scattered as they were amongst the heathens, they were as dead men there, in regard of any hope of being brought back to their own kingdom, see Isa. 26. 19; or 2. of the Gentiles, which should be effectually called by the preaching of the Gospel, whose conversion might well be looked upon as a new creation; see Eph. 2. 10.

Verf. 19. *For he hath looked down from the height of his Sanctuary, &c.*] That is, from his high and holy place; as heaven is called Isa. 57. 15.

Verf. 20. *To hear the groaning of the prisoner, &c.*] This may be meant, both of those that are set free by Christ from their spirituall bondage, and of the captives in Babylon: for which see the Note Psal. 79. 11.

Verf. 22. *When the people are gathered together, &c.*] That is, When the nations are gathered together into one Church with the Jews, under their head the promised Messiah, see Gen. 49. 10; or, When the people shall meet together to worship God, as it is expressed in the next clause, *and the kingdoms to serve the Lord.*

Verf. 23. *He weakened my strength in the way, he shortened my daies.*] I see not but that this may be the same complaint here again repeated, which we had before ver. 11. (for which see the Note there) to wit, that God had wondrously weakened them in the course of their lives (so this word *way* is taken, for the way of mans life, Psal. 2:12.) by reason of their hard bondage in the land of Babylon, and so had by that means cut short many of their daies. But yet indeed the best Expositours do for the most part understand this of Gods weakning them & cutting them off in the way of their expectation, either of their promised deliverance out of Babylon, or of that great work of their redemption by the promised Messiah. So that the meaning of their complaint must be taken as if they had said thus; Lord, thou hast promised to bring us back into our own land: how is it that many of us are cut short in the way from enjoying the benefit of this our return? Or, (with reference to the promised Messiah) thus; Lord, thou hast promised that thy people of Israel shall continue till thou hast sent them a Messiah, by whom the glory of this thy kingdome shall be wondrously advanced; & hitherto thy people have walked on in the way of the expectation of this our promised redemption, earnestly expecting & desiring the end of this course in the accomplishment of this promise; and why then hast thou brought us into this low & weak condition, as if thou meantst to cut us off, & wouldst not bring us to that glorious condition thou hast promised? or, Oh that we might see thy Christ in the flesh, & behold the glory of his promised kingdome! There are some besides that understand these words, *He weakened my strength in the way, &c.* of God, or the enemies, weakning their strength in the way, as they went into Babylon, or in the way as they returned home into their own countrey again. But the former expositions are far more probable.

Verf. 24. *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my daies, &c.*] That is, before I have accomplished little more then half the years which men usually live; see the Note Psal. 55. 23: or rather, according to the exposition of the foregoing Note, Cut not off thy people before thou hast made good thy promise, of bringing them back with joy into their own countrey; or, before that glorious work of our redemption by the promised Messiah be accomplished. And indeed, because the Church was not come to the ripeness of her age till the coming of the Messiah, had she been cut off before that, it might have been said that she was taken away in the half of her daies. *Thy years are throughout all generations;* that is, thou art an eternall and unchangeable God. And this is here alledged for the same end as before verf. 12. for which see the Note there. The most Expositours take it thus, that because God was eternall, therefore he would unto all eternity preserve his Church, yea every particular member thereof; according to that Marth. 22. 32. *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*

Verf. 25. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, &c.*] This which here and in the two following verses is spoken to God, is by the Apostle Heb. 1. 10, 11. applied

applied to Christ, to prove his Godhead. And indeed by that which is said before vers. 13, 14; 15. that God should arise and have mercy upon Zion, and so that the heathen should fear the Name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth his glory, and again vers. 22. that the people should be gathered together, and the kingdome to serve the Lord, it is evident that the Psalmist speaks of the kingdome of Christ; and therefore what is here spoken to God, must be understood as spoken to God in Christ, and to him therefore these words of the Psalm are by the Apostle there fitly applied.

Vers. 26. *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, &c.*] See the Note Job 14. 12: *yea all of them*, that is, the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, *shall wax old like a garment*, that is, shall decay by degrees, or rather, shall at last come to an end: *as a vesture shalt thou change them*; that is, say some Expositours, as one layeth by an old worn garment, that is no longer fit for use, and changeth it for another; or rather, as one alters an old tatter'd garment, and doth so furbish it, and make it up in another fashion, that it seems to be a new garment; so (and as easily too as one changeth a garment) shall God change the heavens & the earth: though they shall not cease to be, and their substance shall be the same, yet in regard of their qualities they shall be quite changed, of corruptible they shall be made incorruptible, &c. so that they shall be new heavens and new earth, Isa. 66. 22. *The new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord.* It is Heb. 1. 12. *as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed*: but that is the same in effect; only it implies either the suddenness of the change, that it shall be done with as much facility as one folds up a garment; or else that they shall no longer serve for the same use as formerly; whence this change is also compared to the folding up of a book or scroll, Isa. 34. 4. *the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll*, that is, the use of them shall cease, as when one shuts up a book and layes it by, which he means to use no longer. *As a vesture shalt thou change them; and they shall be changed*; that is, they shall be certainly changed. And now the drift of all this is, 1. to imply the perishing condition of Gods people, as considered in themselves, poor frail creatures, continually hastening to their end, thereby to move the Lord to take pity of them; if the heavens, that have lasted so many years without any apparent decay, shall yet at last perish; much more must weak frail men perish: and 2. to shew, that yet notwithstanding the children of God shall not perish; and that because God is eternall and unchangeable, and he hath chosen them to be his for ever; so that being begotten again by the seed of Gods word, which must needs be immortall and incorruptible, as God is, it is not possible but that they must continue, though the heavens shall perish: which is the conclusion he makes from hence vers. 28.

Vers. 28. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*] That is, through thy favour and in thy presence, both here, and eternally in heaven. See the Notes Psal. 41. 12, and 69. 35, 36.

P S A L M CIII.

Verf. 1. **B**lesse the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me blesse his holy Name.] That is, my whole inward man, my mind, will, affections, thoughts, with all the inward powers and faculties of my soul: yea it may be extended to the inward parts of his body; according to that Psal. 35. 10. *All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee?* for which see the Note there; as likewise Psal. 20. 1.

Verf. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.*] To wit, thy sins, by pardoning them (and if we so understand these words, they are no more but a repeating again of what was said before in the first clause;) or, thy lusts and corruptions, by mortifying them. Some also extend this to Gods delivering him from bodily infirmities, and all outward evils: see the Note Psal. 41. 6. But of his bodily health he speaks afterward verf. 5.

Verf. 4. *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction, &c.*] That is, Who preserveth and delivereth thee from destroying dangers; or rather, who redeemeth and delivereth thee by the promised Messiah from death and hell; see the Notes Job 26. 6, and 28. 22, and 33. 22: *who crowneth thee with loving kindnesse and tender mercies*; that is, who compasseth thee round about with manifold and precious blessings, which are also a glory and an honour to thee; see the Note Psal. 65. 11.

Verf. 5. *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, &c.*] That is, Who supplyeth thee with plenty and variety of good, yea and many times of the choicest dainties, for the nourishment of thy body; or, more generally, Who gives thee abundantly of all his good blessings, even to the full satisfying of thy desires, according to that Psal. 81. 10. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*; for which see the Note there. *So that thy youth is renewed like the eagles*; that is, thou continuest still fresh and lively and strong, even when thou hast past the years of thy youth, as if thy youth were daily renewed upon thee. And this he compares to the eagles renewing her youth, either 1. because the eagle doth yearly cast her feathers (as it is said that all birds of prey especially do) and so having new feathers grow up in the room thereof, she looks as young and fresh again, and flies as high and swift as ever, according to that Isa. 40. 31. *they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles*; or 2. because, as severall writers report, the eagle retains her vigour unto extreme old age, & neither is weakened with any sicknesse, nor decays with years, but continues still as fresh and lively, as when she was young, till at last, by the overgrowing of her upper crooked beak, her mouth is so shut up that she cannot eat; & so she dies, not through age so much, as want of feeding. Now though this cannot be said of every one of Gods faithfull servants in regard of their bodily health and strength (and indeed some think that the Psalmist wrote this with respect to the renewing of his strength after some fit of sicknesse) yet it may in regard of the inward refreshing of their minds, in the manifestation of Gods love to them; because though their outward man doth perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, 2. Cor. 4. 16.

Verf. 6.

Verf. 6. *The Lord executeth righteousness and judgement for all that are oppressed.*] Though this be expressed as a generall truth, yet by the following verse it seems probable that it is inserted here with particular reference to the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt.

Verf. 7. *He made known his waies unto Moses, &c.*] That is, the waies which he prescribed his people in the Law which he gave unto Moses; or his waies of providence toward his people, the manner of his dealing with them, how tenderly carefull he is over them, how he governs them by his word and spirit, and takes them at last to live for ever with him in heaven: and so the next clause may be added to explain this, *his acts unto the children of Israel*; or else that is meant of those miraculous acts, whereby the doctrine of Moses was sealed and confirmed that it was of God, as the plagues of Egypt, the dividing of the red sea, &c.

Verf. 8. *The Lord is mercifull and gracious, &c.*] This seems to be here inserted in reference to that glorious description of himself, which God gave unto Moses, Exod. 34. 6.

Verf. 11. *For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*] That is, it is exceeding great, see the Note Psal. 36. 5; or, it exceeds their sins, as far as the heaven is above the earth.

Verf. 12. *As far as the East is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*] That is, he hath absolutely pardoned them; as perfectly acquitting us from being punished for them, as if they no way concerned us: yet with respect to the filthinesse of sin, it may be also said, *he hath removed our transgressions from us*, to wit, as one would put away some noysome thing, where neither the sight nor smell of it might any way annoy us.

Verf. 14. *For he knoweth our frame, &c.*] That is, our naturall pronenesse to sin; or, of what a mean and brittle mould he hath made us, as it seems to be explained in the following clause, *he remembereth that we are dust*: see also the Note Psal. 78. 39.

Verf. 15. *As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.*] To wit, which lyeth open to sharp piercing winds, storms and tempests, and hath no covert nor shelter, as flowers in gardens have.

Verf. 16. *For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, &c.*] That is, it is suddenly blown away, or blasted with some blasting wind; see the Note Psal. 78. 39: *and the place thereof shall know it no more*; see the Note Job 7. 10.

Verf. 17. *But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 102. 12, 24, 26.

Verf. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, &c.*] That is, He is the most high God, that hath not only the angels in heaven, but all the kingdomes and creatures in the world, under his command, as is expressed in the next words, *and his kingdome ruleth over all*. And this may be added also to imply, how infinitely able God is to doe for his people that which is said in the two foregoing verses.

Verf. 20. *Blesse the Lord, ye his angels, &c.*] By calling upon the angels to blesse God, the Psalmist doth imply, 1. his desire that God might be advanced by those that

that could doe it better then poor men could doe; and 2. how just it was that he and others the people of God should readily joyn in this duty of blessing God, seeing this was an imployment fit for angels, and that the angels did chiefly blesse God for the great mercy he had shewed to men, which men therefore above all should with thankfulness acknowledge: and to this end also he adds that description which follows, of their exceeding great power, and readinesse to serve God, *that excell in strength, that doe his commandements, hearkning unto the voice of his words*; as if he should have said, being attentive to know, and most ready to doe the will of God in all things whatsoever: for if those glorious spirits must thus stoop before God, and count it an honour to serve him, should not men much more doe so?

Vers. 21. *Blesse the Lord, all ye his hosts, &c.*] This may be meant of all the creatures, as being instrumentall to God in doing his will, for which see the Note Gen. 2. 1; or else rather of the holy angels, because the following words, *ye ministers of his that doe his pleasure*, seem to be meant properly of the obedience that is yielded by reasonable creatures, see the Notes 1 Kings 22. 19. And then the same is repeated here that was said before in the foregoing verse; only by tearing them his hosts, their exceeding multitude is implied, see Psal. 68. 17, and what use he makes of them in fighting against his enemies.

P S A L M CIV.

Vers. 1. **O** Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty.] See the Note Psal. 93. 1.

Vers. 2. *Who coverest thy self with light as with a garment, &c.*] That is, Who dost discover thy glory, which is invisible in it self, by the light which thou hast created, even as a king appears to men gloriously adorned with his robes of royalty. And this the Psalmist, recounting the works of God, mentions in the first place, because in the worlds creation, it was the work of the first day. And it may the rather be compared to a garment, wherewith God doth as it were cover himself, because the heaven, where God is in a speciall manner present, is all over covered, as it were, with light. *Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain*; that is, as easily as one may draw a curtain, to wit, the curtains of a tent, under which God is pleased to withdraw himself, as it were, from the sight of his creatures: see the Notes Gen. 1. 6. and 2 Sam. 22. 12. And this, with that which followeth in the two next verses, he addeth next, because these were the works of the second day.

Vers. 3. *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, &c.*] That is, Who by his watry clouds hath divided the region of the aire, as it were, into severall chambers, from whence, when he pleaseth, he doth marvellously many waies shew forth his glory; see the Note Gen. 1. 6: *who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind*; that is, who guides and governs the clouds, and the swift flying winds, as he pleaseth; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 11, 12.

Vers. 4. *Who maketh his angels spirits, &c.*] Because the Apostle doth plainly apply

apply this to the angels, Heb. 1. 7. *And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;* therefore many of our best Expositours hold, that the Psalmist doth indeed speak here concerning the angels: Having say they, spoken in the foregoing verses concerning the heavens, before he comes, in the following verses, to speak of the earth and the things therein, he doth here insert this passage concerning the angels, because they do as it were communicate both with heaven and earth, as having their constant habitation in heaven, yet so that they are ordinarily sent forth into the earth, and imployed there in the service of God for the good of men. Now they that are of this opinion, as it is clear our Translatours were, do thus understand the words; to wit, either that God made his angels of a spirituall, incorporeal substance, and withall light-some, bright and glorious creatures, like a flame of fire; or else, that he made *his angels spirits*, or winds, that is, active and swift in the services enjoyed them, flying as speedily as the winds, to doe whatever he gives them in charge: *and a flaming fire*; that is, pure and simple, active and fervent, strong and vigorous, and of a kind of fiery efficacy, suddenly piercing things, carrying all before them, and consuming Gods enemies with unresistable violence, and in all these things like unto the fire: whence it is, they say, that some of the angels are called *Seraphims*, that is, *burning*; and frequently the angels have appeared like fire, as to Elijah, 2 Kings 2. 11. and to Elisha, 2 Kings 6. 17. But now on the contrary, other learned men, and of the best Expositours, do hold that the Psalmist doth here speak of the winds and fiery meteors; and accordingly they take the meaning of the words to be this, that God maketh the *spirits*, or winds, to be his angels or messengers, and a *flaming fire*, that is, the thunder and lightning and other fiery meteors, to be *his ministers*, according to that Psal. 148. 8. *fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word*. And indeed, because the Psalmist speaks in such order here of the works of creation, according to the daies wherein they were created, I cannot but think that he speaks in these words concerning the winds and fiery meteors in the aire. But why then doth the Apostle apply this to the angels? I answer, 1. that some think the Apostles purpose was only to shew, that what is here said concerning the winds and meteors, may be also analogically said concerning the angels; as God useth the winds and meteors, as his messengers and ministers, ordering them and imploying them as seems good in his own eyes, so doth he also make use of the ministry of angels: 2. that even the Psalmist in saying, that God useth the winds as his angels, doth also clearly thereby imply, that even the angels are but Gods servants, creatures made for and imployed in his service, as he is pleased to order them, and therefore not equall to him, who is the Son of God and Lord of all things; which is all the Apostle there contends for: and 3. that the Psalmist speaks here of the winds and meteors, as they are under God ordered and governed by the angels, (see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 11.) and that consequently he speaks theretore of the angels, as they are in the winds & meteors, moving them, & clothed, as it were, with them; & that therefore the Apostle might well say, that the Psalmist

mist speaks here of the angels: & this last is, I conceive, the most satisfactory answer.

Verf. 5. *Who laid the foundations of the earth, &c.*] See the Notes Job 26. 7. and Psal. 24. 2. Here begins the relation of Gods work of creation on the third day, when he established the earth in its place, and made a separation betwixt the earth and the waters, and caused trees and plants and herbs to grow up therein; as is expressed in the following verses.

Verf. 6. *Thou coveredst it with the deep; as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.*] Some understand this of the earths being wrapped about with the sea, as with a garment; and some of Noahs flood. But it is clearly meant of the earths being at first covered round about under a deep of water, Gen. 1. 2, 9. before the waters were separated from it; which is related in the following verses.

Verf. 7. *At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.*] That is, at thy thundring command, at thy mighty dreadfull command, which every creature must needs hear, and which no creature bearing it dares disobey: see the Note Gen. 1. 9.

Verf. 8. *They goe up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys, &c.*] That is, in going to the place appointed for them, nothing can stop their course, but by the mighty power of God they run up the mountains, and so down the valleys. These words may be read, as they are render'd in the margin, *the mountains ascend, the valleys descend*; and then the meaning thereof must be, that the waters being separated from the earth, God did at the same time bring the earth into that fashion and form that now it hath, being distinguished here and there with mountains and valleys; or that upon the removall of the waters, the rising mountains and the low-laid valleys did then appear.

Verf. 9. *Thou hast set a bound that they may not passe over, &c.*] See the Notes Job 38. 8; 9, 10.

Verf. 13. *He watereth the hills from his chambers, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 3. That which is here noted as remarkable is, that even the mountains, where there are no springs and brooks of water, are yet watered with the dew and rain that fall from the clouds: *the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works*; that is, with the rain, which is thy work, causing the clouds to be filled therewith, and causing it to be showed down when thou pleasest upon the earth; or, with the rain, which proceeds from the clouds; or, with the fruits, which thou causest the earth by this means to bring forth.

Verf. 14. *He causeth the grasse to grow for the cattel, and herb for the service of man, &c.*] That is, and all kind of herbs which are for the use of man, whether for food or physick; *that he* (that is, that God) *may bring forth food out of the earth.* This, I conceive, is the meaning of these words. Yet some Expositours understand them otherwise, to wit, that God causeth not the grasse only, but the herbs to grow for the cattel, *for the service of man*, that is, that the cattel being nourished thereby may be serviceable to man. *That he may bring forth fruit out of the earth*; that is, that man, by his labour in tilling the earth, may eat of the fruit thereof.

Verf. 15. *And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyl to make his face to shine, &c.*] To wit, when it is used by men in their anointing of themselves with

precious ointments; for which see the Note Psal. 23. 5. Yet some understand it of the vertue that there is in oyl, when it is eaten, to chear the hearts of men, and so to make them look with a chearfull and lightsome countenance, according to that Prov. 15. 13. *A merry heart maketh a chearfull countenance.* However, by joyning that which follows, concerning the support of mans life by bread, and bread which strengtheneth mans heart, there is this covertly commended to our observation, That God hath provided not only for mans necessity, but also for his delight.

Verf. 16. *The trees of the Lord, &c.*] That is, high and lofty trees, (as the cedars are called *cedars of God* Psal. 80. 10. though it be render'd in our translation *the goodly cedars*) are full of sap; whereas one might wonder how the earth should yield sap enough for trees of so mighty a height and so huge a bulk. Or by *the trees of the Lord* may be meant such trees as grow of themselves by the sole providence of God, and are not set or planted by man, as the following clause seems to explain it, *the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted.*

Verf. 19. *He appointeth the moon for seasons, &c.*] See the Notes Gen. 1. 14: *the sun knoweth his going down*; see the Note Job 38. 12. And here begins the relation of the works God created the fourth day.

Verf. 21. *The young lions roar after their prey, &c.*] That which the prophet saith Amos 3. 4. *Will a Lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?* may seem to imply, that lions use not to roar till they have taken their prey; whereas the Psalmist here seems to say, that they roar after their prey, and do hereby as it were seek their prey of God. But herein we shall find no contradiction, if we consider, 1. that a lion may be said to have a prey, or to have taken his prey, as the Prophet speaks, because it is surely his, when he hath once discovered it, though he have not yet gotten it into his paws; and 2. that it may well be that the lion is wont to wander up and down silently, for fear of frightening away the beasts he seeks after, till he hath espied a prey; and then he may be said to roar both for his prey, and because he hath gotten a prey. And indeed Naturalists report, that by the lions roaring even those creatures that are swifter of foot then he are so astonished, that they fall down, and are easily taken by him.

Verf. 25. *So is this great and wide sea, &c.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, *the earth is full of thy riches*, he adds, *so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable*; to wit, things that creep along upon the ground, or that glide in the waters. And thus the Psalmist enters here upon the works created on the fifth day; see Gen. 1. 20: only he mentions not the fowls, which were created also on that day, because of them he had occasionally spoken before, in speaking of the trees wherein they make their nests; as for the same reason he omits also to speak of the beasts and cattel created on the sixth day, because of them he had also occasionally spoken before.

Verf. 26. *There is that Leviathan, &c.*] See the Notes Job 41. 1, &c.: *whom thou hast made to play therein.* This is said, either 1. because these huge whales do by swimming and tumbling up and down in the sea, and clapping their fins and tails, seem to sport themselves, as other lesser fishes are wont to do; or 2. because

by reason of their great strength, their overturning of boats or ships, and hunting and devouring all other creatures that live in the waters, is but a sport to them; or 3. because they securely lord it in the sea, not fearing man, or any other creature whatsoever: as upon the same account it is said of the Babylonians, Habak. 1. 10, *they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them; they shall deride every strong hold, &c.*

Verf. 27. *These wait all upon thee, &c.*] As if he had said, Though there be such an infinite number of birds, beasts and fishes, yet thou providest for them all. And in that expression of the creatures waiting upon God, the Psalmist seems to allude to that which may be ordinarily seen in farms and countrey-houses, to wit, how the cattel and fowl will look and follow after those that at certain set times are wont to give them their meat: and so likewise in the following clause, *that thou maist give them their meat in due season*; where by *their meat* he intends the severall sorts of meat which he provides for the severall creatures, according to their kinds; and by those words *in due season*, is hinted to us that provident care of God over them, in that 1. he provides for them so liberally in the summer, that there is a supply for them all the year after; & 2. that he provides for some of them severall sorts of food, some at one time and some at another.

Verf. 28. *That thou givest them they gather, &c.*] Here again he alludes to the feeding of fowls about a house by throwing of handfulls of corn to them: *thou openest thine hand*; that is, thou givest them food liberally: *and they are filled*; that is, fully satisfied.

Verf. 29. *Thou hidest thy face, &c.*] That is, Thou forbeardest to shew thy self any longer favourable to them, to wit, by withholding food from them, & by refusing to uphold them in their being as formerly: *they are troubled*; that is, sorely distressed; or, they waste away, see the Note Psal. 30. 7: *thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust*; that is, to the dust of which they were created, see the Note Gen. 1. 20.

Verf. 30. *Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; & thou renewest the face of the earth.*] That is, Though trees, plants and herbs, yea & all living creatures die continually, yet others, by that vigour & vitall spirit which God gives them, do as continually spring up in their room; & so the face of the earth by a fresh succession of creatures is constantly renewed, *one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh*, Eccles. 1. 4. So that by those words *thy spirit* here may be meant, either that principle of life which God gives unto all things that live, & whereby the unreasonable creatures do both live & breath, which Solomon calls Eccles. 3. 21. *the spirit of the beast that* (when they die) *goeth down to the earth*; or else, that almighty quickning power, whereby this life is wrought in the creatures, and whereby therefore all things are preserved in their being: and therefore some conceive it is said that God sends forth his spirit, and they are created, because this is the proper effect of the holy spirit of God.

Ver. 31. *The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever, the Lord shall rejoyce in his works.*] That is, The Lord shall preserve & uphold his creatures, that he may still delight himself in them. Yet most Expositours conceive, that in these words the Psalmist doth at least

least imply his desire, that men might so acknowledge Gods bounty & goodnesse in the creatures, & so use them to his glory, that God might not repent that he had made them, but that he might still rejoyce in them, & so still preserve them.

Verf. 32. *He looketh on the earth, & it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, & they smoke.*] Either to imply, that it is indeed the mercy of God that he continueth his creatures, or to imply how carefull men had need to be, to give God cause to rejoyce in his works, he sheweth here, that by experience we may see how easily he could destroy the whole world, in that an angry look from God will make the earth to tremble, & the least touch of his displeasure will burn up the mountains; which is evident in the earthquakes, the thunder & lightnings, that do often discover the mighty power of God, but was most terribly discovered at mount Sinai, when the Law was given, whereto haply he doth here allude.

Verf. 34. *My meditation of him shall be sweet, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, shall be pleasing to God. But rather the Psalmist means, that his meditating on the goodnesse of God in his wonderfull works should delight and refresh his heart, and so make him praise God with much chearfulness; as is expressed in the next words, *I will be glad in the Lord.*

Verf. 35. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, &c.*] To wit, because they give not God the glory due to him as the Creatour and governour of the whole world, but by polluting and abusing his creatures through sin, do keep the Lord from rejoycing in his works; see verf. 31.

P S A L M C V.

Verf. 1. **O** *Give thanks unto the Lord, &c.*] The first fifteen verses of this Psalm are a part of that Psalm, which David composed to be sung at the removing of the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the city of David; and it was the first Psalm that was put into the hands of the Levites to be sung by them: for so much therefore of this Psalm see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 7, 22.

Verf. 16. *He called for a famine upon the land, &c.*] See 2 Kings 8. 1: *he brake the whole staffe of bread;* see the Note Levit. 26. 26.

Verf. 19. *Untill the time that his word came, &c.*] That is, Joseph was laid in iron, as it is said in the foregoing verse, untill that came to passe which he had foretold; when he interpreted the dreams of Pharaohs chief butler and baker, that had been prisoners with him, untill it came to be known to Pharaoh what a man he was, to wit, that he had the gift of interpreting dreams: & then *the word of the Lord tried him;* that is, that gift given him of God to interpret dreams, or his interpreting of Pharaohs dreams, which was given him of God, made known what he was, a man truly endued with a spirit of prophesy, and thereupon Pharaoh did highly esteem him. Thus many Expositours do understand these words. But I rather conceive, that the 1st clause, *untill the time that his word came,* hath relation, not to that which went before, concerni^{ng} Josephs imprisonmēt, but to the following clause, *the word of the Lord tried him;* & that accordingly the words are to be thus understood, that *untill the time that his word came,* that is, untill that came to pass which God had revealed to Joseph in his

dreams, concerning the great honour whereto he should be exalted, or, untill that came to passe which God had spoken, that is, which God had decreed concerning Joseph, or, untill Josephs word came, that is, till the condition which God had decreed concerning Joseph came to be discovered, which was formerly unknown, *the word of the Lord tryed him*, that is, so long the decree of God thus revealed to him in a dream, being so long deferred before it was accomplished, did try his faith and patience and constancy in his bondage and imprisonment: Or it may be said that *the word of the Lord tryed him*, because that word which God revealed to him in a dream, being told his brethren, was the occasion of all his sufferings, wherewith he was tryed, even as gold is tryed in the fire.

Verf. 22. *To bind his princes at his pleasure, &c.*] That is, Pharaoh gave Joseph such absolute rule over his whole kingdome, that it was in his power, if he saw cause, even to punish and imprison his princes: *and teach his senatours wisdom*; to wit, by punishing them if they did any thing amisse; or by the example of his wisdom in governing the people, and that especially in that particular policy of his in ordering the corn that the land of Egypt yielded in the seven plenteous years; implying, that the wisest of the Egyptians, such as were Pharaohs senatours, that were made such for their eminent wisdom, might learn wisdom of Joseph. I know the first clause some understand only of Pharaohs princes being so obliged to Joseph, and in such subjection to him, that they were ready to doe whatever he would have them. And for the second clause, some conceive that the wisdom which Joseph was to teach them may include, not only the wisdom of politicall government, but also all other kind of learning, yea even the knowledge of the true religion. But the first exposition is far the clearest.

Verf. 23. *Israel also came into Egypt, &c.*] To wit, with his children and family: *and Jacob*, which may be meant both of him and his posterity, *sojourned in the land of Ham*; see the Note Psal. 78. 51.

Verf. 24. *And he encreased his people greatly, and made them stronger then their enemies.*] To wit, in their enemies apprehension and fears; see the Note Exod. 1. 9.

Verf. 25. *He turned their heart to hate his people, &c.*] The same may be said of this expression that is said of Gods hardening Pharaohs heart; see Exod. 7. 13: *to deal subtilly with his servants*; as by seeking 1. to wear them out with cruell oppressions and hard labour, and 2. to prevent their encrease, by enjoining their midwives to destroy all their male children: see the Notes Exod. 1. 11, 15.

Verf. 28. *He sent darknesse, and made it dark, &c.*] Here the Psalmist begins to mention the Egyptian plagues, yet not in the order wherein they were inflicted, this being the ninth plague which he mentions first; and only the plagues of the murrain of the beasts, and that of the boils and blains are here omitted. As for the next clause, *and they rebelled not against his word*, though some understand it of the plagues themselves mentioned in the foregoing verse, *They shewed his signs, &c.* to wit, that upon Gods command by Moses and Aaron they presently came, and did not disobey his command, as it is said verf. 31. *He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies*; yet I conceive it is clearly meant of Moses and Aaron, to wit, that they rebelled not against Gods command, but did both denounce a-
gainst

gainst the Egyptians, and bring upon them, the severall plagues that God enjoyned them to denounce, though so to doe could not but be very dangerous to them.

Verf. 30. *The land brought forth frogs in abundance in the chambers of their kings.*] That is, say some, in the chambers of those stately houses and palaces, which had been built by the kings of Egypt in their severall ages. But rather by *their kings* is meant Pharaoh and his Nobles; perhaps the Princes that were of the bloud Royall, or those that were Presidents, and, as it were, Viceroyes under Pharaoh in the severall principalities that were in Egypt, which seem to be those that are called kingdomes Isa. 19. 2. *And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians, and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour, city against city, and kingdome against kingdome.*

Verf. 37. *And there was not one feeble person among their tribes.*] Which as it was strange and miraculous, that amongst six hundred thousand Israelites there should not be one that should not be able to goe along on foot with them, as it is noted they did Exod. 12. 37; when there had been so much sicknesse and death amongst the Egyptians; so it was also a great mercy, because the weak and sick amongst them would have been a great hinderance and trouble to them in their travels.

Verf. 38. *Egypt was glad when they departed, &c.*] Insomuch that they minded not the gold and silver, which they had lent them: *for the fear of them fell upon them*; that is, the Egyptians were terrified for fear of being destroyed by means of the Israelites: yet some would have this to be understood thus, that the Egyptians were now as much afraid of the Israelites, as the Israelites had formerly been afraid of the Egyptians.

Verf. 40. *The people asked, and he brought quails.*] Though they desired flesh in a way of murmuring, yet God was so gracious as to satisfie their desires. In Psal. 78. 18; &c. Gods giving them quails is mentioned as a judgement, but here the Psalmist speaks of it as a singular mercy: and therefore I conceive the Psalmist speaks there of the quails given them in the wilderness of Paran, Numb. 11. 31. which was followed with a great judgement; but here of those that were given them in the wilderness of Sin, Exod. 16. 13. which God did in much goodnesse, and out of his indulgence towards them.

Verf. 43. *And he brought forth his people with joy, &c.*] Whilst at the same time every house of the Egyptians was filled with howling and lamentation, by reason of the heavy hand of God that had been upon them.

P S A L M C VI.

Verf. 1. **P**raise ye the Lord, &c.] The Psalmist speaks here in the name of Gods people, being in captivity or under some sad dispersion, as appears clearly by those words verf. 47. *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, &c.* Yet we cannot hence conclude that it was composed upon the occasion of the Babylonian captivity, or that dispersion of the people in the

the daies of Antiochus Epiphanes. But because of those words before cited, and because we find those that follow here in this first verse, *O give thanks unto the Lord, &c.* in that Psalm which was sung by the Levites, when David removed the Ark into the city of Zion, as we may see 1 Chron. 16. 34, 35. we may rather conclude from thence, that it was made by David, as a form of prayer to be used by Gods people upon occasion of any such like calamity. However, the drift of this and the following exhortation to praise God, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever*, is to imply, that though they were at present in a very sad condition, 1. yet it was a mercy, which they had cause with thankfulness to acknowledge, that they were hitherto preserved, and were not utterly destroyed; and 2. by speaking of Gods never-failing goodnesse to his people in all ages, they might upon just grounds encourage themselves still to trust in Gods goodnesse, and to wait for reconciliation with God, and mercy from God in the worst times.

Vers. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgement, and he that doth righteousness at all times.*] Some conceive, that having said in the foregoing verse, *Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can shew forth all his praise?* these words are added as in answer thereto, implying that none were so fit to shew forth the praise of God, as those that were just and holy and righteous in their lives; for which see also the Note Psal. 33. 1. But I rather think that the drift of these words is, to set forth, that God is alwaies good and gracious to his people, by admiring the blessednesse of those that are his people, and that do carry themselves as becomes his people: *Blessed are they that keep judgement*; that is, that keep constantly a sincere desire in their hearts to doe that only which is just and right: *and he that doth righteousness at all times*; that is, and he that accordingly liveth righteously, and that both in prosperity and adversity; implying, that they that do thus constantly fear and serve God, shall find God good and gracious to them, though they may be in much distresse for a time.

Vers. 4. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people, &c.*] That is, Whereas of late thou hast seemed not to mind us, doe us good again, and deliver us and blesse us, according to what thou hast been wont to doe for thy people: see the Note Psal. 25. 6. *O visit me with thy salvation*; that is, save us, as thou hast formerly done, out of our troubles: see Psal. 85. 1, 2, &c.

Vers. 5. *That I may see the good of thy chosen, &c.*] That is, That I may enjoy the good which thou art wont to afford thy chosen people; see the Notes Job 7. 7. and Psal. 21. 4: *that I may rejoyce in the gladnesse of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance*; that is, that I may triumph with others for thy wondertull deliverances and mercies to thy people. But yet under these outward mercies, spirituall and eternall blessings are likewise comprehended.

Vers. 6. *We have sinned with our fathers: we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.*] Some conceive that this Psalm being composed in Babylon, these words were by the Psalmist taken from Daniels prayer Deut. 9. 5. where the very same expressions are used. But however the drift of these words is, doubtlesse, not only by an humble acknowledgement of their sins to make way for Gods mercy, but

but also especially to imply, that seeing God had shewed great mercy to their fathers, notwithstanding they had provoked him greatly by their sins, therefore they hoped that God would after the like manner deal with them.

Verf. 7. *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Though they saw the miracles which Moses wrought before them, yet they laid them not so much to heart, but that when Pharaoh, upon the message of Moses to him, did oppresse them worse then before, they did then greatly murmur against Moses and Aaron Exod. 5. 21. But rather I conceive that the Psalmist prefixeth this as the aggravation of their murmuring at the red sea, whereof he speaks in the following words, that notwithstanding the wonderfull works he had wrought in Egypt, yet presently at the red sea, when they were scarce gotten out of Egypt, they provoked God by murmuring against him; *they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies, but provoked him at the sea, even at the red sea.*

Verf. 9. *He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.*] That is, He led them through those heaps of waters, which stood up as a wall on each side of them, (see the Notes Exod. 14. 22.) and that on as dry ground, as if they had gone through a dry sandy wilderness.

Verf. 12. *Then believed they his words, &c.*] So it is said Exod. 14. 31. But this is here added as an aggravation of their wickedness, that being thus convinced within themselves, they should yet so soon again murmur against the Lord.

Verf. 13. *They soon forgot his works, &c.*] For three daies after their removing from the red sea they murmured again, because of the bitterness of the waters at Marah, Exod. 15. 22, 23: *they waited not for his counsel;* that is, they would not wait to see what God had determined concerning them, or what God would enjoin them to doe; they would not patiently wait upon Gods providence, as believing that he would provide for them, & as considering that it was Gods way to exercise his people with trials for a time, but would prescribe both what he should doe, and when he should doe it: yet this may be referred to the following story.

Verf. 14. *But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, &c.*] To wit, for flesh, whereas in the wilderness it was a great mercy to have necessary food. See the Notes Num. 11. 4. and Psal. 78. 18: *and tempted God in the desert;* see the Note Exod. 17. 2.

Verf. 15. *And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.*] That is, upon their persons; see the Note Psal. 16. 10. The meaning is, that the dainties that God gave them with a curse, instead of feeding them, brought a deadly consumption upon them: see the Note Num. 11. 33.

Verf. 16. *They envied Moses also in the camp, &c.*] See the Notes Num. 16. 1, 3: *and Aaron the saint of the Lord;* that is, whom the Lord had set apart to that holy office of being the high Priest; so that their insurrection was by consequence against the Lord, Num. 16. 11.

Verf. 24. *Yea, they despised the pleasant land.*] To wit, by refusing to enter into it, & by speaking of it with contempt, Num. 14. 3. *Wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land? &c.* And he calleth it *the pleasant land*, not only because it was such a rich, fruitfull, sweet and delightfull land, *the glory of all lands*, as it is called Eze. 20. 6; but also because God had chosen it to be the peculiar seat of his word & worship, & a sacramental pledge to them of his kingdom of glory, their heavenly inheritance.

Verf. 26. *Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness.*] That is, He threatened, and was ready to strike, and that with great violence; or rather, he swore that he would destroy them, Numb. 14. 21, 28. for which see the Note Deut. 32. 40.

Verf. 27. *To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.*] Because, though we find not this branch of Gods oath in expresse terms, where Moses relates this story of Gods anger against the Israelites, for their refusing to enter into the land of Canaan, yet we find the very same in a manner again affirmed, (only indeed there is no mention of *their seed*) Ezek. 20. 23. *I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countreys,* therefore some conceive that this was thus denounced at that time, though it were not expressed by Moses; and that it was fulfilled, when upon the Israelites presumptuous attempting to enter the land, after God had enjoined them to return back into the wilderness, the Amalekites and the Canaanites smote them and discomfited them, even unto Hormah, Numb. 14. 45, and again after when Arad the Canaanite fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners, Numb. 21. 1. And others hold that this is said, only because under that threatening expressed by Moses, the like was also covertly implied concerning their posterity, in case they should rebell against God as their fathers had done. But I rather think that the true reason of this which is here said concerning the overthrowing of their seed is, because at first God did indeed threaten to destroy the whole people of Israel, and so to scatter them, that they should never be a people or commonwealth by themselves, but that he would make a nation of Moses, Numb. 14. 12, 15; though afterwards, upon the intercession of Moses, he determined to destroy those only that had then murmured, and to bring their children into the promised land.

Verf. 28. *They joyned themselves also unto Baal-Peor, &c.*] That is, Forsaking the Lord, their true husband, they did adulterously prostitute themselves to Baal-Peor, as if he had been their husband; as indeed Baal signifyeth a Lord, or husband. Yet haply the rather is this expression here used, because they did also commit fornication with the daughters of the Idolaters. But see the Notes also Numb. 25. 1, 2, 3. *And ate the sacrifices of the dead;* that is, the sacrifices that were offered to dead stocks and stones, instead of the living God; or to Idols, that were memorials of some that had been famous men amongst them, long since dead and gone.

Verf. 31. *And that was counted unto him for righteousness, &c.*] The meaning is, that God did approve of this fact of Phinehas, though it was done without the warrant of any ordinary authority, and that of his free grace he was pleased with it. And accordingly the drift of the following words, *unto all generations for evermore,* is, to shew that Gods acceptance of this noble act of his was testified unto all generations, by conferring the high priesthood upon him and his posterity for ever: see the Notes Numb. 25. 12, 13.

Verf. 37. *Yea they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.*] See the Notes Lev. 17. 7, and 18. 21, and 2 Kings 16. 3.

Verf. 39.

Verf. 39. *Thus were they defiled with their own works, &c.*] To wit, as a whore is defiled with her whoredomes, as the following words expound it, *and went a whoring with their own inventions*; for which see the Note Judg. 2. 17.

Verf. 47. *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, &c.*] As if he had said, Seeing thou hast thus in all ages been gracious to thy people, notwithstanding their many provocations, afford us, we beseech thee, the like favour in our captivity and dispersion. But see also the Notes above verf. 1. and 6. and 1 Chron. 16. 35.

Verf. 48. *Blessed be the Lord, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 1: *and let all the people say, Amen, praise ye the Lord*; see the Note Psal. 41. 13.

P S A L M CVII.

Verf. 2. **L** *Et the redeemed of the Lord say so, &c.*] The drift of this Psalm is, to set forth Gods praise, in regard of his wonderfull providences towards all mankind; and first, by shewing how miraculously he preserves them in the severall streights whereinto they often fall. And accordingly the Psalmist doth in the first place relate, how miraculously the Lord doth often deliver poor pilgrims and travellers, when loosing their way, or wandring up and down in strange countreys, and in desert places, they fall into great dangers. For that these are *the redeemed of the Lord*, whom here he invites to praise the Lord, is evident in the following description of their miseries verf. 4, 5. where he speaks of their wandring up and down in wildernesses, hungry and thirsty, &c. to wit, such as travelling into forreign parts for merchandise, or any other occasions, or being banished, or otherwise driven by force out of their own countreys; do loose themselves in desolate wildernesses, and so are in danger to fall, or do fall into the hands of robbers, or other enemies that surprize them, and make slaves of them, and yet are afterwards by the mighty power of God delivered from all these miseries: for with reference to their falling into the hands of such enemies is the last clause added, *Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*

Verf. 3. *And gathered them out of the lands, from the East, and from the west, from the North, and from the South.*] In the Hebrew it is, *and from the sea*: whereby though usually in the Scripture *the west* is intended, and that because the mediterranean sea lay on the west of Judea; yet here by *the sea* the South is meant, and that because both the red sea and the great Ocean lay Southward of Judea. But that which is chiefly observable for the understanding of these words is, 1. that the Lord is said to have gathered these lost pilgrims or travellers, that are here stirred up to praise his name, because he fetcheth them in from their banishment, their wandrings or captivity, to their own countrey, or some place of abode, or some place where they may be furnished with things necessary for them: and 2. that it is said that *he gathered them out of the lands, from the East, and from the west, &c.* to imply, that God doth this in all quarters of the world: that we might not think that he speaks only of the desarts of Judea, he shews, that by the speciall providence

of God, men are delivered often out of these streights all the world over.

Verf. 4. *They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, &c.*] That is, having lost their way (which they might easily doe in those sandy desarts, where the winds do usually blow the sands over the waies where men have gone) they wandered up & down, not knowing which way to goe: *they found no city to dwell in;* that is, no place where they might make their abode; or no place inhabited by men, amongst whom they might find any direction or refreshing.

Verf. 5. *Hungry and thirsty, &c.*] To wit, because, having spent their provision, by reason of their long wandring up & down after they had lost their way, no new supply in those solitary desarts was to be had, no not so much as of water to quench their thirst, which in those hot places must needs be great: *their soul fainted in them;* that is, they were continually ready to faint, not only through weaknesse and wearinesse, but also through grief and anguish of spirit.

Verf. 6. *Then they cried unto the Lord, &c.*] This is meant not only of the faithful people of God, (for the Psalmist speaks here of the providences of God towards all mankind) but of all men in generall, who being in great streights, are wont by the very instinct of nature to cry unto God for help: yea and God often hears the cries of such men, both for the clearer discovery of his own goodnesse, and the fuller conviction of their spirits.

Verf. 9. *For he satisfyeth the longing soul, &c.*] That is, he satisfyeth the thirsty with drink, which they longed for: *and filleth the hungry soul with goodnesse;* that is, with good food, see the Note Psal. 103. 5. And thus these two clauses have clear reference to that verf. 5. *hungry and thirsty, &c.*

Verf. 10. *Such as sit in darknesse, &c.*] This is the second instance which the Psalmist gives of Gods wonderful deliverances, namely, of his delivering those that are in prison & bondage. *Such as sit in darknesse, &c.* that is, in dark prisons & dungeons; see the Note Psal. 88. 7: *being bound in affliction and iron;* that is, with iron fetters or chains, which did sorely afflict them, Psal. 105. 18; or, being bound not only with iron chains, but also with the cords of penury, and all manner of afflictions, out of which they can no more free themselves, then they can shake off their fetters; see Job 36. 8.

Verf. 11. *Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord, and contemned the counsel of the most High.*] That is, either the word written, or at least the law of nature written in all mens hearts: see the Note above verf. 6.

Verf. 12. *Therefore he brought down their heart with labour, &c.*] That is, he humbled their proud hearts with sore afflictions & hard bondage; see the Note Psal. 90. 10: *they fell down;* that is, before their enemies, and so became captives; or they fell into thraldome, or lay in great distresse; or, they were dejected in spirit: *and there was none to help;* that is, to comfort or deliver them.

Verf. 17. *Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.*] To wit, with sicknesse, as is clear in the following verses. And this is the third instance here given of Gods miraculous deliverances of men.

Verf. 23. *They that go down to the sea in ships, &c.*] The ground of this expression is, either because the banks of the sea are higher then the waters that beat upon them; or because of the low land which is by the sea side, whether men must goe
down

down from the higher parts of the land, when they intend to go to sea: *that do business in great waters*; to wit, either merchants *that trade by sea*, Rev. 18. 17; or rather marriners & fishermen. And this is the fourth & last instance of Gods miraculous deliverances of men.

Vers. 24. *These see the works of the Lord, & his wonders in the deep.*] Though the sea be full of wonders, yet this is doubtlesse principally meant of those wonders related in the following verse, to wit, how suddenly God raiseth tempests of incredible violence, what mighty mountains of waters there will be then raised in the sea, and how calm the Lord makes all as suddenly again.

Vers. 27. *They reel to & fro, &c.*] To wit, through the swimming of their heads, which is indeed usuall with men that are sea-sick in a storm; or rather the rolling of the ships this way & that, & their being driven about sometimes one way & sometimes another, according as the winds blow, the sea-men having no power to order their ships: *and are at their wits end*; that is, their art and skill fails them, and they know not what course to take.

Vers. 32. *Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, & praise him in the assembly of the elders.*] That is, in the most publick assemblies, as those usually are where the magistrates meet. But withall the elders may be particularly mentioned, not only because such wise men were best able to judge of these wonderfull works of God; but also because there was most need, that the rulers of the people should learn to stand in awe of the mighty power of God.

Vers. 33. *He turneth rivers into a wilderness, &c.*] In the following verses the Psalmist sets forth the providence of God, by shewing the strange and unexpected changes which he often makes in the world; as first here his making fruitfull places barren, and barren places exceeding fruitfull.

Vers. 34. *A fruitfull land into barrenesse, &c.*] In the Hebrew it is, *into salinesse*, for which see the Notes Deut. 29. 23. and Judg. 9. 45.

Vers. 36. *And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, &c.*] To wit, either because those that were very poorly provided for there before, & in a manner famished, do after this live there very comfortably, & in great abundance; or else because poor people, being forced from their native countries by war, oppression or penury, do remove thither, invited by the fruitfulness of the place, *that they may prepare a city for habitation.*

Vers. 38. *He bleisseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, &c.*] This is the second great change here mentioned, which God often makes in the world, to wit, that he mightily encreaseth & advanceth the inhabitants of cities & kingdomes, & then diminisheth & brings them low again. As for the next clause, *& suffereth not their cattel to decrease*, the contrary is thereby implied, to wit, that he doth exceedingly encrease them.

Vers. 40. *He poureth contempt upon princes, & causeth them to wander in the wilderness, &c.*] See the Notes Job 12. 21, 24. And this is the third great change which God often makes in the world, to wit, that he pulls down those that are on high, and raiseth those that are in a low condition.

Vers. 41. *Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.*] That is, exceeding numerous. It may also imply, that God would guide and

protect them, as a shepherd doth his flock, as in opposition to that which was before said of princes, that *he causeth them to wander in the wilderness, &c.*

Verf. 42. *The righteous shall see it, and rejoyce, &c.*] As seeing hereby that it shall be well with them; see the Note Job 22. 19: *and all iniquity shall stop her mouth;* see the Notes Job 5. 16. and Psal. 63. 11.

P S A L M C V I I I.

Verf. 1. **O** *God, my heart is fixed, &c.*] The seven first verses of this Psalm we had before almost word for word Psalm 57. 7, &c. and the rest of this Psalm we had before Psal. 60. 5. for which therefore see the Notes in both those Psalms.

P S A L M C I X.

Verf. 1. **H** *Old not thy peace, O God of my praise.*] Many of our best Expositours take the word *praise* actively, as if he had said, O God whom I desire alwaies to praise, or, O God, who hast alwaies given me occasion to praise thy name, appear in my defence, and be the same to me still, that thou hast alwaies hitherto been, that I may praise thy name. But others take it passively, as if he had said, O Lord, thou art he in whom only I glory, accounting it my greatest praise that I am thy servant, and have an interest in thee, and in whom alone all my praise doth consist, because thou upholdest me in my just cause; whilst others cry out against me, as a perfidious wicked man, I beseech thee appear still in my defence. And indeed this last I conceive the most probable; and that because this seems to be prefixed, as by way of opposition to that which follows in the next verse, *for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitfull are opened against me:* as if he had said, Because wicked men do slander me, I appeal to thee for my justification, as the witness and patron of mine innocency; and therefore whilst they cry out against me with full mouth, as a pestilent enemy to the state, be not thou silent, on whom I wholly depend for the clearing and avenging of mine integrity: and though all the world condemn me, yet as long as thou dost approve me, that is a sufficient praise to me. But however, because it is generally thought that it was Doeg, (or, as some think, Saul) against whom particularly David prayes in this Psalm, as ver. 6, &c. *set thou a wicked man over him, &c.* it is most probable that this Psalm was composed in the time of Davids troubles under Saul: and withall, because one clause of this Psalm verf. 8. *let another take his office or charge,* is by the Apostle Peter applyed to Judas Act. 1. 20. therefore it is also clear, that David speaks here of himself in the person of Christ, as foretelling by the spirit of prophesy, that it would hereafter fare with Christ, as it then fared with him: and so in reference to Christ, the drift of these words may be the same with that branch of Christs prayer Joh. 17. 1. *Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee, &c.*

Verf. 2. *For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitfull are opened against me, &c.*]

me, &c.] See the foregoing Note, as also the Notes 1 Sam. 24. 9. and Psal. 43. 1. In reference to Christ, this may be meant of those clamours of the Jews, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*, as likewise of the flatteries of Judas and others, when they meant to betray him: and so likewise the following words, *they have spoken against me with a lying tongue*, may be meant of the many horrible slanders which they cast upon Christ.

Verf. 3. *They compassed me about also with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.*] See Joh. 15. 24, 25.

Verf. 4. *For my love, they are my adversaries; but I gave my self to prayer.*] That is, I think not of requiting evil for evil, but flying to God by prayer is my only defence and refuge; see the Note Psal. 35. 13. and 69. 13. How this was accomplished in Christ, and particularly in his praying for those that crucified him, Luk. 23. 34. we may easily conceive.

Verf. 6. *Set thou a wicked man over him, &c.*] This may be taken as spoken indefinitely of every one of his enemies before-mentioned (and some conceive it was accomplished, when the Romans came to tyrannize with such horrible cruelty over the Jews;) or of some one that was the chief and the most mischievous amongst them, the head and the ring-leader of all the rest. And therefore taking the words as spoken by David with reference to himself, the most Expositours hold that this is meant of Doeg; who did not only incense Saul against him more than any of his enemies besides, but also caused a whole city and family of the priests to be cruelly slaughtered for his sake. But taking them as spoken with reference to Christ, it is clearly meant of Judas, *who was guide to them that took Jesus*, Act. 1. 16. and to whom Peter doth expressly apply one branch of these curses, Act. 1. 20. As for this first imprecation, it is meant of appointing some wicked cruell tyrant to exercise dominion over him at his will and pleasure. And the very same in effect may be intended also in the next clause, if we read it, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and let an adversary stand at his right hand*; that is, let him have some powerfull and bitter enemy continually with him, that may diligently watch and vex and pursue him, and that may continually oppose and hinder him in all that he undertakes: for standing may imply all assiduity and diligence in doing these things; & the standing of an enemy at the right hand of a man, gives him an advantage to hinder such a one in any thing he would doe. Yet I know there are some Expositours that understand both clauses in a more restrained sense: *Set thou a wicked man over him*, to wit, to be his judge; *and let an adversary stand at his right hand*, to wit, to accuse him. But now reading the second clause, as it is in our Bibles, *and let Satan stand at his right hand*, that which is hereby desired must needs be, that the devil might be still powerfull with him to lead him into any wickednesse, and afterwards to accuse him, and to terrify him, and at last to drag him to eternall perdition: and indeed of Judas it is expressly noted what power the devil had over him; as that it was the devil that put it into his heart to betray Christ, Joh. 13. 2, and verf. 27. that *after the sop Satan entered into him*. And just indeed it was that he should be subject to the devil, that would not be subject to Christ, As concerning the lawfulness of these curses, see the Note Psal. 28. 4.

Verf. 7.

Verf. 7. *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned, let his prayer become sin.* That is, If he begs for mercy, instead of finding mercy thereby, let his entreaties enrage the judge the more, and provoke him to greater wrath against him. But this may be also understood with reference to Gods tribunal, *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned, &c.* that is, When he shall at his going out of this world be judged by the Lord, let him be condemned without mercy; and though he shall then pray to God for the pardon of his sins, yet let them not be pardoned, but let his prayer adde to the number of his sins.

Verf. 8. *Let his daies be few, &c.* That is, Let him live but a while after his sin; or rather, Let him be cut off by an untimely death: which how it was accomplished in Judas, we see Matth. 27. 5. and with reference to this place Christ spake that of Judas Joh. 17. 12. *those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled:* and so likewise the Apostle Peter expressly said, Act. 1. 20. that the next clause, *and let another take his office,* was to be accomplished by chusing another Apostle into the room of Judas; yet it may be meant of Doeg, with reference to that office which he held under Saul, 1 Sam. 21. 17. and which doubtlesse puffed him up, and made him the more insolently cruell to David and others.

Verf. 10. *Let his children be continuall vagabonds and begge: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.* That is, Let them come out of their plundered houses to begge bread of those that passe by; or, being driven out of their dwellings, where they were spoyled of all they had, let them go about from one place to another begging for bread.

Verf. 11. *Let the extortioner catch all he hath, &c.* To wit, by intangling him with bonds, and other fraudulent oppressive courtes, as with so many pits and snares, and thereby stripping him by degrees of all that he hath: *and let the stranger spoil his labour;* that is, let him strip him of those things he hath gotten by much labour. And by *the stranger* may be meant, either any that having no interest in what he hath, do only surprize them by fraud or violence; or else spoilers of some forreign nation, who when they come to pillage men, are wont to make clean work, and to shew no pity.

Verf. 14. *Let the iniquity of his father be remembred with the Lord, &c.* That is, Let him be punished not only for his own sins, but also for the sins of his progenitours.

Verf. 15. *Let them be before the Lord continually, &c.* That is, Let their sins never be forgiven; or, Let the Lord be continually punishing the sins of his parents in him and his posterity, till they be no more remembred amongst men.

Verf. 16. *Because that he remembred not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, &c.* That is, me and others, that are distressed and afflicted, see the Notes Psal. 40. 17, and 69. 29: *that he might even slay the broken in heart;* that is, the man that was sorely afflicted in spirit, because of his distresses: and indeed of Christ it is noted, that he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, Isa. 53. 3. and that he was broken in heart for our sins, *My soul, saith he, is exceeding sorrowfull even unto death,* As for that expression, *Because that he remembred not to shew mercy,*

mercy, it implyes, either 1. that the kindnesse that his enemy had formerly received from him might have put him in mind to have shewed mercy to him; or 2. that the extremity of misery he was in might have stirred up in his enemy thoughts of pity towards him, as naturally men are wont to take compassion of those that are in a very sad condition; and that because he did not this, therefore it was just that God should not shew the least mercy to him or his. And how truly this might be said concerning the mercilesse dealing both of Judas and the Jews with Christ, we may easily conceive.

Verf. 17. *As he loved cursing, &c.*] To wit, say some Expositours, 1. in that he delighted to denounce curses and imprecations against men; or 2. in that he did wittingly and wilfully runne on in those waies of wickednesse, which must needs bring Gods curse upon him, (which was as if he had desired Gods curse) and would not walk in those waies wherein he might have been certainly blessed (as it was with Judas, that for a little mony betrayed his Saviour, and with the Jews in generall, that despised and crucified him, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; crying out, *His bloud be upon us and upon our children*;) or 3. which I like the best, in that he delighted to doe all the mischief he could to the godly, and took no delight at all in doing them good: *so let it come to him*; that is, let that be done to him, which he hath done to others.

Verf. 18. *As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, &c.*] To wit, in that he practised it as constantly, as men wear their garments; or, in that he loved it, and delighted & gloried in it, as some men do in their costly apparell; see the Note Psal. 73. 6: *so let it come into his bowels like water*; that is, as water doth when a man drinks, or when a man is sunk under water, & then it runs into his body: *and like oyl into his bones*; that is, as oyl which is of that efficacy, that it will pierce to the very bones and marrow. And the meaning of this is, that he desires, either that the curse of God might fall upon him in great measure, as men pour down water when they are thirsty, or as men, when they have aches in their bones, or upon other occasions, use much ointments; or that it might seize upon him not only outwardly in outward calamities, but also inwardly in his soul, his mind & conscience, as by continued horrid terrours, and by being delivered up to a reprobate sense, &c.

Verf. 19. *Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, &c.*] See the Note Job 8. 22: *and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually*; that is, let the curse of God lye close upon him, and cleave fast unto him.

Verf. 20. *Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord, and of them that speake evil against my soul.*] That is, against me; or rather, that by their slanders seek to take away my life.

Verf. 21. *But doe thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy names sake, &c.*] See the Notes 1 Sam. 12. 22. and Psal. 25. 11: *because thy mercy is good*; see the Note Psal. 69. 16.

Verf. 22. *For I am poor and needy, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 40. 17. and Psal. 69. 29: *and my heart is wounded within me*; that is, I am in a manner a dead man; or rather, my heart is broken with sorrow: which how it was verified in Christ, we see, Matth. 26. 38. and Luk. 22. 44.

Verf. 23. *I am gone like the shadow, when it declineth, &c.*] That is, swiftly & suddenly.

denly; for no sooner is the sun covered with a cloud, but presently the shadow is gone: but see the Note also Psal. 102. 11. *I am tossed up and down as the locust*: to wit, because as locusts are continually leaping up and down, yea and are often carried away by the winds, Exod. 10. 19. and driven away by men, as being mischievous, hurtfull creatures; so was David persecuted from one place to another, and so was Christ hurried up and down from one tribunal to another; both being looked upon as mischievous persons, not to be endured in the places where they lived. Yet because locusts have dry and thin bodies, some think that in this compariton the Psalmist doth also allude to that leanness of body, whereof he speaks in the next verse.

Vers. 24. *My knees are weak through fasting, &c.*] To wit, for want of meat; or through grief and anguish of mind, which makes men oftentimes even to loath their food, Psal. 102. 4.

Vers. 27. *That they may know, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verse prayed for deliverance, *Help me, O Lord my God, &c.* he adds, *That they may know that this is thy hand*: as if he had said, Let my deliverance be such, that mine enemies themselves may see, that there is a divine hand in it; or, By my deliverance let mine enemies come to know, that this which I now suffer is of thee, by thine appointment and by thy disposing providence; and that thou didst but make use of them as thine instruments for my correction: which fully agrees with that which is said of Christ Isa. 53. 10. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.*

Vers. 31. *For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, &c.*] To wit, even then when he may seem to have cast him off; which David speaks with reference to himself; but see also the Note Psal. 16. 8: *to save him from those that condemn his soul*; that is, that unjustly censure and slander him; or, that seek to take away his life by judging him to be a malefactor, not worthy to live, and so proceeding against him in a judiciary way: which we know was the condition both of David and Christ.

P S A L M CX.

Vers. 1. **T***He Lord said unto my Lord, &c.*] Though this might be taken as spoken by the people of Israel concerning David, who was indeed a glorious type of Christ, and did by the mighty help of God subdue all his enemies round about him, see the Note Psal. 89. 27; yet I rather take it to be only a prophesy concerning Christ: and that 1. because there are some passages in this Psalm, which cannot with any shew of probability be applied to David, as that vers. 4. for how can it be said that David was a priest, much lesse a priest for ever? or that there was a priesthood after another order, *the order of Melchizedek*, erected by God at that time, when the priesthood after the order of Aaron was still settled in the Church? 2. Because our Saviour himself alledged this very Text to the Pharisees, Matth. 22. 43, as a passage commonly acknowledged to be meant concerning the promised Messiah, and that to prove that he was to be more
then

then mere man: for when the Pharisees had acknowledged, that Christ when he came was to be the son of David, our Saviour objected this very place to them, *How then, saith he, doth David in spirit, (that is, by the spirit of prophesy) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thy enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?* and the Evangelist adds there immediately vers. 46. that *no man was able to answer him a word*; which was a clear proof, that in those times this was generally acknowledged to be a prophesy concerning Christ, or else the Pharisees would soon have objected that. 3. Because the Apostle Heb. 1. 13. doth in effect say, that no angel, and therefore much more no mere man, could be capable of that honour which is promised in these words; *To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footstool?* and 4. Because the Apostle Peter doth expressly say Act. 2. 34. 35, that it is not the people that speak here of David their Lord, but that it is *David himself* that speaks these words, *The Lord said unto my Lord*; and that those words, *Sit thou on my right hand, &c.* could not be meant of David, because David was not taken up into heaven as Christ was, *For David, saith he, is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, untill I make thy foes thy footstool.* These words therefore, *The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.* are doubtlesse a prophesy concerning the kingdome of Christ: for the fuller understanding whereof we must know, 1. that David calls Christ here his Lord, both as he was God, and as he was his King and Redeemer; 2. that by the Lords saying that which is here mentioned to Christ, Davids Lord, is meant, that God the Father had from all eternity decreed this concerning Christ his Son, and did in time make known this his decree and promise, both to Christ and to his Church; 3. that by Christs sitting at the right hand of God the Father is meant, the advancement of Christ, as he was both God and man in one person, to the supremest place of power and authority, of honour and heavenly glory, under God the Father: for this word sitting implies reigning with continuance, after he had finished the work of mans redemption, even as a prince that sits in his throne of glory; and Gods right hand notes the next place of power and glory under God, or, as some expresse it, a place of equall power and authority with God, even that he should be advanced *far above all principality and power and might and dominion*, Eph. 1. 21. and should from the highest place of heavenly glory, as Mediatour, and his Fathers Deputy, reign over the whole world, which is therefore called *the right hand of the majesty*, Heb. 1. 3. and *the right hand of the power of God*, Luk. 22. 69: and 4. that in those words, *untill I make thine enemies thy footstool*, though the act of subduing Christs enemies be ascribed to God the Father, yet we cannot thence inferre that Christ doth not himself subdue his enemies; for *what things soever he*, that is, the Father *doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise*; only acts of power are usually ascribed to God the Father, not only because Christ, as the Mediatour, is assisted by the Father in all that he doeth, but also because whatsoever the Son doeth, he doeth it by that power which he hath from the Father by his eternall generation. And as for this word *untill*, though it doth not alwaies imply a certain prefixed time, unto which that which is affirmed shall be, and no

longer, as Gen. 23. 15. and Psal. 112. 8. may seem rather to imply a certain determinate time: for though there is no question, but that Christ shall reign with God the Father unto all eternity, see the Note Psal. 45. 6; yet because it is as certain, that when death, the last enemy of Christ, is once wholly subdued, he shall no longer reign as he doth now, to wit, as a Mediatour, and as his Fathers Deputy, gathering and defending his Church against her enemies, and interceding with his Father in her behalf as formerly; but as one true God, of the same essence with the Father, he shall reign without any externall means or instruments, without word or Sacraments, without enemies or hindrances, &c. therefore here, I say, this word *untill* may imply, that Christs kingdome as Mediatour should continue till all his enemies were subdued, and that then he should voluntarily resign it into the hands of the Father, which is that the Apostle saith 1 Cor. 15. 24, 28.

Verf. 2. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, &c.*] That is, thy mighty and powerfull kingdome, (the scepter, the sign, being put for the thing signified;) or, thy strong scepter, the scepter whereby thou dost shew forth thy power; that is, the preaching of the Gospel, accompanied with the mighty working of the spirit of Christ, for this is the scepter whereby Christ doth mightily subdue and govern his people: and therefore is the Gospel called *the word of the kingdome*, Matth. 13. 19. and *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*, Rom. 1. 16. And accordingly the summe of that which is here said is, that though the Gospel should be first published, and the spirit should be first poured forth upon the Apostles in Jerusalem, Act. 2. 4. yet from thence it was to be spread abroad all the world over; and so, though the foundations of his kingdome should be laid in Zion, yet it should be extended afterwards unto the farthest parts of the earth: see the Notes Psal. 2. 6, 8. As for the following clause, *rule thou in the midst of thine enemies*, the meaning is, that Christ should rule as King, even where the power of his enemies was greatest, and maugre all their malice and rage against him; and that not only by subduing and destroying his enemies at his pleasure, but also by gathering a people to himself, and governing them by his word and spirit: which is more clearly expressed in the following verses.

Verf. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, &c.*] That is, when thou shalt goe forth as a mighty king to conquer and subdue the world, and shalt make thy Gospel to work mightily upon the consciences of those that hear it, then shall thine elect people with all readinesse and willingnesse submit to thee, follow and obey thee. As for the following words, *in the beauties of holinesse from the womb of the morning; thou hast the dew of thy youth* (which is acknowledged by all Expositours to be one of the hardest passages in all the Psalms) for the understanding thereof we must know, First, that by *the beauties of holinesse* may

may be meant, 1. Gods holy Temple, or (in allusion thereto) the holy assemblies of Gods people, for which see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 29. Psal. 27. 4. and 29. 2; and then the meaning is this, that in the day of Christs power his people should willingly gather themselves together, to worship him in his Temple, or in the place of the holy assemblies: or 2. the amiableness that is in the holy wayes of Christianity; and then this may be added, as the cause of the peoples coming in so willingly to the service of Christ: or 3. which I like the best, that glorious holinesse wherewith all true Christians are adorned; and then this clause is added to set forth the glory of that people, that should so willingly come in and submit themselves to Christ, namely, that they should come in to him in *the beauties of holinesse*, that is, adorned with all the holy graces of Gods spirit; as souldiers, that for the honour of their Generall, do goe forth to serve him in their bravest attire, or as the Priests in the Law did wait upon God in their holy garments, beautifull and glorious; the holinesse of the Church being that which indeed makes her *beautifull as Tirzah, and comely as Ierusalem*, Cant. 6. 4. Secondly, those words *from the womb of the morning*, may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *more then the womb of the morning*; and then they must needs be referred to the foregoing words, as making known that *the beauties of holinesse*, wherewith the people of Christ should be adorned, should be more then are the beauties of the morning, where it first breaks forth. But now if we read this clause, as it is in our Bibles, *from the womb of the morning*, then may these words be referred either to the foregoing words, *in the beauties of holinesse*; and so that which is hereby intended is this, that from the first shining forth of Christ upon his people in the preaching of the Gospel, (and Christ is indeed called *the bright morning star*, Revel. 22. 16. and *the day-spring from on high*, Luk. 2. 78.) or, from the first forming of Christ in their hearts, they should with much willingnesse present themselves before Christ in his service, being adorned gloriously with the graces of his spirit, as with clothing of wrought gold and raiment of needle-work: or else it may rather be referred to the following words, *from the womb of the morning; thou hast the dew of thy youth*; (for many learned men conceive that the *Colon*, or middle point that is in our Bibles betwixt these two clauses, is only a distinction for convenient reading, not a disjunction of the sense;) and then the meaning of the words is clearly this, that look as the dew is born out of the womb of the cool morning-aire, & so distilleth down insensibly with innumerable drops upon the earth, (and indeed the like figurative expressions we find elsewhere, as Job 38. 28, 29. *Hath the rain a father? or, who hath begotten the drops of the dew? out of whose womb came the ice? & the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?*) so from the first breaking forth of the sun of righteousness in the morning-light of the Gospel, an heavenly offspring shall be suddenly born unto Christ, begotten by the word and spirit, in innumerable multitudes, as are the crytall drops

of the dew which in a morning cover the earth. They are the children that are begotten unto Christ that are here called his *youth*, because they are made new creatures, and are as *new-born babes*, 1 Pet. 2. 2: and they are compared to the dew, *thou hast the dew of thy youth*, that is, thy young and new-born people are as the dew, because there should be an innumerable company of them, and because they should be suddenly brought forth, by a heavenly calling, upon the first preaching of the Gospel, as the dew that distils down from heaven upon earth. And indeed this explication is very suitable to other places of Scripture where the like expressions are used: as Isa. 54. 1, and 66. 8, 9; but especially that Mich. 5. 7. *And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showres upon the grasse, that tairieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.*

Verf. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.*] The chief thing intended in these words is, that whereas there should certainly be an end of Aarons priesthood, as if the Lord had repented of the honour he had conferred upon that family, it should not be so with Christ; for his priesthood should be an eternall and unchangeable priesthood. But see also the Notes Gen. 14. 18.

Verf. 5. *The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.*] Here the Psalmist sets forth the victories of Christ, as in reference to that which was said before verf. 1. to wit, that God would make his enemies his footstool. *The Lord at thy right hand* (see the Note Psal. 16. 8.) *shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath*; that is, though he may forbear them a while, yet there will a day come, when his wrath will break forth against his mightiest enemies, and he will utterly destroy them. And indeed, though some under this word *kings* include Christs spirituall enemies, as Satan, *the Prince of this world*, Joh. 16. 11. and sin, which reigneth as a king over carnall men, Rom. 6. 12. and death, which is called *the king of terrors*, Job 18. 14; yet it is chiefly meant of the mighty men of this world. The greatest question is, of whom and to whom those words are spoken, *The Lord at thy right hand*, &c. And for this we must know, that they may be understood, 1. as spoken to God the Father concerning Christ; as if it had been said, O God the Father of all power and majesty, *the Lord*, thy Benjamin, the son at thy right hand, (as was said of Christ verf. 1.) *shall strike through kings*, &c: or 2. as spoken to Christ concerning God the Father; O Christ, the Lord thy father shall stand by thee at thy right hand, to aid thee, and to destroy all thine enemies for thee: or 3. as spoken to the people of God concerning Christ; as if he had said, Be not dismayed, O ye servants of Christ; for as the Lord your Saviour sits at the right hand of his Father in glory and majesty, so he will also be at your right hand, to assist and prosper you, and to execute judgement on all your enemies.

Verf. 6. *He shall judge among the heathen, &c.*] That is, He shall rule as king amongst the heathen; or rather, he shall punish and destroy his enemies of all nations, not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also: which is clear by the following words, *he shall fill the places with dead bodies*, that is, with dead bodies lying unburied;

ried; which also may imply the multitude of the slain, in that they that were left alive should not be able to bury their dead: *he shall wound the heads over many countries*; that is, he shall destroy the mightiest of princes that oppose him.

Verf. 7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way, &c.*] Some conceive that hereby the havock that Christ should make amongst his enemies is farther set forth; for they make the meaning of the words to be this, that Christ should make such a slaughter amongst them, that as a conquerour he might drink the blood of his enemies, which should run down as a brook or stream, according to that expression Numb. 23. 24. *Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lye down untill he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain:* and hereby, they say, is signified Christs satiating, refreshing and delighting himself in the destruction of his enemies. But there are two other expositions that are far more probable; and indeed of these it is hard to say which is the best. The first is, that hereby the Psalmist sets forth the alacrity, heat and fervency of Christ in pursuing his enemies: *He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head*; that is, being in the pursuit of his enemies, he shall no where stay to rest and refresh himself, but quenching his thirst a little out of any brook that he meets with in the way, he shall presently lift up his head again, and shall again follow his enemies close at the heels. And this exposition some learned Expositours do the rather approve, because by the coherence of these words with the two foregoing verses, it may seem, that the Psalmist doth still prosecute his prophecies concerning the victories of Christ. But then the second is, that these words are meant, the first branch of his humiliation or passion, and the second of his resurrection and exaltation. For by those words, *He shall drink of the brook in the way*, they say is meant, either 1. the poor and mean condition, wherein Christ lived as a pilgrim and stranger here in this world, like that of those, that have no other drink, but the water that runs in brooks and rivers, to quench their thirst, (wherein they say also that David, whilst he lived obscurely in desolate places for fear of Saul, was a type of Christ;) and then by the lifting up of his head must be meant, the glory whereto afterwards Christ was exalted: or 2. the death and passion of Christ. As waters in the Scripture do usually signify afflictions and sorrows, see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 5. and Psal. 42. 7; so drinking of these waters may signify, either that a man is drowned and overwhelmed in these floods of afflictions, because when a man is drowned, the water will run into his bowels, as we may see in that Psal. 69. 1, 2. *Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul, &c.* for which see the Notes there; or else, a voluntary submission to the afflictions which a man undergoes; according to that of our Saviour, Joh. 12. 11. *the cup which my father giveth me, shall I not drink it?* But now, as drinking of a cup may signify the undergoing of a certain portion of afflictions and miseries; so on the other side, drinking of the brook may signify an undergoing of the highest degrees of all miseries and sorrows, because a brook of waters may signify a confluence of all kind of miseries. So that when it is said here of Christ, *He shall drink of the brook in the way*, the meaning is, that all the miseries due to men for sin should, as a torrent, come pouring in upon him. Having spoken so much in the foregoing verses con-

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cerning the victories of Christ, under those metaphoricall expressions of striking through kings, of filling the places with dead bodies, &c. lest we should hence think that his kingdome should be an outward worldly kingdome, the Psalmist doth therefore adde this, concerning his suffering, and so entring into glory: *He shall drink of the brook in the way*; that is, as he passeth through this world, or, whilst he is in the way of accomplishing the will of God for the salvation of men, passing through this vail of tears, he shall drink of the troubled brook of many bitter sufferings, he shall undergoe all the wrath that was due to man for sin: *therefore shall he lift up the head*; that is, he shall rise victoriously out of the grave, he shall triumphantly ascend up into heaven, and shall there sit down at the right hand of his Father. See also the Note for this phrase of lifting up the head, Psal. 3. 3.

P S A L M CXI.

Verf. 1. **P** *Raise ye the Lord, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 25. 1. This is the first of the Alphabetical Psalms, wherein we have all the Hebrew letters perfectly according to their order without omission of any: and they are in the beginning of every clause of the Psalm, the first eight verses being divided into two clauses, and the two last into three. And just so it is again in the following Psalm.

Verf. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.*] As if he had said, Though profane ungodly men discern not the transcendent excellency that is in Gods works, and that because they regard them not, and therefore search not into them; yet they that take delight in searching into them, they discover, and in a good measure understand, the exquisite excellency that is therein.

Verf. 3. *His work is honourable and glorious, &c.*] Some understand this peculiarly of the glorious work of Gods delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, because they conceive the Psalmist speaks of this in the following verses. But I rather take it as spoken generally, that whatever God doeth is full of majesty and glory. And (which the Psalmist here adds, because therein consists the chief glory of his works) *his righteousness endureth for ever*; that is, whatever God doeth, he doeth it in faithfulness and righteousness unto his people; yea even then when he may seem to doe that which is contrary to what he hath promised them.

Verf. 4. *He hath made his wonderfull works to be remembred.*] To wit, by his word given them, wherein those wonderfull works of his are recorded; or by those memorials of his glorious works, which he ordained to be kept amongst them, such as were the pot of manna, the rod of Aaron, and the festivals which they were appointed to observe, as the Pascheover, the Pentecost, the feast of Tabernacles, &c; or because the works that God wrought for the Israelites were so exceeding wonderfull, that they were not only worthy for ever to be remembred, but such indeed as that it was not possible they should ever be forgotten.

Verf. 5.

Verf. 5. *He hath given meat unto them that fear him, &c.*] That is, to his people Israel: and he useth this expression, *unto them that fear him*, either because they were then the only people that worshipped God in a right manner; or because what he did for them, was done for their sakes amongst them that did truly fear him. As for the mercy here spoken of, *He hath given meat unto them*, either it may be meant in generall, of Gods providing food convenient for them that have feared him in all ages, as he did for Elijah, and others; or rather more particularly, of Gods feeding the Israelites in the wilderness with manna from heaven. And the reason of this is given in the next words, *he will ever be mindfull of his covenant*; because of the covenant he had made with them God did this, though they were a murmuring and rebellious people.

Verf. 7. *The works of his hands are verity and judgement, &c.*] That is, All that God doeth in the government of his Church is full of truth and faithfulness, exactly according to what he hath promised, and full of judgement, as being exactly just in every regard. And this some conceive may be added in particular reference to that work of God mentioned in the foregoing verse, in giving the Israelites *the heritage of the heathen*; wherein God approved his truth, in performing the promise he had made to his people, and his justice, in rooting out those wicked nations. As for the next clause, *all his commandments are sure*, (for which see the Note Psal. 19.7.) I conceive that under this word *his commandments*, both the promises and threatnings annexed to his commandments must necessarily be comprehended: and so they may be said to be *sure*, both because they do surely reveal the will of God to us; and because what is promised and threatned therein shall certainly come to passe. However, this clause seems to be added to that which went before concerning Gods works, purposely to shew what a clear agreement there is betwixt his works and his word; his works continually making good the sure truth of all that he hath revealed in his word & commandments.

Verf. 8. *They stand fast for ever and ever, &c.*] That is, God hath established his commandments that they shall never be changed, but they shall be found perpetually true, together with all the promises and threatnings annexed thereto, whatever carnall reason may in the hour of temptation judge to the contrary: *and are done in truth and uprightness*; that is, they are composed and ordained according to the exact rule of truth and righteousness, so that they cannot be charged with the least falshood or unrighteousness.

Verf. 9. *He sent redemption unto his people, &c.*] Many understand this particularly of the Lords delivering the Israelites out of Egypt by the hand of Moses, whom he sent unto them, and that because in the next words, *he hath commanded his covenant for ever*, he seems to speak of the covenant which God made with them at the giving of the Law, which was presently upon their deliverance out of Egypt. But yet it may be meant more generally, of all the deliverances of the like nature which God had afforded his people, and that as they were shadows of their Redemption by Christ; whence it is that the Psalmist speaks in the next words of the covenant which God made with them for life eternall, which was grounded on that great work of Christs Redemption, and whereto they were strongly obliged,

because he had so redeemed them. As for the expression here used, *he hath commanded his covenant for ever*, see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 15: and for the following clause, *holy & reverend is his Name*, that is added, as an argument to stir up men to be careful of keeping covenant with God.

Verf. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, &c.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, that Gods name was *holy and reverend*, hence the Psalmist takes occasion to presse upon men the fear of God, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning*, that is, the foundation, *of wisdom*; there is never any true wisdom in men till they begin to fear God: *a good understanding have all they that doe his commandments*; the wisdom of others deserves not comparatively the name of understanding: *his praise endureth for ever*; that is, the praise, the approbation, and the glorious reward, which such a man receives from God; or rather, the praise of God.

P S A L M CXII.

Verf. 2. **B**lessed is the man that feareth the Lord.] By describing the blisse of those that fear God, the Psalmist seems to make good what was said in the close of the foregoing Psalm, *that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*.

Verf. 2. *His seed shall be mighty upon earth, &c.*] That is, exceeding numerous, and of great power in every regard: *the generation of the upright shall be blessed*; see the Note Psal. 37. 26.

Verf. 3. *Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth for ever.*] Several waies is this last clause understood by Expositours. For 1. some take it to be added in the praise of the man that feareth God; to wit, that notwithstanding he abounds in wealth, yet he is not corrupted thereby, as many are, but still holds fast his righteousness: 2. others understand it of his renown amongst men; to wit, that though men may seek to overcloud his righteousness with false accusations, yet it shall still shine forth gloriously, and be for ever renowned amongst men: 3. others conceive it is added, as the cause why there is still wealth and riches in the house of the man that feareth God; to wit, because whilst the iniquity of the wicked, both in getting and using their riches, doth soon wast their great estates, his is preserved by his constant righteousness: and 4. others understand it of his perseverance in the waies of righteousness, and the never-failing reward thereof.

Verf. 4. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darknesse, &c.*] And that several waies: as 1. when they are for a time under great distresse and heavinesse, and yet then God brings them into a prosperous condition again, or gives them much joy after their heavinesse; 2. when God keeps them free, in times of some common calamity; and 3. when they are inwardly cheared with the consolations of Gods spirit, even in their greatest afflictions. Wicked men even in the sunshine of their greatest prosperity, not having any assurance of Gods favour, are indeed under darknesse, and in their distresses they are quite overwhelmed with sorrow; but then the man that fears God is full of joy, through the light of Gods countenance

renance shining into his heart, even under the darkness of his saddest calamities: see the Note Elth. 8. 16. As for the following words, *he is gracious, and full of compassions, and righteous*, though many Expositours hold that they are spoken of God, and that herein a reason is given, why *men are upright, whose hearts are in darkness*, namely, because God is gracious &c; yet methinks the dependence of this clause upon the foregoing words shews clearly that it is spoken of the upright man there mentioned, this being the reason given why he be not in darkness, namely, because the upright man is *gracious, &c.*

Verf. 5. *A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth; he will guide his affair with discretion.*] It is in the Hebrew, *with judgement*, that is, justly and judiciously: see the Note Psal. 25. 9. But in our Bibles it is rendered, *with discretion*, which consists in many things: as in ordering his affairs and estate with such frugality and wisdom, that he may still have to give to the poor; in considering when and where it is fit to give, and when and where to lend; in not being too prodigal, nor too penurious; in proportioning his charity according to the persons to whom he affords it; and many other particulars of the like nature.

Verf. 6. *Surely he shall not be moved for ever.*] See the Notes Psal. 15. 5. and 113. and 55. 22.

Verf. 9. *He hath dispersed, &c.*] To wit, by distributing his alms amongst many, and that with a full hand and cheerfully, as the husbandman scatters his seed when he sows his land. And so though his alms be given away, yet his righteousness remains, as it followeth in the next words, *he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever*: for which see the Note above verf. 3. *His horn shall be exalted with honour*: see the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 1. and 2 Sam. 22. 3.

Verf. 10. *The desire of the wicked shall perish.*] This may be understood generally, of Gods frustrating all the carnall desires of wicked men: yet because in the foregoing words the Psalmist speaks of their fretting at the prosperity of the righteous, *The wicked shall see it, and be grieved, &c.* it is most probable, that these words are also more particularly meant of the disappointment of all the plots and devices, which the wicked desired to have effected for the ruine of the righteous.

P S A L M CXIII.

Verf. 1. **P**raise, O ye servants of the Lord.] The Levites may hereby be more peculiarly intended, whose special office it was continually to sing forth the praises of God; but all the faithfull servants of God may be comprehended.

Verf. 3. *From the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the Lords Name is to be praised.*] That is, all the world over; to wit, because the glory of God is manifestly discovered in his works all the world over. Yet herein may also be implied, that all nations were to have the glory of God in the work of mans Redemption discovered unto them by the preaching of the Gospel.

Verf. 4. *The Lord is high above all nations, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 97. 9. A chief thing intended is, that God far excels in his majesty and glory all the great ones that

because he had so redeemed them. As for the expression here used, *he hath commanded his covenant for ever*, see the Notes 1 Chron. 16. 15: and for the following clause, *holy & reverend is his Name*, that is added, as an argument to stir up men to be careful of keeping covenant with God.

Verf. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, &c.*] Having said in the foregoing verse, that Gods name was *holy and reverend*, hence the Psalmist takes occasion to presse upon men the fear of God, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning*, that is, the foundation, *of wisdom*; there is never any true wisdom in men till they begin to fear God: *a good understanding have all they that doe his commandments*; the wisdom of others deserves not comparatively the name of understanding: *his praise endureth for ever*; that is, the praise, the approbation, and the glorious reward, which such a man receives from God; or rather, the praise of God.

P S A L M CXII.

Verf. 2. **B**lessed is the man that feareth the Lord.] By describing the blisse of those that fear God, the Psalmist seems to make good what was said in the close of the foregoing Psalm, *that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*.

Verf. 2. *His seed shall be mighty upon earth, &c.*] That is, exceeding numerous, and of great power in every regard: *the generation of the upright shall be blessed*; see the Note Psal. 37. 26.

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Verf. 6. *Surely he shall not be moved for ever.*] See the Notes Psal. 15. 5, and 16. 8, and 55. 22.

Verf. 9. *He hath dispersed, &c.*] To wit, by distributing his alms amongst many, and that with a full hand and chearfully, as the husbandman scatters his seed when he sows his land. And so though his alms be given away, yet his righteousness remains, as it followeth in the next words, *he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever*: for which see the Note above verf. 3. *His horn shall be exalted with honour*: see the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 1. and 2 Sam. 22. 3.

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P S A L M CXIII.

Verf. 1. **P**raise, O ye servants of the Lord.] The Levites may hereby be more peculiarly intended, whose speciall office it was continually to sing forth the praises of God; but all the faithfull servants of God may be comprehended.

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Verf. 4. *The Lord is high above all nations, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 97. 9. A chief thing intended is, that God far excels in his majesty and glory all the great ones

that are in the world. *And his glory above the heavens*: see the Note Psal. 8. 1.

Who is like unto the Lord? &c.] See the Note Exod. 15. 11.

Verf. 6. *Who humbleth himself to behold, &c.*] That is, to undertake the care and government of *the things that are in heaven*; so that, as glorious creatures as the angels are, it is an abasement to the most high God to mind or regard them: *and in the earth*; yea the meanest of them, as is expressed in the following verse, *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, &c.*

Verf. 8. *That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.*] Where it is a greater honour to be a prince, then to be a prince elsewhere, and a greater advantage in other regards; because of Gods special favour to them above other princes, and the great things that God usually doeth for his people above other nations.

Verf. 9. *He maketh the barren woman to keep house, &c.*] To wit, by giving her many children, thereby to make up a full family: see the Note Psal. 68. 6.

P S A L M CXIV.

Verf. 1. **W**hen Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of a strange language.] See the Note Psal. 81. 5.

Verf. 2. *Judah was his Sanctuary, &c.*] That is, The children of Israel (the chief of the tribes being here put for the whole body of the people) became a holy people unto the Lord, being sanctified and set apart from all other nations to be a peculiar people unto himself, in whom he would be glorified, amongst whom he would make himself known, be worshipped and served, as in his temple and Sanctuary; according to that 2 Cor. 6. 16. *ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and Israel his dominion*; that is, they became a people subject unto his dominion, over whom he would rule as their king by his word and spirit. And this is said to have been done, when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, because then, by the many miracles which God wrought for them, he made it manifest that he had taken them to be a peculiar people unto himself, and because by that great work of their Redemption he had indeed purchased them to be his people.

Verf. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs,*] That is, At the giving of the Law, the mountainous tops of Sinai and Horeb, and the little rising hills therein, or the mountain of Sinai, and other adjacent mountains and hills, did move and shake as apparently, as when the rams and lambs in a flock do leap and skip; and therefore it is said Exod. 19. 18. *that the whole mount quaked greatly*: see also the Note Psal. 29. 6.

Verf. 7. *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.*] Having demanded in the foregoing verse, why the mountains skipped like rams, &c. here the Psalmist, as by way of answering that question, adds these words, *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, &c.* as if he had said, Surely it was because they were afraid of the presence of the mighty God of Jacob: thus it

was then, and thus indeed it ought alwaies to be; *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, &c.*

P S A L M CXV.

Verf. 1. **N**ot unto us, O Lord, &c.] This is expressed as a prayer of Gods people when they were in great danger of their idolatrous enemies, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give glory:* as if they had said, We desire, Lord, that thou wouldest deliver us from the tyranny of the heathen; but not that any glory may thereby redound unto us, either for our valour in vanquishing them, or for our righteousness, as if we thereby had deserved any such thing at thy hands, but only that thy Name may be glorified: *for thy mercy and for thy truths sake;* that is, that hereby it may be manifested how mercifull thou art to thy people, and how faithfull in making good all thy promises to them.

Verf. 3. *But our God is in the heavens, &c.*] This is added by way of disdainning that scorn of the heathen mentioned in the foregoing verse, *Where is now their God? Our God,* say they, *is in the heavens,* and is therefore a God of infinite majesty and power, having all the creatures in heaven and earth under his command: *he hath done whatsoever he pleased;* so that all that hath been done in the world, hath been done, because it was his will and pleasure it should so be. And hence they would imply, that as their enemies could not have prevailed over them, but that their God was pleased it should so be; so when he pleased, he could easily restore them to a better condition again.

Verf. 7. *Neither speak they through their throat.*] It was said before verf. 5. *They have mouths, but they speak not;* and therefore that which is added here, seems to be meant of somewhat more, to wit, that they could not doe what the bruté creatures did, they could not make the least noise to come out of their throats.

Verf. 8. *They that make them are like unto them, so is every one that trusteth in them.*] That is, they are as stupid and blind, as very stocks and blocks, as their idols are; no more able to oppose the will and power of God, and to hurt his people, then their dead idols were.

Verf. 9. *O Israel, trust thou in the Lord, &c.*] As if he had said, Though the heathen say your trust is in vain, yet be not discouraged; let them trust in such helplesse things as their idols are, do you still trust in the Lord: *he is their help and their shield;* to wit, that trust in him.

Verf. 10. *O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord.*] These are particularly expressed, because by their place they were bound to be patterns and examples herein unto others.

Verf. 11. *Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord.*] Some understand this of those that did fear the Lord of other nations, whether they were profelytes that had joyned themselves to the Church of the Jews, or others; yea some look upon it as a prophesy of the calling of the Gentiles. But rather I conceive the drift of these words is, to shew how we are to understand the two foregoing verses, to wit, that

it was only those of Israel, and of the house of Aaron, that did truly *fear the Lord*, that should find him *their help and their shield*.

Verf. 12. *The Lord hath been mindfull of us, he will blesse us, &c.*] As if they should have said, Though God hath afflicted us, yet he hath not cast us off, nor forgotten us; all this while he hath been mindfull of us: God hath formerly remembered us in mercy, and therefore doubtlesse he will blesse us still.

Verf. 14. *The Lord shall encrease you more and more, &c.*] To wit, in number; or, he will give you daily a supply of new benefits, both temporall and spirituall.

Verf. 16. *The heaven, even the heavens are the Lords, &c.*] That is, they are his by creation; or he hath taken them to be the place of his habitation, and from thence he orders and disposeth all things, as he pleaseth, that are here below. And the drift of these words is, either to assure Gods people how safely they might trust in God, who had all things under his power and command, and could therefore make them instrumentall for their good; or else to illustrate that which is said in the following words concerning Gods love to mankind, *but the earth hath he given to the children of men*: as if they should have said, The Lord enjoys an al-fufficiency in himself in the heavens, which he hath provided for the throne of his glory, neither needs he any of these things that are here below; and therefore it is clear that all these things he hath made merely for mans use and service: wherein is implied 1. that this discovery of Gods love and goodnesse and bounty to mankind might let his people see, how confidently they much more might assure themselves, that God would not fail to blesse them; and 2. what just cause there was, that this bountifull provision God had made for man should stir them up to praise God for it; whence it is that those words are added in the following verse concerning their praising God.

Verf. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that goe down into silence.*] That is, into the grave; where there can be nothing but silence, and therefore no possibility of praising God. But that which they would imply hereby is, that if the Lord should suffer his people to be cut off by their enemies, there would be none left to praise his Name, whereas this was the very end why God gave the earth to the children of men. See the Notes Psal. 6. 5, and 30. 9.

Verf. 18. *But we will blesse the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore.*] As if they had said, Thou Lord, preserving us, we thy people shall still in all succeeding ages praise thy Name: and therefore save us for thy Names sake.

P S A L M CXVI.

Verf. 1. *I Love the Lord, &c.*] By the words in the last verses of this Psalm, *I will pay my vows in the courts of the Lords house, in the midst of thee, O Ierusalem*, it appears that it was composed after the Ark was removed to Ierusalem. And because those expressions verf. 3. *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me, &c.* are much the same with those which David used Psal. 18. 6. it seems most probable that this Psalm was also composed by him, and both (it may be) upon the same occasion, which was his deliverance out of the hands of Saul.

Verf. 3.

Verf. 3. *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.*] So he calls his sorrows and pains, not only because he was in apparent danger of death, for which see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 6; but also because he was tempted to fear, that the evils that befell him proceeded from the wrath and displeasure of the Lord against him.

Verf. 6. *The Lord preserveth the simple, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, those that are plain-hearted, and do sincerely and simply mean what they professe: and this indeed David might well speak with reference to himself, who plainly meant what he professed, and did not cunningly intend any hurt unto Saul, whilst he professed all fidelity to him. But rather I conceive that by *the simple* here are meant those that lye open to injuries, and are easily circumvented, and that when they are in danger and trouble, are not cunning to work out their deliverance, as many worldly men are, but are wont only with a simple, quiet mind, to commit their cause to the Lord, and to seek and wait for help from him, as children that being helpless in themselves, do wholly rest upon their parents for help. And this he speaks as from his own experience; *I was*, saith he, *brought low*, not knowing which way to help my self, *and he helped me.*

Verf. 7. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul.*] That is, Be no longer disquieted, but rest thy self quietly, as thou hast formerly done, upon Gods promises and fatherly providence, and that upon the experience thou hast now had of Gods goodness to thee; *for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* They that conceive this Psalm to have been composed after David was delivered from the insurrection of his son Absalom, do otherwise understand this clause; to wit, that now he might expect to rest quietly in his throne again, and peaceably to enjoy the liberty of Gods Sanctuary, as he had formerly done. But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 8. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.*] See the Note Psalm. 56. 13.

Verf. 9. *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*] That is, say some Expositours, I will daily serve the Lord in his Tabernacle, as long as I live here in this world: see the Note Psalm. 27. 13. But what is rather meant by walking *before the Lord*, see again in the Note Psalm. 56. 13.

Verf. 10. *I believed, &c.*] To wit, that God would make good his promise to me; or particularly, that God would deliver me out of those streights I was in: *therefore have I spoken*, to wit, that which he had said before verf. 4. *O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul*; or, *therefore have I spoken*, that is, therefore have I so often spoken of the promises that God had made to me, and made open profession of my confidence therein; or it may be spoken with reference to that which he had said before in this Psalm, concerning Gods goodness and faithfulness to his poor servants, verf. 5, 6: *I believed*; that is, when I saw how miraculously God had delivered me, my faith was strengthened thereby, and hence hath proceeded this confession which I have here made of my confidence in God. And indeed in the 2 Cor. 4. 13. where the Apostle cites these words, he seems rather to apply them to speaking by way of confession, then by way of invocation; *We having the same Spirit*

spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak, &c. As for the following words, *I was greatly afflicted,* they are added to shew that he was in great distresse even at that time, when he did thus call upon God, or encourage himself in his promises.


Verf. 11. *I said in my haste, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 31. 22: *All men are liars;* that is, prone to lie, and to deceive those that rely upon their words: and this it is thought David spake in reference to the prophets, Samuel especially, who had anointed him and promised him the kingdom; and that he doth here acknowledge it, purposely to shew how unworthy he was of the mercy which God had afforded him, and that by this discovery of his own wickednesse he might the more magnify Gods goodnesse.

Verf. 13. *I will take the cup of salvation, &c.*] That is, I will offer unto the Lord a peace-offering of praise; or, I will praise the Lord in a solemn and joyfull manner: for the ground of this expression, *I will take the cup of salvation,* was, either because in those peace-offerings they were alwaies wont to pour out a drink-offering unto the Lord; or because when the sacrificer came to feast with his family and friends on his peace-offerings, the custome was that he took a cup in his hand, and having used a certain form of blessing God for that mercy or deliverance, which God had afforded him, he drank, and then caused the cup to passe round to all the rest; and upon this ground it seems they called this cup *the cup of salvation,* or *the cup of blessing.* And indeed even to this custome Christ may seem to have had some respect in the institution of his last supper, the cup whereof therefore is called by the Apostle *the cup of blessing,* 1 Cor. 10. 16.

Verf. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.*] This is added as a reason why he would praise the Lord, namely, because by the experience of the Lords preserving him, he had found what precious account God makes of the lives of his faithfull servants: *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints;* that is, he doth not make light of their deaths, but their lives are very precious in his sight, even after their death he esteems them as his jewels. But see the Note Psal. 72. 14.

Verf. 16. *I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 86. 16: *thou hast broken my bonds;* that is, thou hast delivered me out of all my streights and dangers, or from the thraldome whereinto mine enemies would have brought me.

P S A L M CXVII.

Verf. 1.  *Praise the Lord, all ye nations, &c.*] That the Psalmist speaks this, as foreseeing and foretelling that all nations should by Christ be joynted to the Jews, and become his people, is evident, because the Apostle Rom. 15. 11. doth expressly alledge this place to prove the calling of the Gentiles.



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P S A L M CXVIII.

Verf. 1. **O** Give thanks unto the Lord, &c.] It is evident by many passages in this Psalm, especially by those expressions verf. 22, 23, and 24. *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner, &c.* that it was composed to be sung in some solemn and festivall assembly of the people, and that when David was newly settled on the throne of Israel. And therefore it is by almost all Expositours judged most probable, that it was penned when after the death of Ishbosheth all the tribes of Israel had anointed him to be their king, & he had vanquished the Philistines that at the same time had invaded the land, & thereupon he gathered the chief of the people together, that he might give thanks unto the Lord, & withall that they might remove the Ark to Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 6. 1. But yet withall by that passage verf. 22. *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner,* which is in so many places of the New Testament applyed to Christ, & that verf. 25, 26, *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord, &c. Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord,* which the inhabitants of Jerusalem applyed to Christ, as the promised Messiah, Matth. 21. 9. it is as evident, that whilst David speaks in this Psalm of himself, & those things which had befallen him, his principall aim was hereby prophetically to foretell those things that concerned Christ, that was to spring out of his loins. And as for this exhortation, *O give thanks unto the Lord, &c.* it may be taken as spoken by David, or by the people of God, & that principally with respect to that great mercy in exalting David to be their king, or rather in giving Christ to be their king & Saviour.

Verf. 3. *Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*] For this and the following verse, see the Notes Psal. 115. 10, 11.

Verf. 7. *The Lord taketh my part with them that help me, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 54. 4: *therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me;* see the Note Psal. 91. 8.

Verf. 10. *All nations compassed me about.*] Though of Christ it may be literally and truly said, of whom David was a type, that all nations do set themselves against him; yet understanding the words of David himself, it cannot be otherwise meant then of the neighbouring nations; unlesse we take it as a figurative expression, *All nations compassed me about,* as if he had said; All the world is set against me, I can no where be safe or quiet.

Verf. 12. *They compassed me about like bees, &c.*] Though it is not without some contempt that he compares his enemies to bees, yet withall he seeks hereby to imply how he was continually stung and vexed by them, not knowing how by any means to avoid them. And see also the Note Deut. 1. 44. As for the following words, he doth thereby shew farther how easily they were ruined: *they are quenched as the fire of thorns;* which though they be soon set on fire, and make a mighty crackling noise, and yield for a time a more terrible blaze then greater wood will do; yet alas, they are soon consumed in their own flame, and so the fire will be presently out, and they will scarce leave so much as any ashes behind them.



Verf. 13.

Verf. 13. *Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall.*] To wit, Thou, O Saul; or indefinitely, Thou, O mine enemy.

Verf. 15. *The voice of rejoycing & salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous, &c.*] This may be here laid down as a generall truth; for indeed all Gods righteous servants are sure to see the salvation of God, & they only can & will truly rejoyce in Gods salvation. But here doubtlesse it is added in reference to that particular mercy, for which this Psalm was composed. And the meaning is, that all the faithfull throughout the land should, every one even in their own private dwellings, rejoyce for that salvation which God had wrought for David, being glad to see the day whereon so great a change was wrought, & that especially because they knew that his exaltation to the throne tended to the great good of the whole kingdome. And so the following words, *the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly*, may be added as that triumphant song, which should be sung in the tabernacles of the righteous.

Verf. 17. *I shall not die, &c.*] To wit, by the hand of mine enemies. It is as if he had said, Mine enemies have long thirsted & sought after my death; & indeed for many years together I have been, as it were, continually in the very jaws of death, & I have been looked upon no otherwise then as a lost dead man: but I see God hath determined otherwise of me, he hath reserved me for his praise; *I shall not die, but live, & declare the works of the Lord.* How this may be applyed to Christ, whom the pains of death could not hold, we may easily conceive.

Verf. 19. *Open to me the gates of righteousness, &c.*] That is, the gates of Gods Sanctuary: which are called *the gates of righteousness*, 1. because there the most righteous God had chosen the Sanctuary for his habitation; 2. because there the word of God was taught, the only rule of true righteousness; 3. because there the people of God were cleansed from their sins by the sacrifices that they offered up unto God, & so were presented righteous in Gods sight; 4. because there they worshipped & praised God, which was a chief part of their righteousness; & 5. & especially, because God required that they should be a righteous people, that presented themselves there in his presence, & did therefore enjoin, that none that were unclean should be admitted to be there. And indeed this reason seems to be implied in the following verse, *This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.* Now this David speaks to the Priests & Levites, that had the charge of the doors of the Sanctuary, in reference to that festivity for which this Psalm was composed, whereon he had gathered the people together, that they might praise God for his mercy to them: see the Note above verf. 1. And it is expressed in a poetical manner, with a kind of triumphant joy, *Open to me the gates of righteousness*; as if he should have said, Those gates from which I was so long banished, & which I did so long & so earnestly desire to see, Let them be now opened to me, & my company, *I will goe into them, & I will praise the Lord.*

Verf. 20. *This gate of the Lord, &c.*] That is, of the Lords house, *into which the righteous shall enter*, according to that Isa. 26. 2. *Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth truth may enter in.* Now some learned Expositours conceive that in these words David doth covertly intimate, what a change there should be in

in matters of religion, now God had exalted him to the throne, to wit, that where- as in Sauls time the worship of God had been neglected, or at least polluted by profane ungodly wretches; now, by the encouragement that should be given to religion, the house of God should be more carefully frequented, & that by such as did truly fear his Name.

Verf. 22. *The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner.*] That is, the chief foundation corner-stone. This with the three following verses seem to be the words of the people, congratulating the inauguration of their new king; as those expressions therein may well induce us to think, *it is marvellous in our eyes, & we will rejoyce & be glad.* But however for the meaning of the words, First, doubtlesse they are meant of David. As builders are wont to cast away some stones, as not fit to be laid in the building, so was David despised and rejected: his own father looked upon him, as not worthy to be presented before Samuel, when he came to anoint one of his sons to be king, 1 Sam. 16. 11; his brethren scorned & despised him, 1 Sam. 17. 28; & as for Saul, his princes & courtiers, who were as the master-builders in Israel, upon whom the care chiefly lay of raising & advancing the glory & wel-fare of the Church & commonwealth of Israel, in stead of owning David to be the man ordained of God to be king after Saul, they persecuted him, as a perfidious ungodly wretch, not worthy to be numbred amongst Gods people; *they have driven me out this day (saith he) from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord,* 1 Sam. 26. 19. yea & after Sauls death all the tribes of Israel, but Judah only, sided with Ishbosheth, & would not endure to have David their king. And yet at last in despite of all this opposition, God brought it so about, that he was established king, & so became the foundation corner-stone in that Church & state, whose peace & glory he was a means under God to uphold & raise, & united together those that had been sadly divided & distracted amongst themselves. And this is thus recorded, that by considering what a miracle it was, that he should be thus exalted to the throne, men might plainly see, that it was not by any ambitious policy & power of his, that he came to be king, but merely by the decree & mighty hand of God, as is more fully expressed in the following verse, *This is the Lords doing, & it is marvellous in our eyes;* & consequently, how notoriously false all those slanders were, that had been formerly raised of him. But then 2. this is principally meant of Christ, that *stone cut out of the mountain without hands,* Dan. 2. 45. who though *he was despised & rejected of men* Isa. 53. 3. especially by the Priests, the Scribes & Pharisees, the elders & rulers of the people, that by their place ought to have built up the Church of God, who would not endure that he should be counted the promised Messiah, but on the contrary persecuted him, as a notorious wicked wretch, not worthy to live amongst Gods people, & never left till they had put him to a shamefull death; yet being raised from the dead, he is now ascended into heaven, is now become the foundation, 1 Cor. 3. 11. the King & Head of the Church, Ephes. 1. 22. *the chief corner-stone*, who hath joyned together the Jews & Gentiles in one body, in one Church, as the corner-stones in a building do joyn two walls together, & in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, Eph. 2. 20, 21. And indeed so

clear a testimony this is of Christs being the promised Messiah, that to prove this no place in the Old Testament is cited so often by Christ & his Apostles, as this is: see Matth. 21. 42. Mark 12. 10. Act. 4. 11. Rom. 9. 32. 1 Pet. 2. 4.

Vers. 23. *This is the Lords doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.*] To wit, This bringing of a poor, despised, banished man to sit on the throne of Israel; & this bringing of a poor crucified man to be the sole Saviour & Monarch of the world.

Vers. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made.*] As if they had said, It is the Lord only that hath given us occasion of keeping this solemn day of rejoycing, & praising his Name together; to wit, by bringing David so miraculously to the throne of Israel: see the Note above vers. 1. And as this is spoken in reference to Christ, it may be meant of the day of our redemption, the day of the Gospel, or the day of the Resurrection of Christ.

Vers. 25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord, &c.*] Having given us such a king, we beseech thee save him from all evil. It is an acclamation which they were wont to make to their new kings, & so was now used by the people when David came to the Sanctuary to give thanks for the kingdom received. In the Hebrew it is *Hoschiah na*, but in the Greek it is expressed by that word *Hosanna*, as we may see Mat. 21. 9. where the people used this acclamation to Christ when he rode into Jerusalem, as being an acknowledged prophesy concerning the promised Messiah; *Hosanna to the son of David*, that is, save now, I beseech thee, the son of David; let him be victorious over all his enemies, & let him be preserved in his members unto the end of the world. And the same is implied in the following words, *O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity*, to wit, to our king & people.

Vers. 26. *Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord, &c.*] That is, Let our king, who cometh by authority & commission from God, that he may represent Gods person, & seek his glory, & may in his stead govern & save his people, let him be praised & extolled of all men; or rather, Let him be blessed of God with all blessings requisite to make his government happy, & a blessing to the people, & that both in his own person & in the successe of all his enterprizes. And this was also applyed to Christ by the people when he rode into Jerusalem, Matth. 21. 9. *Hosanna to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord*; professing thereby their faith, that he was that blessed seed, that was sent of God to be a blessing to his people, & that the work of the Lord would surely prosper in his hands. Some take these words to be a part of the acclamation of the people to David when he came to the Sanctuary. But rather they are the words of the priests welcoming David to the tabernacle; for clearly the following words are the priests words to the people, *we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord*; that is, We, whose office it is to wait upon Gods service in his tabernacle, & to bless his people in his Name, see Numb. 6. 23. we desire the Lord to bless thee, David, & thy followers, yea we assure you that you shall be blessed, & that in this your king. And indeed if we take the words as spoken in reference to Christ, when Gods ministers do preach the Gospel, what do they but pronounce the people blessed in their Lord & Saviour Christ?

Vers. 27. *God is the Lord, &c.*] That is, God is the Lord of heaven & earth, faith-

faithfull in performing all his promises; or, the Lord Jehovah, the God whom we serve, & who hath revealed himself to us in his word, is the true almighty God: *which hath shewed us light*; that is, he hath manifested himself to be such, in that he, & he alone, hath brought us into a joyfull prosperous condition, who lay before, in the time of Sauls reign, under the darknesse of great sorrows & afflictions. But especially may it be said that God shewed his people light in giving them Christ, who is the light of the world, Joh. 8. 12. & by his word & spirit doth enlighten all his people. *Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar*: see the Note Exod. 27. 2.

P S A L M C X I X.

Verf. 1. **B**lessed are the undefiled in the way, &c.] This is another of the Alphabetical Psalms: see the Note Psal. 25. 1. But here, the Psalm being divided into 22 sections, according to the number of the Hebrew letters, & each section consisting of eight verses, all the verses in the first section begin with the first letter in the Hebrew Alphabet, all in the second with the second letter, & so it is in all the sections on to the end of the Psalm. And as for the matter of the Psalm, it seems to be a collection, which David made of the severall meditations that he had had concerning the Word of God, upon his experience of the great benefit he had found thereby in all the various changes of condition that had befallen him. And hence it is that there is not above two verses at the most, wherein there is not some mention made of the word of God, though it be under different tearms; as namely the 90. & 122. verses.

Verf. 3. *They also doe no iniquity, &c.*] That is, They do not wittingly allow themselves to live in any sinfull way.

Verf. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.*] That is, When not regarding what mine own reason, or other men shall suggest, I shall only mind what thy word enjoyneth, resolving in all things to follow the direction thereof; *then shall I not be ashamed*: to wit, of any thing I have done, (which is indeed the sure effect of sin, *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?*) but being free from an evil conscience, I shall be able with comfort to look God & man in the face, yea though I meet with many crosses & afflictions; & (for this also may be included) I shall not at the day of judgement be of the number of those, who having flattered themselves with vain hopes of salvation, shall be cast off with eternall shame & confusion, Dan. 12. 2.

Verf. 7. *I will praise thee with uprightnesse of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgements.*] To wit, so as to practise them, according to that Joh. 6. 45. *Every man that hath heard & hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*: & indeed there is no true praising of God, unlesse men praise him by the righteousnesse of their lives, as well as by their words. As for those words, *righteous judgements*, see the Note Psal. 19. 9.

Verf. 8. *I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.*] To wit, neither 1. by withdrawing thy grace utterly from me, though to try me thou shalt see fit to

leave me for a time to my self; nor 2. by hiding thy self over-long from me in any time of trouble, lest I should be overcome by so sore a temptation.

Verf. 9. *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*] The Psalmist doth particularly here instance in young men, 1. because youth is the time when men do usually make choice what course of life they will take, whether to live piously or profanely; & therefore it is fit that they should especially consider of this, that if they will addresse themselves to live holily & righteously, the only way to doe this is in all things to take direction from the word of God: & 2. because young men, through their folly and weaknesse, & want of experience, & through the violent impetuoussnesse of their lusts, are hardliest restrained from their sinfull courses; so that if the word may be effectuell to cleanse them from sin, then much more others.

Verf. 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart, &c.*] Which is done by getting the knowledge of it, by committing it to mind & memory, by thinking seriously of it upon all occasions, by having alwaies a full purpose of heart to keep close thereto, as the only rule of mans life; & by doing all this out of a high esteem of it, & dear affection to it, as to some precious treasure.

Verf. 12. *Blessed art thou, O Lord; teach me thy statutes.*] Either by *blessed* here is meant, that God is praised & blessed of all his creatures, to wit, for his goodnesse & mercy to them, & because he filleth all things with his blessings; & then the argument that David useth here is, that since God was so good & gracious, & ready to give all his creatures occasion to blesse him, therefore he would also deal so with him, by teaching him his statutes: or else that God is absolutely blessed & happy in & of himself, & consequently the fountain from whence all blisse is derived unto the creatures; & so upon this account he desires God to teach him his statutes, that thereby he might become a sharer of his blessednesse.

Verf. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live & keep thy word.*] Two things therefore David here desires of God: 1. that God would preserve his life, which seemed to be in extreme danger; & 2. that being so preserved he might consecrate his life wholly to Gods service, not desiring to live for any other cause, but that he might keep his word. And to this some adde, that under these words, *that I may live*, he desires of God the spirituall life of grace; or that he might live cheartully & comfortably, as being assured of Gods favour, which is indeed only worthy the name of living.

Verf. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.*] This may be meant of the wonderfull wisdome, holinesse, righteousness & equity, &c. which do shine forth in Gods law; of the wonderfull rewards there promised to the righteous, & the punishments denounced against the wicked; the wonderfull works of God recorded in his word; but especially of the wonderfull & incomprehensible mysteries of the Gospel; for the discovery whereof David had the more cause to desire the illumination of Gods spirit, because they were only made known by dark types & shadows in those times of the Law.

Verf. 19. *I am a stranger in the earth, &c.*] See the Note Gen. 47. 9. This is laid down as the ground of the following petition, *hide not thy commandments from me; that*

that is, suffer not thy commandements, for want of the illumination of thy spirit, to be hidden from me: & that 1. because being but a stranger upon earth, & having but a while to continue here, it was fit that his chief care should be for heaven, the land of rest where he was to dwell for ever & ever; & 2. because being therefore here alwaies travelling towards heaven, he had need of continuall direction from the word of God, to guide him in the way thither, & that the rather, because naturally he knew no more of the way that leads to heaven, then men do know the way that leads from one place to another, when they are in a strange countrey: see also the Note Psal. 39. 12.

Verf. 20. *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgements at all times.*] That is, My spirit fails or faints within me; or, my soul, in her eager desires after thy judgements, is as the broken & chawnd earth when it gapes after the rain; or, I do so earnestly long after thy judgements, that my heart doth even break through grief when I cannot come to enjoy them.

Verf. 21. *Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, &c.*] That is, Thou hast destroyed the proud contemners of thee & of thy laws: (for the word *rebuked* see the Note Psal. 6. 1.) *which do erre from thy commandements*; that is, that out of pride & stubbornnesse refuse to walk in the waies that God hath enjoyned them. Now the drift of the Psalmist in alledging this was, to imply, that even by the judgements of God upon those that despised his laws, he might well be quickned in a holy endeavour carefully to observe them.

Verf. 22. *Remove from me reproach & contempt, &c.*] That is, Free me from that reproach & contempt which wicked men have cast upon me: *for I have kept thy testimonies*, & therefore have I no way deserved those foul aspersions; but indeed it is for my keeping so close to thy testimonies, that they have reproached me: or, *for I have kept thy testimonies*, that is, I have not been ashamed of thee & thy service, I have not abandoned thy truth, & thy waies, because of their reproaches, & therefore I hope thou wilt clear mine innocency against thē that falsely accuse me.

Verf. 23. *Princes also, &c.*] As if he had said, Not only the meaner sort of people, but even Princes *did sit & speak against me*; to wit, not only as they casually met together in private, but especially when they sat in counsell together, yea when they sat in the seat of judgement, (for so much those words *did sit & speak against me* seem to imply:) *but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes*; to wit, thereby to comfort my self, to strengthen my faith, & to learn how to carry my self in such a condition. And hereby he would imply also, that their speaking against him did no way beat him off from the waies of piety, but rather encouraged him in them.

Verf. 24. *Thy testimonies also are my delight, & my counsellors.*] David seems to speak here as a prince, that doth nothing without the advice of his privy counsell. And this he opposeth to that in the foregoing verse, as if he had said, Whilst princes sat together, & took counsell against me, I betook my self to thy testimonies, & they were *the men of my counsell*, as it is in the Originall.

Verf. 25. *My soul cleaveth unto the dust, &c.*] To wit, through extreme distresse & danger, or through grief & terrours of conscience: but see the Note Psal. 44. 25.
quicken

quicken thou me according to thy word; see the Notes Psal. 71. 20, and 80. 18.

Verf. 26. *I have declared my waies, &c.*] That is, all my streights and sorrows, temptations & sins, every state & condition wherein I was, all my businesses and undertakings, I have still made them known to thee: & *thou heardest me*; to wit, in doing for me what withall I then desired of thee: *teach me thy statutes*; as if he had said, hear me therefore in this, as thou hast done formerly for other things.

Verf. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts; so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.*] That is, the wonderfull works that thou shalt work in doing this for my poor soul, how herein thy power hath been magnified in my weaknesse; or, the wonderfull works recorded in the word, for which see the Note above verf. 18. And the drift of this is, to set forth, either 1. that if God would teach him, then he would be ready upon all occasions to teach others; or 2. how it would chear him in his afflictions, making him with great joy to talk of the wonders of Gods word, if the Lord would effectually teach him the way of his precepts. And indeed unlesse men understand Gods word, it is not possible they should take any delight in talking of it.

Verf. 28. *My soul melteth* (or, as it is in the Hebrew, *droppeth*) *for heavinesse.*] The meaning is, either that his soul did melt away, as it were, into tears, drop by drop; or that his strength did by little and little waite and passe away like water.

Verf. 29. *Remove from me the way of lying, &c.*] This may be meant either of the way of errour in doctrine, or of the way of sin, which may be called *the way of lying*, because it deceives those that walk in it, & men are usually drawn thereinto by the false impostures of the world & the devil. And this he desires may be removed from him, because he knew that his own corrupt nature was inclinable thereto, though for the present he walked in the way of truth, as he professeth in the next verse. And accordingly we must understand the following clause, & *grant me thy law graciously*; that is, let me have that still to be the rule of my life, imprint it in my heart, that I may live according to the directions thereof.

Verf. 31. *I have stuck unto thy testimonies; O Lord, put me not to shame.*] That is, say some Expositours, Suffer me not to fall into any such sinfull course, as may expose me to shame amongst men, & likewise fill mine own conscience inwardly with confusion. But rather his desire is, that God would not by denying his requests, or hiding himself from him in his troubles, frustrate the hopes that he had in him, & so overwhelm his spirit with shame & confusion, & give occasion to wicked men to insult over him; but rather that he would give him cause still to persevere in the waies of his commandements, with full assurance of his love & favour. Or else his request in these words may be only this, that God would not suffer wicked men to reproach him for his care & endeavour to keep his commandements.

Verf. 32. *I will run the way of thy commandements, &c.*] That is, I will chearfully & zealously observe thy commandements: *when thou shalt enlarge my heart*; which is meant of working in him 1. a greater measure of knowledge; for so in regard of his great knowledge it is said of Solomon 1 Kings 4. 29. that *God gave Solomon wisdom & understanding exceeding much, & largenesse of heart, &c.* see the

Note

Note there; 2. more strong degrees of love to God & to his word, &c. as Paul expresseth his ardent love to the Corinthians 2 Cor. 6. 11. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged;* & 3. & especially, an encrease of comfort & joy through the assurance of Gods love & favour in Jesus Christ; for thus also the joy of the Church is set forth upon the conversion of the Gentiles Isa. 60. 5. *thine heart shall fear, to wit, with admiration, & be enlarged, to wit, with joy, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, &c.* And indeed, as sorrow streighteneth the heart, so joy doth dilate & enlarge it: & this spirituall joy is the true well-spring of all free, forward & chearfull obedience.

Verf. 36. *Encline my heart unto thy testimonies, & not unto covetousnesse.*] And so consequently not unto any other sinfull lusts. Only covetousnesse is particularly expressed, because that doth in a speciall manner take men off from the love & study of Gods law, & is the root of all evil: & hereby also is implied, that Gods testimonies are better then all riches.

Verf. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, &c.*] That is, from looking so after vain things, as for them to neglect thy law, from beholding them so, as thereby to be brought inordinately to affect them, & to be intangled in any sinfull practise: & *quicken thou me in thy way;* that is, direct me so in thy way, that I may live thereby; or, cause me to live according to thy laws; or (which I like the best) cause me to walk on with all liveliness & chearfulness & zeal in the way of thy commandements.

Verf. 38. *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, &c.*] That is, By thy spirit assure me that thy promises shall be made good to me; or, Perform what thou hast promised to thy servant: *who is devoted to thy fear;* that is, who am only desirous & carefull, that I may continually persevere in thy fear, & who am therefore one of those to whom those promises are made.

Verf. 39. *Turn away my reproach, which I fear, &c.*] I conceive that this is much the same with that which he had said before verf. 31. *O Lord, put me not to shame;* for which see the Note there. Yet some Expositours do limit this to the reproach of loosing the kingdome promised, or the reproaches which he feared would befall him for the sin which he had committed in the matter of Uriah: & again others, with more probability, because of those words, *which I fear*, do understand it of the reproach which shall be the portion of the wicked at the day of judgement; as if he had said, The reproaches of men I fear not, but that which I fear is, lest I should be cast off with shame before thy tribunal; let not that, I beseech thee, Lord, be my portion: or else, of his fear, lest the word & truth of God should suffer reproach by his means, as if he had in vain made his boast of them. And accordingly we must understand the following clause, *for thy judgements are good*, that is, they are holy & just, righteous & faithfull, profitable & delightfull to those that observe them: as if he should have said, Therefore let them be so to me, let me not be ashamed of the hope I have placed in them; or, Therefore cause me still to cleave close to them, and not to bring reproach upon my self by any sinfull swerving from them; or, Therefore it is not fit that I should be reproached by men as an evil doer, as long as I observe these good judgements,

ments, and make them my rule in all things whatsoever.

Verf. 40. *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness.*] That is, quicken me in thy law, which is exactly righteous, & the only rule of true righteousness; see the Note above verf. 37: or, quicken me according as thou art a righteous God; see the Note Psal. 5. 8: & what is meant by quickning, see in the Note above verf. 25.

Verf. 42. *So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me, &c.*] That is, to confute & stop the mouths of them that reproach me, for being so strict in my waies, & for trusting in thy word; namely, by shewing how God hath made good his promises to me: *for I trust in thy word*; it is as if he had said, & therefore let me have wherewith to answer those that reproach me for my confidence therein.

Verf. 43. *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, &c.*] As if he had said, Whereas I have hitherto made profession of thy truth, & gloried of thy promises, bring me not now into such a condition, either by withholding thy grace, or by not affording the help thou hast promised me in my trouble, that I should now be afraid to profess thy truth, or to glory of thy promises, as I have done; at least though thou mayest, to try me, leave me in such a condition for a time, yet let it be but for a time, *take not the word of truth utterly*, that is, for ever, *out of my mouth*: *for*, saith he, *I have hoped in thy judgements*, that is, thy word & promises; or the judgements thou hast threatned against wicked men, & which thou hast said thou wilt execute on the behalf of thy faithful servants.

Verf. 45. *And I will walk at liberty.*] That is, cheerfully, willingly, securely, as being delivered from the bondage of sin, & freed from those doubts & fears and terrours, wherewith wicked men are perplexed. It is in the Hebrew, *I will walk at large*, for which see the Notes Psal. 4. 1.

Verf. 48. *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, &c.*] That is, I will with all earnestness endeavour to doe what is therein enjoyned: or, I will with all eagerness embrace and study them; as men reach forth their hands to those things they do most earnestly desire. Yet some conceive that in these words the Psalmist alludes to the lifting up of the hands in swearing or prayer, & that he desired to imply thereby, that he would bind himself by an oath to the observation of Gods laws, or that he would addresse himself to the study of them, with prayer to God for assistance therein.

Verf. 51. *The proud have had me greatly in derision, &c.*] That is, They have derided me with all possible bitterness, & that continually day by day: And who he means by *the proud*, see in the Note above verf. 21. *Yet have I not declined from thy law*; that is, from the study of thy law, from the waies of piety therein prescribed, or to seek redresse or comfort in my troubles any other way then from thy word.

Verf. 52. *I remembered thy judgements of old, O Lord, & have comforted my self.*] Some by Gods judgements here understand the laws of God, which were written in mens hearts from the first creation. But though these may be included, yet it is clear that the righteous acts of the Lord, recorded in the Scriptures, which God as a just judge had executed in all ages, according to the threatnings annexed to his

his laws, both in the punishments of the wicked, & the deliverances of his righteous servants, are the *judgements* wherewith David is said here to have comforted himself.

Verf. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*] That is, it causeth a grievous terrour & trembling to seize upon me; to wit, out of zeal for Gods glory, & indignation against such wicked wretches, for their presumptuous and grievous sins; & partly also out of grief for the sore punishments which he knew their wickednesse would bring upon them, & haply the common calamities they might also bring upon others. And some adde also that their wickednesse made him afraid of his own falling into the like enormities.

Verf. 54. *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*] That is, in the daies of my pilgrimage here in my earthly tabernacle; see the Note Gen. 47. 9: or, whilst I lived in exile, wandring up and down from one place to another. And by saying that Gods statutes were his songs he means, either that he made or sung Psalms & songs concerning Gods statutes; or else that the remembrance & meditation of Gods statutes was as delightfull to him as songs, and that in his exile: though he were then subject to many miseries, griefs & fears, & were deprived of the comfort of Gods Ordinances, & of serving God in his Sanctuary; yet then the meditation of Gods statutes yielded him much refreshing comfort: as travellers use to delight themselves, & to take away the wearisomenesse of their journey, by singing songs together as they goe along; so did he delight himself in the time of his exile, by thinking on Gods statutes.

Verf. 55. *I have remembered thy Name, O Lord, in the night, &c.*] To wit, when others slept, & when men do usually take greatest liberty to sin against thee; or, when sorrow doth ordinarily lye heaviest upon men, then did I remember thee, to wit, with joy, see the Note Job 35. 10. And then those words are added, *& have kept thy law*, because indeed they that do often and seriously keep God in their thoughts, they must needs be rendred carefull to observe his commandements.

Verf. 56. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*] To wit, all these benefits before mentioned; or more particularly with reference to what he had said in the two foregoing verses, *this*, that I have been thus comforted in my greatest afflictions, that Gods statutes were my songs in my pilgrimage, &c. Yea some refer this both to his comforts & to his afflictions; *This I had*, that is, thus I was persecuted, & thus I was comforted, *because I kept thy precepts*.

Verf. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 16. 5: *I have said, that I would keep thy words*; to wit, that I may be sure to keep mine interest in thee, which I have chosen as the only happinesse I desire.

Verf. 59. *I thought on my waies, &c.*] That is, the waies wherein I was to walk; before I did any thing, I considered seriously with my self whether it were warrantable or no: *& turned my feet unto thy testimonies*; that is, I was carefull to doe that only which was agreeable to thy word. Or thus rather, *I thought on my ways*; that is, on my former course of life: *& turned my feet unto thy testimonies*; that is, where I found that I had gone awry, I reformed my life according to thy testimonies.

Verf. 62. *At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, &c.*] Where I can have no respect to the applause of men, but only to approve my self unto thee, who seest in secret; but see also the Note above verf. 55: *because of thy righteous judgements*; see the Note above verf. 43, & Psal. 19. 9.

Verf. 66. *Teach me good judgement & knowledge, &c.*] To wit, that I may not only know thy law, but also may be able thereby to judge rightly of things that differ, & may not mistake error for truth, & evil for good: *for I have believed thy commandments*; that is, I have been fully perswaded that they were thine, and have accordingly embraced them as worthy to be obeyed: as if he should have said, Teach me therefore to understand them more fully, that I may more fully believe, embrace & obey them.

Verf. 69. *The proud, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 21: *have forged a lie against me*; see the Note Job 13. 4: *but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart*; as if he should have said, their lies shall not beat me off from the obedience of thy laws; or, thereby I shall be best able to stop their mouths, or at least I shall be sure that their lies & plots against me shall never doe me any hurt.

Verf. 70. *Their heart is as fat as grease.*] That is, it is grosse and carnall, and through outward pomp & plenty puffed up with pride & arrogance, sottish & stupid & unteachable (as indeed when mens hearts are overgrown & oppressed with fat, such men are usually noted to be dull & foolish,) senselesse & void of feeling, (see the Note Job 15. 27.) stiffe & hard & obstinate, according to that Isa. 6. 10. *make the heart of this people fat*, which is expressed by the Evangelist Joh. 12. 40. in these words, *He hath blinded their eyes, & hardened their heart.*

Verf. 73. *Thy hands have made me & fashioned me, &c.*] See the Note Job 10. 8. Some conceive that the first words, *Thy hands have made me*, are particularly meant of the creation of his soul, & the next, *& fashioned me*, of the forming his body. However the ground whereon he infers the following request, *give me understanding, that I may keep thy commandments*, may be twofold: 1. because being Gods creature, he was thereby obliged to serve him, & therefore desires herein assistance from God; & 2. because God is indeed the readier to doe good unto man, because he is the work of his hands.

Verf. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they see me, &c.*] That is, when they shall see that thou hast instructed me in the knowledge of thy law, and that hereby I am brought to keep thy commandments, & (we may adde too) when they shall see that all thy promises are in the conclusion made good to me, they shall rejoyce not only on my behalf, but also on their own; see the Note Psal. 34. 2: *because I have hoped in thy word*; that is, considering that this befell me because I hoped in thy promises, this shall encourage them to expect the same grace.

Verf. 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are right, &c.*] That is, all those judgements wherewith thou dost either punish the wicked, or correct thy righteous servants; as is evident by the following clause, *& that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*. Yet if by judgements here be meant Gods precepts, then we must understand this place thus; as if he had said, Though thou hast sorely afflicted me,

me, yet I know that every passage of thy word is just & right, & that it is in faithfulness that thou hast afflicted me.

Verf. 76. *Let, I pray thee, thy mercifull kindnesse be for my comfort.*] That is, Though thou dost afflict me, yet by teaching me, and causing me to believe thy mercifull kindnesse revealed in thy word, support, I beseech thee, & comfort me in mine afflictions: or rather, *Let thy mercifull kindnesse be for my comfort*, to wit, by giving me grace to keep thy precepts; or, by delivering me out of my distresses and troubles.

Verf. 77. *Let thy tender mercies come unto me, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 41: *that I may live*; to wit, chearfully & comfortably in the assurance of thy love; without which indeed men are but as dead men, even whilst they live.

Verf. 78. *Let the proud, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 21. *be ashamed*, see the Note Psal. 6. 10: *for they dealt perversely with me without a cause*; that is, unjustly, & wickedly, out of mere malice & perverseness of spirit: *but I will meditate in thy precepts*; see the Note above verf. 23.

Verf. 79. *Let those that fear thee turn unto me, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Let such as these be mine acquaintance: I care not for the society of wicked men. But there are two other expositions that are more probable: to wit, 1. that David desires that such godly men as had forsaken him or been estranged from him, being misled by delusions & false reports, or beaten off by the troubles & low condition whereinto he was fallen, might again be brought to joyn themselves with him in a way of amity & friendship, & take his part, & (some adde too) embrace him as their king, being convinced of the equity of his cause, by the judgements of God upon his enemies; or rather, 2. that he desires the godly would turn to him, that is, look towards him, that beholding in him an example of Gods faithfulness to his righteous servants, they might be strengthened and comforted concerning themselves. See the Note above verf. 74.

Verf. 82. *Mine eyes fail for thy word, &c.*] That is, with waiting for that salvation & mercy which thou hast promised in thy word; see the Notes Deut. 28. 32. & Job 11. 20: *saying, When wilt thou comfort me?* to wit, by affording me the deliverance & mercies I have long waited for.

Verf. 83. *For I am become like a bottle in the smoke.*] That is, my body is scorched & black with extreme misery; see the Note Job 30. 30; or, my skin through my leanness is withered, wrinkled, and shrunk up, & so it is every day more and more with me, as it is with a skin bottle or bladder hung up in the smoke; yea I am no more esteemed & regarded amongst men, then such a bottle would be.

Verf. 84. *How many are the daies of thy servant? &c.*] That is, the daies allotted to me, wherein I must continue under this oppression & misery? or, the daies of my life? as if he should have said, They are but few, I have not long to live; therefore let me not spend those few daies I have to live, without seeing thy promise made good to me. *When wilt thou execute judgement on them that persecute me?* But see the Note Psal. 89. 47.

Verf. 85. *The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.*] Some conceive that there is an allusion in these words to that law Exod. 21. 33, 34.

concerning digging of pits, & that hereby he seeks to aggravate the wickednesse of his enemies, that whereas Gods law provided for the security of beasts, that no pits should be digged & left uncovered to the endangering of them, their wickednesse must needs be very great, that did secretly digge pits purposely that men might fall into them. But whether it be so or no, doubtlesse the drift of this clause was to represent his enemies to the Lord, as worthy for their wickednesse to be destroyed; *The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law*: which is as if he had said, They regard not thy law, but what they please they will doe, though it be never so contrary to thy commands.

Verf. 86. *All thy commandements are faithfull, &c.*] That is, All thy laws, together with all thy promises & threatnings annexed, are most true & faithfull: and whereas therefore they favour innocency & righteousness, & are against all injustice & wrong, they that depend on the salvation promised therein to those that observe them, shall doubtlesse never be deceived. And hereupon he infers, *they persecute me wrongfully, help me*: as if he had said, they therefore that persecute me for keeping these thy righteous laws must needs doe it wrongfully; & therefore thou that art a faithfull God help me against mine unjust oppressours.

Verf. 87. *They had almost consumed me upon earth, &c.*] By adding those words (*upon earth*) he implies, that however they had dealt with him here, he had hope of a better life in heaven, whereof he was sure they could never deprive him.

Verf. 88. *Quicken me after thy loving kindnesse.*] See the Note above verf. 25.

Verf. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven, &c.*] That is, thy promises stand firm for ever with thee in heaven, though they may seem to fail upon earth, when things come to passe, which seem to be contrary to what thou in thy word hast said shall be. Or else the meaning may be, that the eternall certainty & efficacy of Gods word is clearly to be seen in the permanency of the heavens: for why do the heavenly lights, & orbes, & all things therein continue in their beings & motions from their first creation, but because God hath said that it shall so be? from whence the Psalmist would imply, that accordingly also the promises that God hath made to his people in the written word must needs be of the same eternall efficacy & certainty, & sure to be accomplished in their seasons, notwithstanding all the strange alterations & confusion that seem to be in the things that are here below. And this exposition may seem the more probable, because in the following verses he alledgeth likewise the stability of the earth by the same word of God verf. 90. *Thy faithfulness is unto all generations; thou hast established the earth & it abideth*, & the continuance of all the creatures both in heaven & earth in their severall stations and operations, as from the beginning God did appoint, verf. 91. *They continue this day according to thy ordinances &c.* & all this to prove, that therefore he might safely build upon the sure accomplishment of Gods promises, which he expresth verf. 92. *Except thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine afflictions.*

Verf. 96. *I have seen an end of all perfection, &c.*] That is, I have found by clear reason, and partly by mine own experience, that the most excellent of all the creatures, & the greatest perfection that is in them, are but finite: namely in that 1. they

they are subject to fail & vanish, & come to an end; & 2. all the good that is in them may be comprehended within certain limits; they are not able to give full contentment to a mans mind, or support to his heart, at least in all conditions & afflictions. *But thy commandment is exceeding broad;* to wit, in that 1. it comprehends infinite & incomprehensible treasures of wisdom & knowledge; nothing pertaining to holiness or happiness is wanting in it, nothing requisite for the direction of all men in all conditions; neither is it possible to expresse the innumerable benefits which it yields to those that enjoy it: and 2. it is to be an eternal rule of truth & righteousness unto the Church, according to that Matth. 24. 35. *Heaven & earth shall passe away, but my words shall not passe away;* & when all earthly things shall fail men, the word shall still be a sure counsellor and comforter to them: it shall support them in all afflictions, even unto death, and the comforts thereof shall abide with them for ever.

Verf. 98. *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser then mine enemies, &c.*] To wit, not only because thereby he became wise unto salvation, which is the only true wisdom, far above the worldly wisdom of his enemies; but also because this wisdom of walking in Gods waies was more prevalent to preserve him, then the craft & policy of his enemies was to insnare & destroy him. And observable it is, that the great politicians in Sauls Court, that were advanced to high places for their great wisdom & subtilty, were of the chief of those enemies of whom David here professeth, that he excelled them in wisdom. *For they are ever with me;* that is, thy commandments are rooted in my heart; I do alwaies think & meditate on them, & make them my Rule in all things.

Verf. 99. *I have more understanding then all my teachers.*] Through Gods abundant grace, the faithfull do many times outstrip their godly teachers in knowledge & piety. Yet because David spake not this by way of boasting, but to set forth the great benefit of being taught out of Gods word, it is not improbably thought by some Expositours, either that David spake this of those that had instructed him in humane learning, meaning that from the word of God he had learnt wisdom farre excelling that which they had taught him; or else of those that were publick teachers in the Church, but yet were in those corrupt daies of Saul carried away, as well as others, with the common iniquity of the times, and haply in their very teaching complied with the humours of Saul, his princes and courtiers.

Verf. 104. *I hate every false way.*] That is, every way of error & sin; for these are called false waies, both because they are not agreeable to the word of truth, and likewise because they will surely deceive those that expect any good from them.

Verf. 108. *Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, the vows and promises before mentioned, that he would keep Gods laws, such as that verf. 106. *I have sworn, & I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements.* But it is rather meant of his prayers & praises, the Psalms which he composed & sung to the praise of God, which are termed *the calves of our lips* Hos. 14. 2. see the Notes also Psal. 50. 14, 15. And it may well be that in this

this request he had respect unto his exile, desiring, that seeing in that regard he could not offer any other sacrifices, God would therefore accept of these free-will-offerings of his mouth.

Vers. 109. *My soul is continually in my hand.*] That is, My life is continually in danger. The expression seems to be taken from the condition of souldiers in bat-tel, who may well be said to have their soul in their hands, because they are in such continuall danger, that unlesse they secure themselves by a strong hand, they are but dead men. But see the Notes Judg. 12. 3, & Job 13. 14.

Vers. 111. *Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever.*] To wit, as chu-fing & esteeming them above all things whatsoever. See the Note Deut. 33. 4.

Vers. 113. *I hate vain thoughts, &c.*] That is, I hate not only the doing, but e-ven the very thinking of evil; though I cannot wholly keep such thoughts out of my mind, yet I hate & resist them. But because the following clause, *but thy law do I love*, is added as in opposition to this, therefore the most of Expositours do particularly understand this of all humane inventions, wherewith men merely out of their own carnal reason might think to serve & please God, or might flatter themselves in any way not truly agreeable to Gods word; and that thele they are which David here professeth were hatefull to him, & that because he only made the law of God the rule of his life.

Vers. 116. *Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, &c.*] That is, Uphold & preserve me alive, maugre the rage of mine enemies; or uphold me in faith, and piety, & comfort, that so my soul may still be quickned with the grace, & chea-red with the comforts of thy spirit. And to the same purpose is the following verse, *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe, &c.*

Vers. 118. *Thou hast troden down all them that erre from thy statutes, &c.*] To wit, though they were never so high, & did never so proudly exalt themselves against thee: *for their deceit is falsehood*; that is, either 1. the shews of piety, wherewith such men deceived the world, are false and counterfeit; or rather 2. there is no-thing but falsehood in their fraudulent practises, wherewith they seek to ruine Gods faithfull servants, which must needs therefore make them hatefull to God, who is a God of truth; (& herein David might have respect to the false slanders which his enemies raised against him) or 3. all the subtle devices, wherewith they seek to prevail against the faithfull, do usually fail them, and come to nothing, themselves being often taken in the snares which they layd for others; or 4. (which most Interpreters do pitch upon) the imaginations & carnall confiden-ces, wherewith they flatter themselves to the deceiving of their own souls, either concerning any good they expect in their waies of wickednesse, or concerning their hopes of securing themselves, & escaping the judgements of God, prove alwaies in the conclusion lying vanities. However the Psalmists drift here, in ad-ding this concerning the dreadfull end of wicked men, is to imply, that for this partly he was the more carefull not to doe as they did, but to study Gods law, that he might walk in his waies & trust in his goodnesse, as is more evident in the following verse.

Vers. 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like drosse, &c.*] That is, Though

Though wicked men live a while mingled amongst thy faithfull people, as drosse is with gold & silver, yet at last thou art wont to take them away, even the greatest as well as the meaneſt, as drossy, worthlesse things, that so thy Church may be the purer: through thy fiery indignation they suddenly vanish away like smoke, even as drosse consumes away in the fining of metals. *Therefore I love thy testimonies*; to wit, because I am thereby taught so to live, that I may not thus perish with the wicked; & because this severity of thine against the wicked makes me the more highly to prize that word, wherein thou hast made known the riches of thy grace towards thy chosen people.

Verſ. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements.*] To wit, as being terrified with the judgements which God executed upon wicked men; of which he had spoken in the two foregoing verses. See also the Note Psal. 42. 6.

Verſ. 121. *I have done judgement & justice, &c.*] As if he should have said, And it is therefore without cause that mine enemies persecute me; & hereupon he infers, *leave me not to mine oppressours.*

Verſ. 122. *Be surety for thy servant for good, &c.*] That is, Interpose thy self betwixt me & mine enemies, & rescue me from their tyranny & oppression, (as sureties do poor debtours out of the hands of their cruel creditours) & that by undertaking to plead my cause, & to assert mine innocency.

Verſ. 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work, &c.*] To wit, to doe that which is thy proper work, as thou art the just judge of the whole world; that is, to punish & suppress the wicked, & to make good thy promises by helping thy poor servants out of their hands: as if he had said, Whatever becomes of me, *it is time for thee, Lord, to work*, for the vindicating of thine own glory. *For they have made void thy law*; to wit, in that they had no respect to it, but did merely what they pleased themselves, as if there had been no law, to which they were bound to submit themselves; yea in that they forced others to disobey it, & persecuted those that would have made it their rule; & especially too in that by their false glosses, & perverting of Gods laws, they made them of none effect. However it was not the purpose of the prophet hereby to prescribe God a time; only he seeks to God for deliverance, by pleading how seasonable it was to take vengeance on the wicked, when they were so ripe for judgement.

Verſ. 127. *Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, &c.*] That is, Because I saw that wicked men did so generally slight & make void thy law, therefore admiring their blindness and madness herein, out of a holy indignation against them, & that thy service might not wholly fall to the ground, my love to thy law became the more fervent; or, Because I was perswaded that God would undertake the defence of the righteous, & would not let the wickedness of the wicked go alwaies unpunished, therefore I did the more affectionately love thy law. And to the same purpose is that which follows in the next verse.

Verſ. 128. *Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, &c.*] That is, For the same reasons, (to wit, those mentioned in the foregoing Note) I am the more assuredly perswaded of the righteousness of thy whole law, and

do the more heartily embrace it: *and I hate every false way*; see the Note above vers. 104.

Vers. 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderfull, &c.*] See the Note above vers. 18: *therefore doth my soul keep them*; that is, even out of that reverence which in this regard I bear to them, I do willingly & heartily observe them.

Vers. 130. *The entrance of thy words giveth light, &c.*] That is, When thy words enter a mans heart, & make a sanctifying impression therein, then they enlighten his soul; or rather thus, When men do first enter upon the study of thy word, they shall presently find their understandings enlightened thereby: *it giveth understanding to the simple*; see the Note Psal. 119. 7.

Vers. 132. *Look thou upon me, &c.*] This David might say, either with respect to the false slanders that were raised against him by his enemies, from which to clear himself, he desires that God would look upon him, & take notice of his innocency; or with respect to his apprehension that God had for a time seemed to turn his back upon him, which makes him therefore desire that God would again look favourably upon him: & saith he, *be mercifull unto me, as thou usest to doe unto those that love thy name*; which is as if he had said, Though in this great misery I am in thou seemest to hide thy self from me, yet knowing that all thy faithfull servants have in all ages found thee mercifull to them, this emboldens me to begge of thee, that thou wouldest deale with me, as thou art wont to deale with those that sincerely love thee.

Vers. 139. *My zeal hath consumed me.*] See the Note Psal. 69. 9.

Vers. 140. *Thy word is very pure.*] It is in the Hebrew *tried or refined*; for which see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 31. & Psal. 12. 6.

Vers. 142. *Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, &c.*] To wit, the righteousness of God revealed in his word, as it contains both an eternall rule of righteousness for men, and also promises and threatnings, that shall be alwaies found righteous & faithfull; which is evident by the following clause, *& thy word is truth*: see also the Notes Psal. 111. 7, 8.

Vers. 143. *Thy commandments are my delight.*] He means the commandments with the promises annexed, or the whole doctrine of life & salvation revealed in the word.

Vers. 148. *Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.*] Because in the night there were severall watches, (see the Note Judg. 7. 19.) therefore the meaning may be, either that he was more carefull & ready to awake at severall times in the night, to meditate on Gods word, then those that were appointed to watch were to doe their duty therein (& yet we know the care of such men is usually very great, both to keep their times for watching, and to see that sleep doth not overtake them) for which see also the Note Psal. 63. 6; or else, that he did usually awake to meditate on Gods word at severall times in the night, before the watchmen did call upon him, who were wont, it seems, to call upon men to tell them the seasons of the night. But I rather think that by *the night watches* here are meant the last watch in every night, which is elsewhere called *the morning watch*, Exod. 14. 24; and so that he saith here is the same with that which

which he had said in the foregoing verse, *I prevented the dawning of the morning.*

Verf. 149. *O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgement.*] That is, according to thy word; see the Note verf. 25. The same is meant after verf. 154, 156, 159.

Verf. 150. *They draw nigh that follow after mischief, &c.*] That is, They draw nigh to me to doe me mischief: *they are far from thy law*; that is, they mind not thy law, & therefore no marvell though they care not what mischief they doe me.

Verf. 151. *Thou art near, O Lord, &c.*] That is, As mine enemies are near to mischief me, so thou art near to help me, & to destroy mine enemies: *& all thy commandements are truth*; to wit, the commandements, together with the promises & threatnings annexed; as if he should have said, & therefore I know thou art near unto me.

Verf. 152. *Concerning thy testimonies I have known of old, &c.*] That is, from my tender years, or from the first time that I began to study them; or, I have known by experience of old, even in all foregoing ages: *that thou hast sounded them for ever*; that is, that thou hast ordained them to stand firm for ever: see the Notes Psal. 111. 7, 8.

Verf. 155. *Salvation is far from the wicked; for they seek not thy precepts.*] That is, so far they are from keeping them, that they do not so much as desire to know them, nor endeavour to keep them: therefore I know that thou wilt not take part with my wicked enemies against me, but wilt protect me from their rage: or, seeing salvation is far from them that seek not thy precepts, therefore teach me thy law, that I may not be in this danger.

Verf. 159. *Consider how I love thy precepts.*] This may have particular reference to those words in the foregoing verse, *I beheld the transgressours & was grieved, because they kept not thy word*; as if from hence he would desire God to take notice how unfeignedly he loved Gods precepts.

Verf. 160. *Thy word is true from the beginning, &c.*] That is, from the beginning of the world, or, ever since thou didst make known thy word to thy people, it alwaies was unquestionably true. And then that it should alwaies continue so to be, is affirmed in the next clause, *and every one of thy righteous judgements endureth for ever*; for which see the Notes above, verf. 89. & 142. & Psal. 111. 7, 8.

Verf. 161. *Princes have persecuted me without a cause, &c.*] To wit, such as by their power were able to crush him, & therefore are usually most feared; & such as by their place should have been rather a refuge to him: & to be injured by such, men can least endure: *but my heart standeth in awe of thy word*; to wit, in that I am afraid to doe any thing contrary to thy law for fear of these my persecutours, & in that I dare not take liberty to doe evil to them, as they doe to me.

Verf. 162. *I rejoyce at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.*] The ground of this expression is, because the joy of such men is indeed alwaies exceeding great, that having been a while before in danger of losing their own lives, are suddenly not only advanced in their spirits with the honour of a glorious victory, but also greatly enriched with the spoils of their enemies. And the fitter this expression was for David, because he had been a great warriour, and because besides he had found the word very advantageous to him in his spirituall warfare.

Verf. 163. *I hate & abhorre lying, &c.*] That is, all false speaking & hypocrify, yea every false way contrary to the word of God; see the Note above verf. 29: & hence is the next clause opposed thereto, *but thy law do I love.*

Verf. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law, &c.*] That is, All things shall goe prosperously with them: *& nothing shall offend them*; that is, nothing shall hurt them. Or thus, *Great peace have they which love thy law*; that is, they shall enjoy great quiet of mind & peace of conscience, as knowing the filial affection which they bear to thy word, and being thereby assured of thy love and favour to them: *& nothing shall offend them*; that is, nothing shall trouble or disquiet them. This last clause is in the Originall, *they shall have no stumbling-blocks*; & so the meaning may be, that those things which prove stumbling-blocks to others to make them fall into sin, shall not, by reason of the great respect which they bear to Gods law, prove so unto them. But then this must be understood of such a stumbling & falling, as ends in a finall apostacy; for otherwise the best may fall into sin.

Verf. 168. *I have kept thy precepts & thy testimonies; for all my waies are before thee.*] This he addeth, either 1. by way of calling God to witnesse concerning the truth of that which he had said; or 2. as a reason why he was so carefull to keep Gods precepts; or 3. to set forth his sincerity in keeping Gods commandements, to wit, that he did it, not that he might approve himself to the eye of man, but that he might approve himself to God.

Verf. 172. *My tongue shall speak of thy word, &c.*] That is, I shall not only sing forth thy praise, but I shall also speak of thy word to the edification of others: *for all thy commandements are righteousness*; that is, they are most righteous, even the only perfect rule of righteousness, & consequently fit to be observed of all men, & the only means of reforming the unrighteousnesse of men; & from hence also he would imply, that therefore he would teach others therein, or that therefore he would extoll them, & declare to others how righteous they were: or, they are exceeding faithfull; & therefore I will declare the faithfulness of thy word, and teach others to trust in it.

Verf. 173. *Let thine hand help me, &c.*] To wit, in my seeking to know & keep thy precepts; or by delivering me out of my dangers and miseries, or out of the hands of my enemies.

Verf. 175. *Let my soul live, &c.*] See the Note above ver. 116: *& it shall praise thee*; to wit, all my days: *& let thy judgements help me*; that is, by thy judgements executed upon mine enemies, help me out of my troubles & dangers. But because in this Psalm by Gods judgements Gods laws are usually meant, the meaning of this clause may be this, *Let thy judgements help me*, that is, Let thy promises made to me in thy word be accomplished for my help; or, Let my integrity and sincere endeavour to keep thy judgements be for my help; or lastly, Let thy word help me in the praising of thy great name: for that indeed went immediately before this clause, *Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgements help me.*

Verf. 176. *I have gone astray like a lost sheep, &c.*] To wit, in regard of his wandering up & down from one place to another in the time of his exile, when he was shut out, as it were, from the Church, the sheep-fold of Gods people; or in regard

of his going astray through infirmity from the ways of Gods commandements; whereupon he desires the Lord, his shepheard, to seek him out, & bring him home again into the right way, whenever he should thus goe astray, *seek thy servant*: and the reason he gives in the next words, *for I do not forget thy commandements*; that is, though I may sin through frailty, yet my constant desire is that I may keep thy commandements.

P S A L M CXX.

The Title. **A** *Song of Degrees.*] There are here fifteen Psalms together that have all this Title. Some say, because they were culled out by the Jews to be sung at their severall stages or stations, as they went up from Babylon to return back to the land of Canaan: & others, because they were sung by the Levites on their solemn festivall daies, or else at the dedication of Solomons Temple upon the fifteen steps or stairs, whereby they went up by degrees to the house of the Lord. And indeed we read of certain stairs that were in Solomons Temple 2 Chron. 9. 11. *And the king made of the algame trees terrises* (or, as it is in the margin, *stairs*) *to the house of the Lord*; which some conceive to be the same that are called Neh. 9. 4. *the stairs of the Levites*, & to which the prophet Ezekiel may seem to allude Eze. 40. 6. But the most probable reasons that are given why these Psalms were called *songs of degrees* I conceive to be these. 1. Because they raised up their voices to a very high strain in singing these Psalms, or haply sung them in tunes, wherein they raised their voices by degrees still higher & higher; as it is said 2 Chron. 20. 19. that *the Levites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high*: or 2. because they were sung by the Levites standing in some high place, from whence the people might the better hear them: or 3. because they are Psalms of choicest use & greatest excellency, even as a man of eminency above others is 1 Chron. 17. 17. *tearmed a man of high degree*.

Verf. 3. *What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?*] As if he had said, Thou lookest for some great reward and preferment from men; but, alas, what is the recompence that shall be given thee? to wit, from the Lord. To which an answer is given in the next verse, *Sharp arrows of the mighty*, &c. But now it may be read, as it is in the margin, *what shall the deceitfull tongue give unto thee, or what shall it profit thee?* and then it is all one as if he had said, Alas, thou wilt gain nothing by it: meaning thereby, first, that no profit would thereby redound to him; others he might bring into great danger and distresse, but he the whilst should get nothing by it; and none but men desperately wicked would hurt others without hope of any advantage to themselves: and 2. that all their slanders & fraudulent dealing would come to nothing, because God would vindicate the innocency of his servants, & retort the evil intended against them upon the heads of those that sought to mischief them.

Verf. 4. *Sharp arrows of the mighty, &c.*] That is, the mighty God of heaven & earth shall suddenly bring upon thee (see the Note Deut. 32. 23.) plagues & sorrows and terrours, that shall pierce as deeply, and give thee as sore deadly

wounds, as do the sharpest arrows shot by a mighty man, & wherewith thou shalt be long tortured, according to the torments of him that should be burnt with coals of juniper; which is said, because, as they say, juniper wood, being of a saltish & fat and gummy substance, doth make a very scorching fire, and the coals thereof do burn exceedingly. And some there are that conceive, that by these *arrows of the mighty* are meant those terrours of conscience, which should stick like poysoned arrows in their bosoms, & that by the *coals of juniper* are meant the everlasting torments of hell. But now if we read the words as they are in the margin of our Bibles, *It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty man with coals of juniper*, then as in reference to the other translation of the foregoing verse, *What shall the deceitfull tongue give unto thee? or what shall it profit thee?* the drift of the Psalmist herein is to shew what a mischievous thing a false slanderous tongue is: as if he had said, whilst it yields no benefit to the slanderer, it is extremely mischievous to them that are slandered by him, *It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of juniper*; that is, they wound as deeply and deadly, as do such arrows (see the Note Psal. 57.4.) & that unawares when men are absent, & think not of the danger they are in: and the torment thereof is as the burning of juniper coals. For as juniper wood (according to the report of those that write of the nature of it) is 1. soon set on fire; 2. the fire in it spreads with much violent rage, and makes a mighty crackling noise; 3. the coals thereof scorch & burn exceedingly; & 4. they retain fire very long whilst they are covered over with ashes: so 1. the slanderous tongues of wicked men do soon raise up false reports of the righteous; 2. these false reports will spread apace with great clamours and noise; 3. they bring upon men much bitter sorrow; & 4. they are not easily suppressed when they are once raised, but even when they seem extinct, some jealousies thereof will be still nourished in mens breasts. And to this some adde, that as juniper coals burn sorely, whilst they yield a very sweet smell; so the tongue of the slanderer doth often sorely mischief a man, under a shew of speaking fairly & friendly of him.

Verf. 5. *Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, &c.*] A people that were descended from Meshech, one of the sons of Japhet, Gen. 10. 2. often mentioned in the prophesy of Ezechiel, as chap. 27. 13. & elsewhere. Many there are that think they are the same people, that were afterwards called Scythians, and at this day Muscovites; & that the rather, because these nations were of old famous archers, men of great might for drawing the bow; & *Mesech* may fairly be derived of an Hebrew word that signifyeth *to draw*: *that I dwell in the tents of Kedar*; that is, amongst the posterity of Kedar, the son of Ishmael, Gen. 25. 13. that dwelt in tents; and these are those that were called Arabians, a savage nation, that had no settled dwelling-place, but in their tents were still wandring up & down like beasts for their prey. And indeed both these nations were people fierce & barbarous, great robbers, and such as made nothing of taking away the lives of any that came in their way. Yet it was not because David ever dwelt amongst these nations, that he thus bewails himself here, *Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, &c.* but he speaks it either of the Philistines (as some conceive) amongst whom David was sometimes forced to hide himself, or rather of his own countrey-men, & that to set forth their barbarous

barous cruelty & inhumanity, & that especially in their seeking to take away his life by their false slanders; as if a man should say in these daies, living amongst those that professed themselves Christians, who yet notwithstanding should deal with him more like savages then Christians, *Wo is me that I sojourn amongst Turks & Pagans.* And withall we may note that David might the more fitly use this word sojourn, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesek, &c.* because in his exile he had indeed no settled habitation, but was continually forced to flee from one place to another.

P S A L M C X I.

Verf. 1. **I** *Will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.* That is, say some Expositours, I will look to the sanctuary or Temple, whose foundation was in the holy mountaines Psal. 87. 1. to wit, the hills of Zion & Moria; as knowing that my help must come from the Lord only, who hath chosen that for his dwelling place. But I rather conceive, with others, that the Psalmist speaks here, as one that were debating the matter with himself, from whence he should expect help in the danger he was in; & that accordingly he first sets down how he was inwardly moved & tempted to place his hope in outward helps, *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, &c.* but then corrects himself in the following verse, *My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven & earth;* as if he had said, Let me tast mine eyes whether I will, if I look not to him, I shall look & wait in vain. Accordingly therefore by *the hills* here is meant whatever is most eminent & glorious in the world, whatever may seem most firm & strong & invincible; & so the prophets aim must be to shew, that if he should expect help where it was most likely to be had in earthly things, such hopes would deceive him. Or else in saying *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills*, his meaning might be, either that he would look to them as places of refuge & defence against their enemies; or else that he would look about on every side for help: for because Canaan was a hilly mountainous countrey, see Exod. 15. 17. & Deut. 11. 11. or because there were *mountains round about Ierusalem* Psal. 125. 2. therefore to say that he would lift up his eyes to the hills, was all one in effect as if he had said, that he would look about on every side, to see if from any place help would come in to him. And indeed if David composed this Psalm, as some think, for the encouragement of himself & his souldiers, when he was to leade forth an army out of Ierusalem, (which may seem the more probable, because some expressions therein are so suitable to the condition of souldiers, as that verf. 6. *the sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night*) then by his lifting up his eyes to the hills he might mean, that at first he was solicitous what auxiliary forces would come in to him from the severall tribes of Israel; though at last he corrected himself, & concluded that it was God only upon whom his hope of help depended, as he saith in the next verse. But however, reading the words as they are translated in the margin of our Bibles, this is then clearly the drift of the place, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? from whence should my help come?* that is, how should I hence expect any help?

Verf. 3.

Verf. 3. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, &c.*] That is, to stumble or slide; see the Note Psal. 38. 16. And this may be taken as spoken by the Psalmist to himself, or to every particular godly man, according to that Psal. 91. 3. for which see the Note there. As for the following clause, *he that keepeth thee will not slumber*; it is observed by some Expositours, that in that expression the Psalmist alludes, according to what is said in the foregoing Note, to that constant order in all armies of appointing Sentinels to watch for the preservation of the whole army whilst they take their rest.

Verf. 5. *The Lord is thy shade, &c.*] Thy comfortable refreshing & protection; see the Note Numb. 14. 9: *at thy right hand*; see the Note Psal. 16. 8. And in this expression it may seem probable that the Psalmist alludes to that pillar of a cloud, whereby the Lord did not only guide the Israelites, but also shadow them from the heat of the sun, & the cold of the night; whence is that of the Psalmist Psal. 105. 39. *He spread a cloud for a covering*; see the Note also Exod. 13. 21. And thence is that which follows in the next verse.

Verf. 6. *The sun shall not smite thee by day, &c.*] That is, It shall not hurt thee with the heat thereof: *nor the moon by night*; to wit, with the cold and moist vapours which it raiseth. The meaning is, that God should preserve him from every thing that might hurt him. But the expression here used is suitable to the condition of souldiers, that usually are abroad in the open fields both by day and night, as is noted before verf. 1.

Verf. 7. *The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.*] That is, thy life; or, The Lord shall so far preserve thee from all evil, that nothing which befalls thee shall hurt thy soul, or prove prejudiciall to thine eternall salvation.

P S A L M CXXII.

Verf. 1. **I** *Was glad when they said unto me, Let us goe into the house of the Lord.*] The drift of David in this Psalm may be, only to set forth what delight he took in frequenting Gods house. But yet it is the opinion of almost all Expositours, that he composed this Psalm, when he had newly removed the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the city of Zion, as to the place wherein God had made known to him, that he would take up his settled habitation, according to that Psal. 132. 13, 14; & that his aim herein was, to expresse how exceeding glad he was, when he perceived by the peoples flocking together to worship God in this holy mountain, & by their exciting one another thereto, especially at the three solemn feasts, when all the males of Israel were to appear there before God, how acceptable this which he had done was, not only to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had now gotten the Ark, the sign of Gods presence, amongst them, but to all the people of the land in generall, yea & how unanimously they all rejoiced in this, that God had at last made good his promise, in providing a settled place for his worship and service.

Verf. 2. *Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.*] This may be taken

as the words of David, or as the words of those that stirred up him & others to goe to the Sanctuary, *Let us goe into the house of the Lord; our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Ierusalem.* And it is as if it had been said, We shall no longer now goe sometimes to one place to worship God, & sometimes to another, as we did before, when the Ark was now in one place & now in another; but Jerusalem must now be the settled place where we shall constantly meet to worship God, even unto the coming of the promised Messiah.

Verf. 3. *Ierusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.*] That is, whose buildings, first did not stand scattering, some in one place, & some in another, as it useth to be in villages, but were joyned closely & handsomely together, & that in a well-contrived order, & with a very comely proportion & uniformity in the structure; & 2. whose inhabitants were as firmly knit together with all possible unanimity and harmony of affection, being joyntly subject to the same government, & making profession of the same religion. All which is here spoken of Jerusalem with relation doubtlesse to her former condition; because in former times there had been two (if not three) towns in the place where Jerusalem stood, the one inhabited by the Jebusites, which was called the fort of Zion, the other by the Israelites: who did accordingly live under severall governments, & made profession of severall religions, till David took the fort of Zion; & then, it seems, he built all the vacant places in & between these two towns, and compassed them both with the same walls, & so did perfectly unite them together, and make of them one well-compacted city. And this is noted here by way of extolling the beauty & glory of this city, purposely thereby to settle in the hearts of the people an high esteem of it, & (which was the only foundation of all their safety and welfare) that they might still own it, as the city which God had chosen to be the only peculiar place of his worship, and the royall seat of that kingdome, under which they were to live in subjection unto all succeeding generations.

Verf. 4. *Whether the tribes goe up, &c.*] To wit, at the three solemn feasts: *the tribes of the Lord unto the Testimony of Israel*; that is, unto the Ark, which is called *the Testimony*, see the Note Numb. 17. 4; or unto the Tabernacle, or the Temple, where the Ark was; whence the Tabernacle is usually in the books of Moses called *the Tabernacle of testimony*.

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and religion; & that because he knew that the safety & happinesse of them all depended upon the welfare of Jerusalem, in that God had established that to be the seat of the Sanctuary and kingdome: neither could they be happy any longer then they enjoyed Gods Ordinances there, and lived under the government of that kingdome.

P S A L M CXXIII.

Verf. 1. **U**Nto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.] As if he had said, Finding all things in outward appearance hopelesse & desperate here below, I look up unto thee, O Lord, in whom there is hope for thy people in their greatest extremities. And indeed if this Psalm was composed for the use of Gods people (as it is probably thought by many Expositours) when they were in Babylon, or under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, they might well then say that they had no hope in the world, but in God only.

Verf. 2. *Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of a handmaid unto the hands of her mistresse, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, &c.*] The faithfull waiting upon and looking up unto God may here be compared to servants looking to the hand of their master or mistresse in three regards especially: 1. as servants & slaves of old did wholly depend upon the good will & pleasure of their masters & mistresses for their food & raiment, and whatever else they wanted, not daring to challenge any thing, but patiently waiting to receive what they were pleased to give them; so the faithfull do quietly wait upon God for a supply in all their necessities: 2. as such servants when they were beaten were wont to cast back their eyes sadly upon the hand of their master or mistresse that beat them, even by their mournfull looks begging as it were for mercy; so are Gods servants wont to look with weeping eyes unto the Lord, when ever he corrects them: & 3. as such servants, however they were wronged, yet were not allowed to revenge themselves, nor to lift up a hand against those that injured them; in such thralldome they lived in this regard, that they might not carry either sword or any other weapon about them; and therefore whenever they were injured they still had recourse to their masters for aid, expecting that they should take their part, & defend them against those that injured them; so also it is with Gods servants, they look up still to God, to whom vengeance belongs, for protection & help against those that oppresse and afflict them. And indeed this last is most agreeable to the sequle of the Psalm, wherein they complain how exceedingly they were oppressed by their enemies. As for that last clause, *untill that he have mercy upon us*, as it implies their confidence that God would help them, so also their resolution patiently to wait upon God, till he were pleased to help, though he deferred it never so long.

P S A L M CXXIV.

Verf. 1. **I**f it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, &c.] Some Expositours conceive that David speaks here in generall of all the wonderfull deliverance which God had wrought for the Israelites in all ages. But because of those words, *now may Israel say*, I rather think that he speaks here of some particular deliverance, upon occasion whereof this Psalm was composed, & wherein it was unquestionably clear that God alone had saved them by his almighty power; as haply that from Absaloms conspiracy, or that from the invasion of the Philistines, 2 Sam. 5. 17, 18, or some other of the like nature.

Verf. 3. *Then they had swallowed us up quick, &c.*] That is, They had utterly destroyed us, & that as speedily as a man is swallowed up that falls into deep waters; for that he alludes thereto in this expression, is evident in the following verse.

Verf. 4. *Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul.*] See the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 5. Psal. 32. 6, & 69. 1.

Verf. 6. *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.*] This phrase implyes, 1. that the mightiest enemies of Gods people cannot prevail over them, even in their greatest weaknesse, unlesse the Lord deliver them into their hands; & 2. that this, because of their sins, God in his justice might now have done, but that of his mercy he was pleased to spare them.

Verf. 7. *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler.*] See the Note Psal. 91. 3.

P S A L M CXXV.

Verf. 1. **T**hey that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, &c.] The meaning is, that as mount Zion stood fast & could not be overturned, though the winds on every side should blow with never such violence upon it; so the Church shall never be overthrown, but in the midst of all the changes & confusions that are in the world, & all the persecutions that are raised against her, she shall stand fast and continue for ever: and so shall it be with every faithfull member of the Church, in regard of their constant perseverance in the right way unto eternall salvation. Only we must know, that because mount Zion was a type of the Church, therefore the Psalmist sets forth the stability of the Church by the stedfast standing of mount Zion, rather then of any other mountain.

Verf. 3. *For the rod of the wicked, &c.*] That is, the persecution & oppression of wicked men, the rod whereby they scourge & beat Gods faithfull servants; or the rod & scepter, the tyrannicall government of wicked men: *shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous*; that is, upon the Church, or upon their substance & inheritance: *lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity*; that is, say some, lest

they stretch forth their hands in praying to idols; or, (for it is not safe so to limit the words) lest by the prosperity of such wicked men they be tempted to partake with them in their sins; or, lest through despair or faint-heartednesse & fear of suffering, they yield to doe any thing that is evil, or take any unlawfull course to help themselves. And indeed that phrase of putting forth their hands unto iniquity seemes to imply, either some sly, close & secret stealing forth of mens hands, as it were, to do something that is evil, thereby to avoid suffering; or some sodain reaching forth their hands, being overborn by the violence of temptation, to some unlawfull way of securing themselves, even as men ready to fall or sink in the water will sodainly catch at any thing that is within their reach to save themselves.

Verf. 4. *Doe good, O Lord, unto those that be good, &c.*] This may be understood more particularly (as in reference to what was said in the foregoing verse) of Gods sending them such seasonable deliverance from the oppression of wicked men, that they might not put forth their hands unto iniquity.

Verf. 5. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked waies, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, &c.*] That is, God shall cut them off & destroy them; yea & at the last judgement, separating them from his elect people, he shall cast them together with other reprobates into the pit of hell: for in this expression, *the Lord shall lead them forth, &c.* there is doubtlesse an allusion to that usuall custome of leading forth malefactours in publick from the place of their imprisonment to the place of execution. But what is meant here by those that *turn aside unto their crooked waies*? & why is it said that they shall be led forth *with the workers of iniquity*? I answer, that this may be probably expounded severall waies: as 1. that those cunning hypocrites, that professe themselves to be of the number of Gods people, & make a shew of religion, and yet the whilst do secretly turn aside into the crooked waies of any base sinfull practises, shall be punished no lesse then those that are openly profane, yea no lesse then the heathen, that are professedly workers of iniquity; or 2. that those that forsake the waies of righteousness, & turn aside into the crooked waies of wickednesse, shall be destroyed no lesse then those that have alwaies given up themselves to work iniquity; or 3. (which I like the best, because it best agreeth with that which went before verf. 3, 4.) that those that in times of persecution, when the rod of the wicked is upon the lot of the righteous, shall for fear or hope of favour deny the faith, or take any other crooked sinfull way, to secure or advance themselves, shall be punished as workers of iniquity; no pretence of the temptations by means whereof they were seduced, shall keep them from being numbred amongst workers of iniquity, nor from being punished as such: for this expression, *the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity*, is to the same effect with this, the Lord shall punish them as workers of iniquity; as if we should say, They that secretly filch away other mens goods, the judge shall punish them with thieves. And as for that last clause, *but peace shall be upon Israel*, therein is this covertly implied, that the destruction of such hypocrites shall tend to the peace of the truly faithfull.

P S A L M CXXVI.

Verf. 1. **W**hen the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, &c.] That is, When the Lord brought the Jews back from Babylon into their own countrey: *we were like them that dream*; the mercy seemed so incredible, so far above all hope and expectation, that at first we could scarce tell whether it were so indeed, or whether we were not all the while in a dream; as it is said of Peter, when the Angel had carried him out of prison, Act. 12. 9. *that he wist not that it was true which was done by the Angel, but thought he saw a vision*. And indeed that a heathen king should of his own accord send home Gods captived people into their own land, & that with a charge to build again the city Jerusalem and the Temple therein, & a command to his subjects, to afford them all requisite accommodations thereunto, giving them likewise all the vessels of the Temple, with great riches besides, it was a matter of great wonder; & the people here do observe it, to shew what great cause they had to blesse God for it.

Verf. 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, & our tongue with singing.*] See the Note Job 8. 21. The time was when they hung up their harps upon the willows, & could not sing for bitterneffe of spirit, *How shall we sing, say they, the Lords song in a strange land?* see Psal. 137. 2, 4: but now they had taken them down again, and could sing Psalm upon Psalm, and were never weary of singing. *Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them*; that is, even the Chaldeans & Persians, together with other nations, amongst whom the Jews had lived as the most despised nation under heaven, and who had wont to insult over them for their confidence in God, and to flout at them and their religion, Psal. 137. 3. *Sing us, say they, one of the songs of Zion*, were by the wonder of our deliverance forced to acknowledge, that our God had shewed great love to us in the great things he had done for us.

Verf. 3. *The Lord hath done great things for us, &c.*] As if the Jews should have said, (for in their name the Psalmist here speaks) If you that are our enemies say so, who speak it haply with repining spirits, well may we say so with glad hearts, for whom God hath done it.

Verf. 4. *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, &c.*] That is, Bring home the rest of our brethren, that are still captives in Babylon, as thou hast brought us home. For we must know, that though part of the Jews were returned, when this Psalm was penned, upon liberty granted them by the Proclamation of Cyrus, as is noted before verf. 1; yet the greatest number by far stayed still in Babylon, according to that Isa. 10. 22. *though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return*: apprehending the tediousnesse of the journey, how great the perils were they were like to meet with in their way homeward, & how impossible it seemed that they should recover their land again, from which they had been carried away captives so many years ago, and withall being grown, some of them at least, well enough contented with their present condition; either for fear or sloth, they preferred certain rest, though under bondage, & that amongst

idolaters, before hope of liberty, & of recovering their ancient inheritance, accompanied with so many dangers and troubles. And therefore no wonder it is, though that remnant of the Jews that were returned to their own countrey do still pray thus for their brethren that were behind, *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, &c.* Yea some conceive that in these words they do also pray that God would perfect the mercy of their deliverance out of Babylon to those that were returned, by settling them quietly in their land, & freeing them from that mighty opposition they met with in their rebuilding of their city & Temple, by means of the envy & malice of their neighbours round about them. As for that clause, *as the streams in the South*, we must take notice, first, that by *the South* here is meant barren and dry desarts; for because on the South of Canaan there lay great desarts, dry and sandy, yea the South parts of Canaan it self were dryer then other parts of the land were, whence was that of Calebs daughter to her father, *Thou hast given me a South land, give me also springs of water*, (see the Note Josh. 15. 19.) therefore by the South in the Scripture is usually meant the desert or wilderness, as in Psal. 75. 6. *promotion cometh neither from the East nor from the West, nor from the South*, which is in the Hebrew, *nor from the desert*: and 2. that in those dry desarts God did sometimes send mighty land-floods, either by sudden violent showers of rain, or by the melting of the snow upon the mountains. Accordingly therefore when the Church here praves, *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the South*, either 1. they mean thereby, that God would bring home their captivated brethren in great multitudes, so that they might cover the waies as they went, as those mighty streams in the South were wont to overflow & cover the earth, and that speedily & suddenly too, as those land-floods used to come suddenly, when there was a little before no appearance of water: or 2. they would imply hereby, that though it would be a work of great wonder, like that of bringing streams of water into the dry desarts, yet God was able to doe it: or 3. they would hereby intimate how great a refreshing this would be to them; that the turning again of their captivity would be as welcome a mercy to them, as it would be to the traveller, that is to goe through dry desarts, to meet there with some sweet streams of water for the refreshing of himself.

Verf. 5. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.* That is, as the poor husbandman that sows in tears, either for the toil of his work, or the unseasonableness of the weather, or especially when in times of dearth & scarcity he casts the corn, that should nourish himself & his family, into the ground, and that too but upon uncertain hopes, as knowing that often when men carry out much, they bring in little, as is threatned Deut. 28. 38. yet when a plentiful harvest comes, he then reaps with joy; & haply hath the richer harvest, when his seed-time was saddest, according to that usuall proverb, that *corn sown in a flood, comes up like a wood*: so they that do what God requires, in hope of a retribution from God, according to his will revealed in his word, though they may meet with much affliction & sorrow therein, yet shall doubtlesse at last reap what they expected with exceeding great joy; yea their foregoing sorrow shall be in part a cause or occasion of their greater joy. And with this generall sentence the Psalmist concludes this Psalm:

Psal. partly with respect to the experience which some of the Jews had already had of the truth hereof in their deliverance out of Babylon, when they went into captivity, in hope that God would make good what he had promised them by the prophet Jeremy, that after a certain time he would bring them back again with joy into their own land, their faith & patience & prayers was precious seed, sown not without many tears because of their misery; but when God brought them back with so much riches & glory, then they reaped with joy, according to that Isa. 51. 11. *the redeemed of the Lord shall return, & come with singing unto Zion, & everlasting joy shall be upon their head*: & partly by way of encouragement for the time to come, both to those that were behind in Babylon, & those likewise that were employed in repairing Jerusalem, &c. but were many waies in a very sad condition, by reason of the great opposition, & manifold discouragements they met with in that service; even to put them in hope, that after this sad seed-time they should have a joyfull harvest; which is again repeated in the following verse.

Verf. 6. *He that goeth forth; &c.*] That is, that goeth out of doors to sow his seed; or, that in the field goeth on still forward, casting his seed into the ground: *& weepeth, bearing precious seed*; that is, good & choice corn, that is fit for seed; or corn when it is scarce & dear, & so it grieveth him the more to part with it: *shall doubtlesse come again with rejoycing, bringing his sheaves with him*; to wit, when at harvest he comes home out of the field with his carts laden with sheaves.

P S A L M CXXVII.

The Title. **A** *Song of degrees, &c.*] See the Note on the Title Psal. 120. for *Solomon*, or, of *Solomon*, as it is in the margin of our Bibles. And indeed because this psalm treats concerning the well ordering of private families & publick states, in the knowledge whereof Solomon through the grace of God did especially excell, & because that which is here delivered is in effect much the same with that which is declared in the book of Ecclesiastes, it may seem very probable that Solomon was the authour of this Psalm; see the Title Psal. 72.

Verf. 1. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, &c.*] For this phrase of building the house, see the Notes Exod. 1. 21. & 2 Sam. 7. 11: *except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* The meaning of both clauses is, that no care or labour of men can avail to the encrease & welfare of private families; & that no watchfulness or endeavours of magistrates and others subordinate to them, can be successfull for the preservation & prospering of publick states, except the Lord give a blessing thereunto. And it is not improbable which some conceive, namely, that this Psalm was composed to be used at the dedication of their new-built houses: for which see the Notes Deut. 20. 5, & on the Title of the 30. Psalm.

Verf. 2. *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late.*] This may be understood as spoken to them which watch & ward for the preservation of a city, or to magistrates that use to wake when others sleep, in consulting about the welfare of the common-

commonwealth, according to what is said in the foregoing verse; or rather of those that toil and moil themselves in private families, for the advancing of their private estates, as appears by the following words, *to eat the bread of sorrows*, that is, coarse homely meat, (as Dan. 10. 3. that which we translate there *pleasant bread*, is in the Original, *bread of desires*) or rather, bread gotten with much labour and sorrow, & eaten with much grief & vexation, whilst men out of a covetous humour do even grudge themselves the very bread they put into their mouths. As for the following words, *for so he gives his beloved sleep*, that hath reference to what he had said concerning the providence of God, that without that all endeavours of men were in vain: *for*, saith he, *so he gives his beloved sleep*; that is, through Gods provident care over his beloved, & their reposing themselves quietly thereon, they can seasonably sleep in peace, and fare better then those that wear out themselves with carking cares. And probable it is that in those words, *his beloved*, Solomon might allude to that other name of *Iedidiah*, which God had given him, that is, *beloved of the Lord*, 2 Sam. 12. 25.

Verf. 3. *Loe, children are an heritage of the Lord, &c.*] This is added, because by children a mans house is built, according to the phrase of the Scripture; so to make good what was said before verf. 1. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it*: see the Note there.

Verf. 4. *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth.*] That is, children in their youth, or children begotten in the youth of their parents, as Joseph, because he was begotten by his father when he was old, is called *the son of his old age*, Gen. 37. 3. and a husband married to a maid in her youth is called Joel 1. 8. *the husband of her youth*. Now these are said to be, to wit, when they are blessed of God, *as arrows are in the hand of a mighty man*, to imply 1. that they are alwaies ready at hand to goe whethersoever their father will send them, & to doe whatsoever he will enjoin them; 2. that they are healthfull, strong, of generous dispositions, vertuous, & active, fit for any service he shall imploy them in, and able to effect the greatest exploits; and 3. especially that they are a defence to their father against all wrongs whatsoever, and a terrour to his enemies. And this is said here of *children of the youth*, that is, (according to the most received of the Expositions before mentioned) children begotten by the father in his youth, either because such are usually most strong and vigorous; and are also often best qualified in other regards, by means that their father lives to see that they be well educated; or else because parents seldome live to have any comfort or service from children that are born to them in their old age.

Verf. 5. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them, &c.*] That is, his house; or, that hath many such children: *they shall not be ashamed*; that is, all that are parents of such children shall not need to be ashamed, as those parents must needs be that are usually reproached with the wickednesse of their children; or, *they*, that is, such children, *shall not be ashamed*, to wit, because being vertuous & good, they shall be able therefore to give an account of their lives, & to stop the mouths of false accusers; or, (joyning both together) such a father & his children shall not be ashamed, & why? the reason is implied in the following words,
but

but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate: that is, they shall plead their fathers cause before the tribunal of the magistrate, & defend him from the wrongs & oppressions of his enemies; or, they shall be able to oppose any enemies that shall assault the city: & indeed some read this last clause thus, *they shall subdue (or destroy) the enemies in the gate.* See the Note Gen. 22. 17.

P S A L M CXXVIII.

Verf. 1. **B**lessed is every one that feareth the Lord, &c.] This Psalm some conceive to have been composed for the use of the Jews at their marriages.

Verf. 2. *For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands, &c.*] Many blessings are implied in this: as 1. that God should prosper the labours of such a man, that he should reap the fruit of his labours; 2. that what he gets should be preserved to him for his use; 3. that by this means he should be able to live of his own, and neither depend upon the bounty of others, nor be chargeable to others; 4. that this estate of his own whereon he lived should not be gotten by any unjust means, but by his honest labours, which is of all the most comfortable; 5. that he should live contentedly though he had no more then what he earned with his daily labours; & 6. that God should give him a heart to enjoy with comfort what he hath gotten.

Verf. 3. *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, &c.*] That is, she shall bear thee many children, & shall be an ornament to thy family, and the continuall delight of thine eyes, and gladness of thy heart. This I conceive is chiefly intended here in these words. Yet withall observable it is how fitly a wife is compared to a vine by the sides of the house, both because it is the praise of the wife to be much at home in the house, & there her business continually lyes; & because as the vine, being a weak plant, cannot grow up by it self, but as it is by some means born up & supported, so doth the wife, by reason of the weakness of her sex, stand in continuall need of being upheld and born up by the care of her husband. And so for the next clause, *thy children like olive plants round about thy table*, as it implies the blessing of many children; so also that the children he had should be healthfull, fair, fresh & flourishing, (see the Note Psal. 52. 8.) hopefully sprouting, & growing up continually, so that their father should delight to look upon them, & to have them with him; as likewise that they should be well qualified & vertuous, & such as in time should yield the sweet fruit of much comfort & benefit to their parents: to which some adde too, because olive branches were used as emblems of peace, that they should be the means of keeping peace between their parents.

Verf. 5. *The Lord shall blesse thee out of Zion, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 20. 2. These words *out of Zion* are added, to put them in mind of the Covenant which God had made with them: so that it is as if he had said, Our God that dwelleth in Zion shall from thence heare the prayers which there thou offerest up unto him, and shall blesse thee with all the blessings of his people, according to his covenant, and the promises he hath made to us: & thou shalt see the good of Ierusalem all the daies of thy

thy life, meaning that he should delight to see the flourishing estate of Gods Church, & that he should have a share in her blessings.

P S A L M CXXIX.

Verf. 1. **M**Any a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say, &c.] That is, ever since God had first a Church upon earth, as was seen in the murder of Abel; or rather, ever since the seed of Israel became a people, which was whilst they abode in Egypt; for indeed the time of their being there, and of Gods delivering them from thence, is often elsewhere in the Scripture called the time of Israels youth, as Ezek. 23. 3. & Hof. 2. 14, 15.

Verf. 3. *The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.*] By the plowers plowing upon their backs is meant, that their enemies had rent and torn them, & grievously afflicted them, with all possible cruelty, no otherwise then as if men lying with their faces upon the earth should have plows again and again driven over their backs; & by making long their furrows is meant, that they had used them thus despihtfully and cruelly a long time together. But yet withall the aim of saying that this was done upon their backs, might be to imply, either that this was done by the heavy burthens which their enemies laid upon them; or that the deep slashes which their enemies by scourging them had made in their backs, were like so many furrows which the plow makes in the earth. Neither is it altogether improbable which some adde, that the Holy Ghost might also intend covertly to intimate by this expression, that in all this cruelty of the enemy, God made use of them as his husbandmen to till his field, the Church, that through these afflictions they might be the better prepared to receive the seed of his word & spirit, & might afterward yield him the more fruit, as a field doth that is well plowed and manured.

Verf. 4. *The Lord is righteous; he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*] That is, even in the heat of their persecuting Gods people, God hath broken their power, & frustrated all their plots & practices, & so hath taken them off, that they can proceed no further; & all this on a sodain, as when one should cut asunder the harnessse or plow-gear, wherewith the plow is drawn, the plow must needs stand still, nor can the husbandman carry it on any further.

Verf. 5. *Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.*] See the Notes Psal. 35. 4. & 40. 15.

Verf. 6. *Let them be as the grasse on the house tops, &c.*] Because the houses in Judea were built flat on the tops, & so out of the clefts & crevices between the stones there grasse or green corn would usually sprout out, which yet for want of earth and moisture was soon blasted by the heat of the sun, thence is it that the Psalmist useth this similitude, praying that the enemies of the Church, even when they were at the greatest height, might yet be but as such grasse or green corn on the house tops.

Verf. 7. *Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves, his bo-*
some.]

some.] That is, which never comes to be mowen, nor bound up in sheaves, as the corn in the fields doth. And in this expression here used the reason hereof is intimated, namely, because if it should grow up, it would not be worth the reaping and gathering; there is but only a little here & there that sprouts up, the harvest-man cannot cut it down by handfuls, nor grasp his arms full in his bosome, when he gathers it to bind it up in sheaves, as he doth in the corn fields. And the same is intended in the following verse.

Verf. 8. *Neither do they which goe by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you, &c.*] That is, such grasse or green corn on the house tops never comes to be mowen, or gathered in by the harvest-men, who should thereupon have the prayers of those that passe by, as they usually have when they are working in the field. The drift of all this is, to expresse their earnest desire that the enemies of Gods people might be suddenly destroyed.

P S A L M CXXX.

Verf. 1. **O** *Ut of the depth have I cried unto thee, O Lord.*] That is, out of the depths of seeming desperate tribulations & dangers, & likewise of overwhelming sorrows by reason of my sins; see the Notes Psal. 40. 2, & 68. 22, & 71. 2. see also the Note upon the Title of the sixth Psalm.

Verf. 3. *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand?*] See the Note Psal. 1. 5. It is as if the Psalmist should have said, If thou shouldest take strict notice of the iniquities of men, with a purpose to deal with them according to their deserts, no man could ever escape thy just vengeance; & if the holiest of men cannot justify himself before thy tribunal, alas, what shall become of me? For doubtlesse the Psalmists aim in these words is to imply, 1. that he acknowledged that God had justly for his sins cast him into those depths of misery wherein he lay, & that he might also justly upon the same ground reject his prayers; and 2. that therefore he did not desire deliverance out of his miseries, because of any righteousness of his own, but only that he should doe it of his own free grace & mercy; as is also more fully expressed in the following verse.

Verf. 4. *But there is forgiveness with thee. &c.*] That is, Thou art & hast declared thy self to be a God ready to forgive poor penitent sinners; or, there is forgiveness to be had from thee, if men seek it as they ought to doe: *that thou maist be feared*; that is, that thou maist be worshiped by men in a right manner; for fear here is taken, as it is often elsewhere in the Scripture, for the whole worship of God. Gods readinesse to forgive poor penitent sinners, & to deliver them out of their troubles, is the great encouragement to draw men to serve God, and to pray to him for mercy when they are in misery (as the Psalmist now did) & that as children seek to their father, fearing to offend him, even because of his goodnessse.

Ver. 6. *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more then they that watch for the morning, &c.*] That is, more eagerly then they that watch in the last watch of the night do wait for the first breaking of the day: either because they watch abroad in dangerous

times, & perhaps too in tedious weather; or else merely because being tired with long watching they long for the morning, that then they may goe & take their rest. See the Note also Psal. 119. 148.

Verf. 7. *With the Lord there is mercy, & with him there is plenteous redemption.*] That is, He is infinitely gracious to pardon the sins of his people, though never so many & great, and as infinitely able, by innumerable incredible waies and means, to deliver them out of all their troubles and miseries.

Verf. 8. *And he shall deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*] That is, He will pardon and deliver them from all their sins, which have been the causes of their sufferings, and that for the merits of Christ their Redeemer; and so consequently he will deliver them also from all their sufferings & sorrows.

P S A L M CXXXI.

Verf. 1. **L**ord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, &c.] It is in the Hebrew, *my heart is not lifted up, &c.* which was according to that law which God gave for the king of Israel, *that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren*, Deut. 17. 20. But for the better understanding of these words, we must know, that David might speak them, either with respect to the time before he was settled in the throne of Israel, professing hereby, that however Sauls flattering Courtiers had continually reported of him, that he sought Sauls ruine, and out of pride & ambition sought to step into his throne, yet the Lord the searcher of all hearts knew, that he did never of himself aspire to, nor look after any such worldly greatness, but did still refer himself to the will of God, being content to be in whatever condition God was pleased to dispose of him: or else with respect to the times when he sat in the throne of Israel; & that accordingly he protests in these words, that though God had exalted him to the highest pitch of honour that man upon earth can be capable of, in that he had made him both a prophet and a king, & had set him in the throne promised to the Messiah, the only-begotten Son of God, & had furnished him with excellent gifts suitable to this dignity, yet his heart was not exalted hereby to think highly of himself, neither did he carry himself in his place proudly & arrogantly, his utmost ambition being still only this, that he might be serviceable to God and his people: *neither* (saith he) *do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me*; that is, I have kept my self within the bounds of my calling, & have not, in the confidence of mine own wisdom & power, undertaken things that were above my reach; neither did I of my self undertake to be a prophet or king, nor have I sought to enlarge my dominions, or attempted any thing of the like nature, but as I was called thereto of God, to whose will in all things I submitted my self.

Verf. 2. *Surely, I have behaved & quieted my self as a child that is weaned of his mother, &c.*] By quieting himself he means, that he had bridled himself from, & suppressed in himself, all those inordinate motions & desires, wherewith ambitious men, that would be over-wise & provident for themselves, do usually disquiet both themselves & others, & whereunto himself was naturally enclined as well as

as others. And he compares himself to a child that is weaned of his mother, which he repeats again in the last clause of the verse, *my soul is even as a weaned child*, not to imply, that he was as free from all pride, & ambitious desires after great things, and revengefull thoughts, as such infants are (for to imply this it had been enough to have said, that he was as a child, without adding that of a child *weaned of his mother*, as we see in the like expression of our Saviours, Matth. 18. 3. *Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*;) but rather to imply his quiet recumbency upon God in any estate & condition whatsoever: that as a child that is weaned from the breasts of the mother, is notwithstanding no way solicitous for it self how it shall be fed, but still hangs upon the mother, and rests upon her for every thing whatsoever, & though it have not what it naturally most desires, the milk of the breast, yet it is contented to be fed with what the mother gives it; so did he wholly cast his care upon God, as one that could doe nothing for himself, and even when the Lord was pleased to withhold from him what he expected, & to keep him in a low & afflicted condition, yet he patiently still submitted himself to Gods good will & pleasure, & was contented to be what God would have him.

Verf. 3. *Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.*] As if he should have said, Let all the Israel of God therefore learn by mine example to have mean thoughts of themselves, that so accordingly they may not trust in themselves, but in God alone. And indeed because the performance of Gods promises made to David concerning his being settled in the throne, tended so much to the common good of the whole Israel of God, well might his confidence, that God would perform his promises made to him, encourage them also to hope in the Lord.

P S A L M CXXXII.

Verf. 1. **L**ord, remember David & all his afflictions.] Because Solomon made use of some verses of this Psalm, to wit, verf. 8, 9, 10. almost word for word, in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, 2 Chron. 6. 41, 42. (for which see the Notes there) it is hence evident that this Psalm was composed before that time: & probably therefore either by David, to be sung when the Ark was removed from the house of Obed-Edom to Zion, or for the use of his son Solomon when he came to build the Temple; or else by Solomon himself, that the people might use it all the time the Temple was building, or particularly at the great solemnity of the Temples dedication. But however, the drift of this petition, *Lord, remember David & all his afflictions*, is to desire of God, that by settling and prospering the throne of David, & the Temple, & the place of his publick worship, & by blessing the service that was there done him, he would make it evident that he was mindfull of him, & did highly esteem him, both for what he had suffered for his sake, and especially for his great solicitousnesse to have built God a house, which is the chief thing that is intended by *his afflictions*. For first, because when David had made known how earnestly desirous he was to build

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God a Temple, God did hereupon tell him that his son should doe it, though he might not, and did withall make many gracious promises to him, concerning his kingdom, the Temple, & the flourishing estate of his Church & people, 2 Sam. 7. 10, 16. (concerning which see the Notes there) therefore this, *Lord, remember David and all his afflictions*, is all one in effect as if this had been added too, And remember also the promises which thou didst then make unto him; for so we see the like expression used, Deut. 9. 27. *Remember thy servants Abraham & Isaac & Jacob, look not unto the stubbornesse of this people*; that is, Remember the covenant which thou madest with Abraham & Isaac & Jacob, and because of that do not destroy this people, though they be a stubborn people. And 2. because David had undergone so many afflictions, in a manner all his daies, for the advancement of Gods glory, & that in confidence that God would at last doe for him what he had promised him, and because he had been so anxiously solicitous to build a house for the Lord, therefore in these words; *Lord, remember David & all his afflictions*, this also may be comprehended, that even in this regard God would be the readier to doe good to him, who had been so zealous for his glory, & had suffered so much for his sake.

Vers. 2. How he swore unto the Lord, &c.] See the Note 2 Sam. 7. 3: *& vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob*; that is, the God whom Jacob worshipped and trusted in, as an almighty God, Gen. 49. 24. & who by his almighty power had delivered Jacob out of all his dangers and troubles.

Vers. 3. Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, &c.] To avoid the absurdity of thinking, that David should make such a rash & unwarrantable vow as this might seem to be, that till he had his desire satisfied in that which is afterwards expressed, he would abide in the open air, & never goe within his doors, nor ever take any rest either by day or by night, some say that David spake this with reference to his purpose of taking the fort of Zion from the Jebusites, 2 Sam. 5. 6, where by revelation he knew that God meant to have the Ark settled, and which he might probably think would be accomplished within some short time. And then others again say, that he meant it only of that stately cedar house, which he had lately built for himself in Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 7. 1, 2. to wit, that he would not goe into that house; & so also that he would not goe up unto his bed; nor (vers. 4.) give any sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids, to wit, in that house. But neither of these expositions give me any satisfaction. I rather take these to be hyperbolicall expressions of the continuall exceeding great care, wherewith he was perplexed about providing a settled place for the Ark to rest in, like that Prov. 6. 4, 5: *Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids; deliver thy self as a roe from the hand of the hunter, &c.* Neither is it any more in effect then if he had said, *I will never lay by this care, to mind my self in any thing whatsoever, I shall never with any content abide in mine own house, or with any quiet rest in my bed, untill, &c.*

Vers. 5. Untill I find out a place for the Lord, &c.] That is, Untill I find where the place is, of which God hath so long since spoken, (see the Note Deut. 12. 5.) that there he would have his habitation, & that there the Ark should take up its settled

settled abode; or rather, Untill I provide, prepare or build a dwelling place for the Lord; for so the same expression is used Act. 7. 46. where it is said of David, that he *found favour before God, & desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob*, and so it is more clearly expressed in the following clause, *an habitation* (or, as it is in the Hebrew, *habitations*; for which see the Note Psal. 43. 3.) *for the mighty God of Jacob*, see above vers. 2.

Vers. 6. *Loe, we heard of it at Ephratah, &c.*] A very obscure place this is. But the most probable expositions that I find amongst Expositours are these. 1. That in these words a reason is given why David was so solicitous to have the Ark brought into its resting place, and why the people were so glad to have this done, to wit, because formerly it had been still in a fleeting condition, carried up and down from one place to another: to expresse which they say, *we heard of it at Ephratah*, that is, we heard of the Ark, that in old time before our daies it was in *Ephratah*, that is, in the land of Ephraim, to wit, in Shiloh (& indeed why might not the land of Ephraim be called *Ephratah*, seeing we find that Jeroboam, because he was of the tribe of Ephraim, is called *an Ephraimite*? 1 Kings 11. 26.) *we found it in the fields of the wood*, that is, when the Philistines brought back the Ark out of their countrey, we found it in the field of Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. 6. 12, 13, 14; or when David went to fetch it to mount Zion, we found it in Kiriathjearim, 1 Sam. 7. 1. 1 Chron. 13. 5, 6. which signifyeth properly a town or city of woods, that is, situated nigh unto woods; and so the full scope of these words is as if they should have said, Thus hath the Ark been formerly transported from place to place, but now care hath been taken to bring it to the place where it must alwaies abide. 2. That the care of David in bringing the Ark to the place which God had appointed for it, is set forth by shewing the different opinions which men formerly had concerning the place of the Arks settled abode: *we heard of it at Ephratah*, that is, we heard of the resting place for the Ark, the mansion or habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, mentioned in the foregoing verse, that it was to be in *Ephratah*, that is, in Bethlehem, Gen. 35. 16. which was a very fruitful place, & called therefore *Ephratah*, which signifyeth *fruitfulness*, as for the same cause also it was called *Bethlehem*, that is, *the house of bread* (& indeed it is not improbable that such a report might be spread abroad concerning *Bethlem Ephratah*, in regard that many men might be inclinable to think, that the city where David their king was born, was likely to be made the seat both of the kingdome and Sanctuary; *we found it in the fields of the wood*, as if they should have said, but now we have unexpectedly found that the place where the Ark must be settled is in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, see the Note 2 Sam. 24. 18. which might be called *the field of the woods*, because it was a woody place; or in Jerusalem, or mount Zion, which might be so called, because it was but a barren soil and compassed about with hills that were covered over with wood. 3. That this is spoken of Davids removing the Ark to the city of Zion. *We heard of it at Ephratah*, that is, the same of this solemn transporting of the Ark to Zion was brought unto us the inhabitants of Bethlehem Ephratah; *we found it in the fields of the wood*, that is, as is before noted, in Kiriath-jearim, for it is in the Hebrew *in the fields* of

of *Toar*, & *Joar* differeth not much from *jeirim*. Or 4. that this was spoken by way of congratulating the bringing of the Ark in to the Temple, according to the desire of David, as into the place appointed of God for its settled abode: *We heard of it at Ephratab*, that is, say some Expositours, We heard of the ancient men in *Bethlem Ephratab*, even when we were children, where the Ark was to be settled; or, as others, we heard of it of David the Ephrathite, that is, who was of Bethlem Ephratab; & accordingly *we found it in the fields of the wood*, that is, in Jerusalem, or in mount Moriah, the floor of Araunah, as is before noted; he being anointed king, the place of the Arks settled abode is now discovered. But to me the two first seem the most probable.

Verf. 7. *We will goe into his Tabernacle, &c.*] See the Note again Psal. 43. 3: *we will worship at his foot-stool*; see the Notes 1 Chron. 28. 2. & Psal. 99. 5. In this verse the people are brought in, resolving that since the Ark was now brought into the place which God had chosen for its settled abode, they would now diligently frequent that place of his presence & publick worship; & they speak as rejoicing at the benefit which thereby would redound to Gods people.

Verf. 8. *Arise, O Lord, into thy rest, &c.*] See the Note 2 Chron. 6. 41.

Verf. 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, &c.*] That is, Let them be righteous & holy, and live holily and righteously; & particularly, let them carry themselves justly & holily in the execution of their priestly office: see the Note, Job 29. 14. And in this expression he alludes to the holy garments where with the Priests were clothed, Exod. 28. 23. In the 2. Chron. 6. 41. this clause is expressed thus: *Let thy Priests, O Lord, be clothed with salvation*; & accordingly the meaning here may be, Let the manifestation of thy righteousness, in protecting them by thy grace & providence, & in shewing thy self tenderly carefull over them, be an ornament to them; for which see the Note there. And they therefore that think this Psalm was composed to be sung at the removing of the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom, do conceive that David doth hereby implicitly desire, that no such thing might now befall them, as had before in the sudden death of Uzzah. *And let thy Saints shout for joy*; that is, Let thy holy people exceedingly rejoyce in the manifold mercies which through thy favour they enjoy, or particularly in the benefits they enjoy by means of the ministry of thy priests, and the settling of the Ark amongst them. I know that some understand this of the Levites, whose work it was to praise God with singing of Psalms in the Temple. But if we compare this with the place before cited 2 Chron. 6. 41. it will clearly appear that the former exposition is the best.

Verf. 10. *For thy servant Davids sake, &c.*] That is, (say some Expositours) for thy Christs sake, who is often in the Scripture called David; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 51. But others again conceive that David himself doth here desire, that God would remember him his servant, and make good his promises to him, whom he had anointed king over Israel; *turn not away, saith he, the face of thine anointed*. And some restrain his request to this, that God would not send him away without effecting the work he had undertaken, of removing the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Zion, as he had done before when Uzzah was smitten. But I rather

ther take it to be the prayer of Solomon, or of the people on Solomons behalf, to wit, that God remembring the promises he had made to David, & out of the respect he bare to him, who was a man after his own heart, would not cast off his son Solomon, that was anointed to succeed him in the throne, out of his sight, nor reject his prayers, or frustrate him of his hope in building a Temple for the Lord, as his father had appointed him: all which will be evident by comparing this place with that 2 Chron. 6. 42.

Verf. 11. *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*] See the Notes 2 Sam. 7. 11, 16. and Psal. 89. 3.

Verf. 13. *For the Lord hath chosen Zion, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 78. 68. and 1 Kings 9. 3.

Verf. 15. *I will satisfie her poor with bread.*] That is, I will not only give them food enough, but also, by my blessing upon it, cause their food to nourish and satisfie them.

Verf. 17. *There will I make the horn of David to bud, &c.*] That is, In Zion I will make the strength and glory of his kingdome to grow up and encrease; see the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 1, & 10. 2 Sam. 22. 3. & Psal. 89. 24. But withall this expression of the budding of the horn of David seems to have respect, both to the mean condition from which David was advanced, as likewise to the strange growing up and shooting forth of his kingdome again in his posterity, when it was brought very low, as it was by the schism of the ten tribes, that fell off to Jeroboam, and often afterwards in their civill wars; yea when it was in a manner cut off, as it was in the Babylonian captivity; but especially when it was so utterly ruined at last, that there seemed to be no memoriall left of it, & yet then in Christ, that *horn of salvation*, Luk. 1. 69. budded and sprang forth again, and from Zion, where indeed Christs kingdome began, did spread abroad all the world over: whereto the prophets also seem to allude, where they call Christ *the branch*, as Zach. 6. 12. and Isa. 11. 1. *a rod out of the stem of Iesse, and a branch out of his roots.* And to the same purpose is the following clause, *I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed;* that is, that there shall be still one of his posterity, in whom the glory of his kingdome shall live and shine forth; see the Note 1 Kings 11. 39. Which yet was chiefly accomplished in Christ, in whom this kingdome did indeed shine forth most gloriously even unto the ends of the earth. But see the Note also 2 Sam. 21. 17.

Verf. 18. *His enemies will I cloth with shame, &c.*] See the Note Job 8. 22: *but upon himself shall his crown flourish;* that is, upon his own head, & the heads of his posterity, even unto Christ, in whom his kingdome shall flourish unto all eternity.

P S A L M CXXXIII.

Verf. 1. **B**ehold, how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity.] That which is said most probably by Expositours, concerning the occasion of penning this Psalm, is, either that it was purposely provided to be sung by the Israelites at those three solemn feasts, when all

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the males were to come up to worship God together at Jerusalem: or else that it was composed upon occasion of that pacification that was made amongst the Israelites, either after the suppressing of Absaloms rebellion, or rather when after many years civill wars that had been in the land between David & the house of Saul, all the tribes did at last joyntly submit to David, and so lived peaceably together as brethren under his government; whereupon, as from the experience they now had, how much better it was with them, when they lived thus comfortably together in unity and peace, then when before they were continually seeking to destroy one another, he commends unto them brotherly love & concord, *Behold how good & how pleasant it is; &c.*

Verf. 2. *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aarons beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.*] That is, It must needs yield as much refreshing content and delight both to God & man, especially to those that live thus as brethren together, as that precious ointment did, that was alwaies poured forth upon the head of Aaron and his successours, when they were consecrated to the high priests office; nor only to the high priest himself, but also to all that were about him, to whom the fragrant smell thereof did spread. And the rather doth he compare the unity of brethren to this holy ointment, which was peculiarly designed to that religious service of consecrating the high priest, because he desired hereby to intimate, first, that the brotherly concord which he chiefly intended, was when they joyned together with one consent in a way of religion, to wit, in the pure worship of God, being all of them indued with the sweet smelling graces of Gods holy spirit; & 2. that this brotherly concord is an effect of that spirit of grace & peace, which being plentifully poured forth upon Christ the head of the Church, runs down upon all the members of his body, and is the bond of their spirituall union.

Verf. 3. *As the dew of Hermon, &c.*] As by the similitude in the foregoing verse David shewed *how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity*, so by this here he shews, *how good it is*, that is, how profitable: *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion*; that is, as the dew that falls from heaven upon such a fat & fruitfull soil, as is that of mount Hermon, and the mountains near about Zion or Jerusalem, doth cause these places to yield great encrease & profit, so doth brotherly love, through Gods blessing, bring all variety of outward plenty with it to those that do sincerely practise it, besides that it doth also make men fruitfull in good works, both towards God & towards man. *For there, that is, where brethren do thus dwell together in unity, the Lord commanded the blessing*, that is, he poureth forth upon such men all variety of blessings; see the Notes Psal. 42. 8, & 44. 4, & 68. 28, & 71. 3: *even life for evermore*; that is, not only a long prosperous life here, but also life eternall in heaven, whereof therefore brotherly love is made an unquestionable sign 1 Joh. 3. 14. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.* Yet some understand, that by *life for evermore* here is meant, that God would give a happy life to all that should so agree together throughout all generations.

P S A L M CXXXIV.

Verf. 1. **B**Ehold, *blesse ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, &c.*] That is, all ye Priests & Levites, as appears by the following words, *which by night stand in the house of the Lord*: for though some devout men & women of the people were sometimes wont to wait upon Gods service in the Temple even by night, as is noted of Anna, Luk. 2. 37. that she *departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings & prayers night & day*; yet here the Psalmist seems to speak of such as by their office & place were constantly to give attendance upon the service of God in the Temple by night, as well as by day, as the word *stand* doth here import. And that this was the constant charge of the Priests & Levites, as in their courses they waited in the Temple, is evident Levit. 8. 35. 1 Sam. 3. 3. & in many other places: as a kings guard are wont to watch by night in his Court, so did they keep their watches in the Sanctuary. However, the aim and scope of this exhortation to these Priests & Levites is all one as if he had said, Think it not enough that you watch by night in the Temple, or that you perform there the outward ceremonial service, but see that you give God that spirituall service of praising his name, which he chiefly requires. See also the following Note.

Verf. 3. *The Lord that made heaven & earth blesse thee out of Zion.*] That is, say some Expositours, every one of you Priests & Levites that doe carefully perform your duty, as I have said, in praising the Lord. But now others conceive that this is here added as the substance of that prayer, wherewith the Psalmist desires that the Priests would blesse the people, when they lifted up their hands in the Sanctuary, as was said in the foregoing verse. Yea & some also hold that this Psalm is written dialogue-wise, and that accordingly the two first verses must be taken as spoken by the people to the Priests & Levites, & then this as the answer of the Priests & Levites to them; or else that the two first verses contain the words of David to the Priests & Levites, & then this their answer to David their king: See the Note Psal. 118. 26. As for the last words, *out of Zion*, see the Note Psal. 128. 5.

P S A L CXXXV.

Verf. 2. **Y**E that *stand in the house of the Lord, in the Courts of the house of our God.*] Though this Psalm begins with the very same words, in a manner, as doth the foregoing Psalm; yet I conceive the drift of this is, not only to stir up the Priests & Levites, as it was in the former, to this duty of praising God, but the people also: & that 1. because the arguments which here he brings to presse this, did in common concern both Priests & people; & 2. because that clause, which is here added, *in the Courts of the house of our God*, may be extended to the people, as well as to the Priests, seeing there were some Courts in the Temple which were for the people to worship God in.

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the males were to come up to worship God together at Jerusalem: or else that it was composed upon occasion of that pacification that was made amongst the Israelites, either after the suppressing of Absaloms rebellion, or rather when after many years civill wars that had been in the land between David & the house of Saul, all the tribes did at last joyntly submit to David, and so lived peaceably together as brethren under his government; whereupon, as from the experience they now had, how much better it was with them, when they lived thus comfortably together in unity and peace, then when before they were continually seeking to destroy one another, he commends unto them brotherly love & concord, *Behold how good & how pleasant it is &c.*

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P S A L M CXXXIV.

Verf. 1. **B**Ehold, *blesse ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, &c.*] That is, all ye Priests & Levites, as appears by the following words, *which by night stand in the house of the Lord*: for though some devout men & women of the people were sometimes wont to wait upon Gods service in the Temple even by night, as is noted of Anna, Luk. 2. 37. that *she departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings & prayers night & day*; yet here the Psalmist seems to speak of such as by their office & place were constantly to give attendance upon the service of God in the Temple by night, as well as by day, as the word *stand* doth here import. And that this was the constant charge of the Priests & Levites, as in their courses they waited in the Temple, is evident Levit. 8. 35. 1 Sam. 3. 3. & in many other places: as a kings guard are wont to watch by night in his Court, so did they keep their watches in the Sanctuary. However, the aim and scope of this exhortation to these Priests & Levites is all one as if he had said, Think it not enough that you watch by night in the Temple, or that you perform there the outward ceremonial service, but see that you give God that spirituall service of praising his name, which he chiefly requires. See also the following Note.

Verf. 3. *The Lord that made heaven & earth blesse thee out of Zion.*] That is, say some Expositours, every one of you Priests & Levites that doe carefully perform your duty, as I have said, in praising the Lord. But now others conceive that this is here added as the substance of that prayer, wherewith the Psalmist desires that the Priests would blesse the people, when they lifted up their hands in the Sanctuary, as was said in the foregoing verse. Yea & some also hold that this Psalm is written dialogue-wise, and that accordingly the two first verses must be taken as spoken by the people to the Priests & Levites, & then this as the answer of the Priests & Levites to them; or else that the two first verses contain the words of David to the Priests & Levites, & then this their answer to David their king: See the Note Psal. 118. 26. As for the last words, *out of Zion*, see the Note Psal. 128. 5.

P S A L CXXXV.

Verf. 2. **Y**E that stand in the house of the Lord, in the Courts of the house of our God:] Though this Psalm begins with the very same words, in a manner, as doth the foregoing Psalm; yet I conceive the drift of this is, not only to stir up the Priests & Levites, as it was in the former, to this duty of praising God, but the people also: & that 1. because the arguments which here he brings to presse this, did in common concern both Priests & people; & 2. because that clause, which is here added, *in the Courts of the house of our God*, may be extended to the people, as well as to the Priests, seeing there were some Courts in the Temple which were for the people to worship God in.

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Verf. 3. *Sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.*] That is, The name of God is pleasant & delightfull to his servants, when they think or speak of it; or, It is a pleasant and delightfull thing to sing praises to his name.

Verf. 5. *Our Lord is above all gods.*] That is, all that are called gods; see the Note Deut. 10. 17. And in advancing the Lord above all Idol-gods, he hath respect to the high esteem which the heathens had of them.

Verf. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places.*] That is, all deep rivers and lakes: or, by deep places may be meant all the invifible depths, both of the earth and waters, even to the very centre.

Verf. 7. *He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, &c.*] Of which in the middle region of the air the clouds are formed. Now in saying that these *ascend from the ends of the earth*, either his meaning is, that they ascend from all parts of the earth in every quarter of the world; or else that they ascend from the sea, which is the lands end, or the utmost bounds of the earth. And indeed those vapours of which watry clouds are formed do usually rise from watry places of the earth, and especially from the seas; whence is that of Elijahs servant 1 Kings 18. 44. *Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a mans hand;* see also Amos 5. 8. *He maketh lightnings for the rain;* that is, to make way for the rain, the lightnings bursting the clouds, that so the rain may pour down; or, to goe along with the rain, this being the wonder here noted, that fire and water should so go together, & break forth from the same cloud: *he bringeth the wind out of his treasures;* that is, say some, out of the caves and hollow places of the earth: but I rather conceive, that because the wind riseth many times on a sudden, & as our Saviour saith Joh. 3. 8. *we cannot tell whence it cometh*, therefore God is said here to bring it forth, as if he had it locked up in a readinesse in some secret & hidden treasures or store-houses.

Verf. 13. *Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever, and thy memoriall, O Lord, throughout all generations.*] See the Note Psal. 102. 12.

Verf. 14. *For the Lord will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.*] That is, Though he may for a time afflict his people, yet he will at last relent over them, and punish their enemies: see the Note Deut. 32. 36.

Verf. 15. *The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, &c.*] By this description of the vanity of idols, compared with the fore-mentioned works of God, he clears what he had said before verf. 5. that *our Lord is above all gods*. What is farther to be noted in this and the five following verses, see in the Notes Psal. 115. 4, 11.

Verf. 21. *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, &c.*] That is, Resorting to Zion, the place of Gods presence and publick worship, let us thence praise the Name of our Lord.

P S A L M CXXXVI.

Verf. 1. **O** Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.] See the Notes 2 Chron. 7. 3, and 20. 21.

Verf. 4. To him who alone doth great wonders.] See the Note Psal. 72. 18.

Verf. 6. To him that stretched out the earth above the waters.] See the Notes Gen. 1. 9. and Psal. 24. 2.

Verf. 7. To him that made great lights.] See the Note Gen. 1. 16.

Verf. 8. The sun to rule by day, &c.] That is, to have sole power under God to give light by day, the moon & stars not then appearing; as on the other side the moon & stars have the only power to give light by night, the sun being then hidden from our sight, and are therefore also said in the following verse *to rule by night*.

Verf. 14. And made Israel to passe through the midst of it.] To wit, the red sea, (as was said in the foregoing verse) not only by opening a passage for them through the waters, but also by giving them courage to passe between those heaps of water, with as much confidence as if they had been to goe on dry land in any other place.

Verf. 16. To him which led his people through the wilderness.] To wit, carefully & tenderly, as a father leads his child, or a shepheard his flock, supplying them in their wants, & protecting them from dangers, going before them, by day in the pillar of a cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire; see the Note Exod. 13. 21.

Verf. 23. Who remembred us in our low estate.] That is, many and many a time when our dangers & miseries were greatest.

Verf. 26. O give thanks unto the God of heaven.] That is, that created the heavens, that hath his habitation in the heaven, and from thence doth support and govern the whole world.

P S A L M CXXXVII.

Verf. 1. **B**y the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembred Zion.] For the better understanding of this & other passages in this Psalm, take notice, 1. that it was penned as in the name of the holy Levites, that had been singers in the Temple, as appears by many passages in it; as those wherein there is mention made of their harps, & the enemies desiring them to sing one of the songs of Zion, &c: 2. that the drift of this Psalm might be different, according as we may differently conceive of the time when it was written. For if it were penned after their return out of Babylon, as some think, because he speaks here of those things that were done in Babylon in the time past, *there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembred Zion, &c.* then the scope of the Psalmist was, to render the people the more thankfull for their deliverance out of Babylon, by putting them in mind how sad their condition was when they were in captivity.

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but if it were composed whilst they were yet in Babylon, Cyrus not having yet subdued the Babylonians, (which others conceive may be probably gathered from those words vers. 8. *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, &c.*) then the drift of the Pen-man of this Psalm might be, to keep the people from being too much dejected, & especially from being polluted with the superstition and profaneness of the nations amongst whom they lived in so lasting a captivity as seventy years, to wit, by propounding herein to them the example of the steadfast faith and piety of the holy Levites, how they could not be intangled by the delicacies of Babylon, but still groaned & longed after Zion, & how they could not be wonne to do any thing, that might be a dishonour to their God and their religion, yea how they foretold the destruction both of the Edomites & Babylonians, vers. 7, 8. which shewed that they expected a time of deliverance: 3. that those words here, *there we sat down*, are either to imply their long continuance in Babylon, or else to set forth hereby their weariness after this toilsome labour, or rather their sadness and sorrow; for sitting is usually mentioned in the Scripture as the gesture of mourners, as Job 2. 12. *So they*, that is, Jobs friends, when they found him in such a sad condition, *sat down with him upon the ground seven daies & seven nights*, &c. & Jer. 15. 17. *I sat alone, because of thine hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation*, & Lam. 2. 10. *The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, & keep silence*: & 4. that it is expressed that they sat down & wept *by the rivers of Babylon*, 1. because Babylon was a countrey full of goodly rivers, see Ezek. 1. 1. Dan. 10. 4. the chief whereof were Tigris and Euphrates; 2. because the captive Jews were not suffered to dwell amongst the Babylonians in their towns & cities, they being as odious to the Babylonians as formerly they had been to the Egyptians, but were assigned to have their habitation by themselves in the countrey, that they might there be set a work in their servile field-employments; & so they lodged in the open field, or at the best in some poor tents and cottages, which there they reared up for themselves by the river side; or 3. because they were wont when they had any leisure, to retire thither by themselves, and there to sit down, & bewail their condition; or 4. that this might imply that the pleasures of Babylon, which consisted much in their goodly rivers, could not make them forget their sorrow for Zion, but that even there they sat down, and poured forth many sad penitentiall tears, when they remembered Zion, that is, in what a sad condition poor Zion lay, and how they were deprived of that comfort in Gods presence and publick worship they had formerly enjoyed.

Vers. 2. *We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.* 1 Because it may seem very improbable, that the Levites should have so much leisure, as to mind the saving of the muscull instruments of the Temple, (which are all comprehended under the harps here mentioned) when the Babylonians were with such rage burning the city & Temple of Jerusalem, and making such a slaughter as they did amongst the inhabitants, and when therefore they must needs have enough to doe to secure their own lives; or that the mercilesse plundering soldiers would shew them so much favour, as to let them retain their muscull instruments; therefore some Expositours take these words, *We hanged our harps upon the*

the willows, to be only a figurative proverbial expression, meaning only that there they had adieu to their muscull instruments, being brought into such a sad and dolefull condition. But because there follows in the next verses an historical relation of what the Babylonians said to them, and what they answered again, I conceive it is clear that the Psalmist relates what was actually done, namely, that they did indeed hang up their harps upon the willows in the open fields; thereby shewing how little they regarded them, and giving the Babylonians to understand, in whose sight they did this, that the pleasant shade of those willows by the rivers sides could not tempt them to make use of their muscull delights, when as their souls were so oppressed with sorrow for the miseries of Zion. Neither seems it to me so improbable, either that the Levites should in that confusion of the sacking of Jerusalem endeavour with all sollicitous care to reserve to themselves, and to carry away with them, those holy precious remainders of the Temples utensils, as memorials of Gods Zion, and the delight they had formerly taken in Gods worship there, and which in Gods good time they might hope again to use in the holy service of God, as they had formerly done; and haply as hoping they might allay their sorrow in their captivity by some muscull refreshings, though afterwards they found themselves so overpressed with sorrow, that they could not take any delight therein: or, that the Babylonians should afford this favour, especially if we consider that they might out of curiosity desire to hear what the skill of the Hebrews was in those kinds of melody; for which also see the following verse.

Verf. 3. *For, &c.*] This word shews, that here another reason is given why they hanged up their harps upon the willows: *they that carried us away captives required of us a song, & they that wasted us*, that is, that sacked us & pillaged us, & laid our city on heaps, as the Hebrew word signifies, *required of us mirth*; to wit, not so much out of a desire to delight themselves with the musick of the Hebrews, or to heare what their skill was in playing & singing (though that some might have respect to, as is before noted,) as by way of scoffing at them, & insulting over them: *Sing us*, say they, *one of the songs of Zion*; as if they had said, what? is your God dead, to whom you were wont to sing? If he were formerly delighted with your musick, why do you give it over? And observable it is that the Psalmist doth expresse this, that it was they that carried them away captives that required this of them: for this was 1. to imply, how unreasonable a thing it was, that they that had brought them into such a sad condition should require mirth of them; & 2. to imply the courage of these poor captives, that being in bondage could yet in this refuse to gratify their lords & masters.

Verf. 4. *How shall we sing the Lords song in a strangeland?*] That is, being in exile, where we are overpressed with sorrow, both for our own sufferings, & the sad condition wherein Zion lyes; what heart do ye think we can have to sing? especially considering that the Lord doth hereby call us to mourning. Yea, how dare we profane the holy songs of Zion, composed for the worship of the Lord our God, by singing them to an idolatrous heathenish people, to make them merry, and so to expose them to their derision and scorn? This I conceive is the drift

drift of this their answer. Yet there may be in these words also a covert intimation, that they hoped that God would carry them back into their own land, and that then they would chearfully sing the songs of Zion, though in a strange land they could not doe it. And so also some understand the following verse.

Verf. 5. *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, so as not earnestly to long after, and to wait for the promised restauration of poor Ierusalem, which our enemies do so scorn & despise; and so as not to be most ready to sing the songs of Zion, if God should ever carry us back thither, to see Ierusalem again in a flourishing condition, though now indeed we can neither play nor sing; or rather, *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem*, to wit, so as to give my self to musick and merriment, whilst thou art in so sad a condition: *let my right hand forget her cunning*; that is, let my skill fail me of playing upon musically instruments, that gift wherewith God hath honoured me for his service; or, let a dead palsey seise upon my right hand, that I may never play on instrument more: see also the following Note.

Verf. 6. *If I do not remember thee, &c.*] See the foregoing Note: *let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth*; that is, let me be stricken with an apoplexy, that I may not be able to sing or to speak. But indeed these imprecations are no more in effect, then as if they had said, that they might well expect some notable judgement from God upon them, if they should thus forget Ierusalem. *If I preferre not Ierusalem above my chief joy*; that is, If I do not esteem, desire & pray for the happy recovery and flourishing estate of Ierusalem, more then any thing that might yield me the greatest joy for mine own particular; or rather, if I rejoyce in any thing more then in the restauration of Ierusalem; or till I see Ierusalem in a better condition, if I prefer not my mourning for Ierusalem before the chiefest joy that can betide me.

Verf. 7. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom, &c.*] To wit, how they carried themselves towards thy people: *in the day of Ierusalem*; that is, in the day of her destruction, as it is said of the Ethiopians, Ezek. 30. 9. *great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt*, that is, in the day when Egypt was destroyed: see also the Notes Job 18. 20. and Psal. 37. 13. And how they carried themselves is expressed in the following words, *who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof*: the meaning whereof is, that they with much delight assisted and encouraged the Babylonians in the destruction of Ierusalem, as is largely related by the prophet Obadiah, verf. 11, 12, 13, 14. But now the drift of this prayer of the holy Levites is, that as they remembred Ierusalem to pity her, so God would remember the cruelty of her enemies to punish them for it; covertly to assure the poor Jews, that this in his own good time, God would certainly doe; & that because God had foretold this by his prophets concerning the Edomites in particular, and that with speciall respect to their unthankfulnesse to the children of Israel, who had formerly spared them as brethren, Deut. 2. 4, 5. when they first entred the land of Canaan, as Obad. 10. *for thy violence against thy brother Jacob; shame shall cover thee, & thou shalt be cut off for ever*, & so in many other places; of which therefore in these words, *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom*, the Levites desire the Lord to be mindfull,

Verf. 8.

Verf. 8. *O daughter of Babylon, &c.*] That is, O thou great and mighty empire of Babylon, now in the prime of thy beauty & glory; or, O thou nation, O ye people of Babylon, see the Note 2 Kings 19. 21: *who art to be destroyed; which they speak with confidence, because this the prophets had foretold, as Isa. 47. 1, &c. and in many other places: happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us;* to wit, because it shall be counted an honour to them, that they have executed Gods vengeance upon such a wicked cruell people; & because God would recompence this with outward prosperity & successe and many earthly blessings. Yet some take this as only implying their desire, that they might be happy that should so return the cruelty of the Babylonians into their own bosoms.

Verf. 9. *Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*] The Psalmist may seem herein to have respect to that place in Isaiahs prophesie, where this very thing is expressly foretold concerning the Babylonians, Isa. 13. 16. *Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, &c.* And his aim herein was to set forth, that though this were in it self an act of horrid cruelty, yet they that should so use the Chaldeans should be honoured for it, because they had exercised the same cruelty towards Gods people.

P S A L M CXXXVIII.

Verf. 1. *I Will praise thee with my whole heart, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 9. 1: *before the gods will I sing praise unto thee;* that is, before princes & great ones, see the Note Psal. 107. 32. (for these are often called gods in the Scripture, see the Note Exod. 22. 28.) or, before the angels, who are present indeed in Church-assemblies, as was signified by the images of the Cherubims in the Sanctuary. And thence it is that Paul saith, that women ought to have a covering on their heads in the holy assemblies, 1 Cor. 11. 10. *because of the angels.*

Verf. 2. *I will worship towards thy holy temple, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 5. 7, & 28. 2: *& praise thy name for thy loving kindnesse & for thy truth;* to wit, in setting me in the throne of Israel, according as thou hadst promised me: *for thou hast magnified thy word;* to wit, in the promise thou hast made concerning the Messiah, the greatest good that ever thou didst make known to thy people: or, *thou hast magnified thy word;* that is, thy faithfulness in making good thy word, or the infallible truth & unresistable power of thy word: *above all thy name;* that is, above all thy other glorious attributes, to wit, in that men were chiefly ravished with the admiration of Gods accomplishing the promises which he had made to David concerning the kingdome; the promises seemed before hand so unlikely to be performed, that when God had fully brought all to passe that he had promised, the faithfulness of God was so admired herein, that comparatively nothing else was thought of.

Verf. 3. *In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me; and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*] That is, Though thou didst not presently deliver me, yet a gracious answer I had of my prayer, in that thou didst inwardly strengthen my faith and patience and courage, and so didst support me from sinking under that pressure of afflictions that lay upon me, & enabledst me quietly & cheerfully still to wait upon thee.

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Verf. 4.

Verf. 4. *All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they heare the words of thy mouth.*] That is, So many of the kings of the earth, farre & near, as shall heare how wonderfully thou hast made good what thou hadst spoken concerning me, both when thou didst command me to be anointed king, & when thou didst promise to settle me in the throne of Israel, though I lived then in a low & mean condition, shall hereupon praise thy name. Yet because David was a type of Christ, we may well also understand this of the kings of the Gentiles, when they should be converted upon the preaching of the Gospel to them.

Verf. 5. *Yea, they shall sing in the waies of the Lord.*] That is, They shall with singing praise the works of the Lord, in bringing me to the kingdome which he had promised me, & the manifold strange waies whereby he brought it about; or, They shall praise the Lord with singing, they themselves the whilst walking in the waies wherein the Lord hath appointed them to walk. But this indeed may be most fitly said of the converted Gentiles, with respect to their exceeding joy for the glad tidings of the Gospel.

Verf. 6. *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly, &c.*] That is, Though the Lord be a God of transcendent majesty, & hath his habitation in the highest heavens, yet he beholdeth the lowest, the meanest and the most despised amongst men: yea he beholdeth them with a favourable countenance, to pity, deliver, & exalt them in due time, especially when they are also of an humble and lowly spirit. For that this is included appears by the following clause, *but the proud he knoweth afar off*; that is, though he knoweth them well enough, yet it is not in a friendly manner, but with contempt, he stands aloof from them; even as they look with contempt upon others, so doth the Lord upon them. And then taking these words also as spoken with reference to the times of Christ, the meaning is clear, to wit, that God is very tender over poor humbled sinners, but that he abhors those that are proudly conceited of their own righteousness.

Verf. 7. *Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me.*] That is, Thou wilt preserve and deliver me, even when I might seem to be in the very jaws of death; or, Thou wilt comfort me against all terrours and sorrows, inward and outward: see the Notes Psal. 71. 20, and 80. 18.

Verf. 8. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me, &c.*] That is, Though I should still meet with more and more troubles, and though mine enemies should still rage never so much against me, God will perfect the work of my deliverance and salvation; yea whatever he hath promised to doe for me. *Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands*; that is, give not over what thou hast begun to doe for me.

P S A L M CXXXIX.

Verf. 1. *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.*] That is, thou hast exactly known me; see the Note Psal. 7. 9. Yet some take it thus, that God had proved and sifted him by many trials, and so had exactly discovered all that was in him. But now the scope of this long discourse which David here enters into concerning the omniscience of God, was either 1. hereby

to intimate that he made his addresses now to God with all sincerity, as to an all-seeing God; or, 2. hereby to appeal, as it were, to God concerning his innocency in regard of the false slanders of his enemies, as that he did no way favour any wicked or bloody purpose in himself or in others, which he seems to urge vers. 19. *Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore ye bloody men;* or 3. hereby to presse God to help him, because he knew his streights, & exactly understood his condition in every regard.

Vers. 2. *Thou understandest my thought afar off.*] That is, Though thou art in heaven & I upon earth, yet thus far off thou knowest every thought of my heart; or rather, Thou knowest my thoughts long before they be brought to effect, or long before they come into my mind.

Vers. 3. *Thou compassest my path, &c.*] This may be read, as it is in the margin, *Thou winnowest my path;* & then the meaning is, that God did as clearly see every way of his, as the corn is seen, when it is winnowed from the chaff. But reading the words as they are in our Bibles, *Thou compassest my path, &c.* the meaning must needs be, that God was on every side present with him, whereever he was & what-ever he did, & therefore must needs know all his actions. And indeed considering the expressions here used, *Thou compassest my path, & my lying down, & art acquainted with all my waies,* it is not improbable which some think, namely that David doth herein allude to the knowledge which huntsmen often get of some wild beast, by watching & tracing her every way, that they know exactly where she useth to goe, & where to lye, both by day & night, and are acquainted with all her paths: see also vers. 5.

Vers. 4. *For there is not a word in my tongue, but loe, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*] That is, I speak not a word but thou knowest it, yea and with what mind and to what purpose it was spoken; or, If I be but about to speak, whilst my words are yet, as it were, in my tongue, thou knowest what I mean to say before I speak it, or, though I should never speak it.

Vers. 5. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, &c.*] That is, Thou dost environ me on every side with thine omnipresence; see the Note above vers. 3: *and laid thine hand upon me;* that is, there is no fleeing out of thy sight or presence; I am in that regard, as if thou laydest thine hand upon me, and keptst me prisoner, that I should not stir away from thee: or this phrase may be used to imply, that he must needs be every where in Gods eye, because he was upheld, & preserved, and guided, & led by Gods all-disposing power and providence, so that he could not turn or stir any where, but as he would have him. Yea & some conceive that here again David alludes, as before vers. 3. to a huntsmans besetting and seizing upon some beast he hath pursued, when at last he claps his hand upon her.

Vers. 7. *Whether shall I goe from thy spirit? &c.*] That is, that I may be where thou, who art an infinite spirit, art not present? as it is more clearly expressed in the following clause, *or whether shall I flee from thy presence?* Or, *Whether shall I goe from thy spirit?* that is, to be hid from thy eye, that thou maist not know where I am? Because men know & understand things by their spirit, which is a faculty of the inward man, according to that 1 Cor. 2. 11. *what man knoweth the things of a*

man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? therefore doth David here put the spirit of God for the knowledge of God.

Verf. 8. *If I make my bed in hell, &c.*] That is, If I goe down into the lowest parts of the earth; or into the grave, which is as the bed where dead men are said to rest. See the Note Job 26. 6.

Verf. 9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea.*] That is, Could I take my flight never so early, or, could I flee never so swiftly from East to West, as the morning light doth; for the sun-beams are here compared to wings, (as also Mal. 4. 2. *the sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings*) because they passe through the air so exceeding swiftly, as it were in a moment; & the uttermost parts of the sea are here put for the West, because the Mediterranean sea was on the West of Canaan.

Verf. 10. *Even there shall thine hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*] That is, All the way I went I should be under thy power and custody and conduct; so that to be sure there is no escaping out of thy presence: see the Note above verf. 5.

Verf. 13. *For thou hast possessed my reins, &c.*] That is, Thou didst make them at first, & so they are thine, and thou hast absolute power over them, & therefore thou must needs exactly know them; & consequently also all that is within me, see the Note Psal. 7. 9: *thou hast covered me in my mothers womb*; that is, thou hast cherished & preserved me there; or, this may be meant of his being wrapped up in his mothers womb, in that which we call the after-birth; or, of his being covered with skin & flesh, see the Note Job. 10. 11. However this which he saith of Gods framing his body in his mothers womb, doth fully clear what he had said in the foregoing verse, that *the darknesse and the light are both alike to God*.

Verf. 14. *I am fearfully & wonderfully made, &c.*] That is, There are so many wonders in thy making of me, that when I think of them, it strikes me with astonishment, yea with dread & fear of thine infinite & incomprehensible wisdom and power: *marvellous are thy works*; that is, all thy severall works of forming man in the womb; or, all thy works in generall. As for those following words, *and that my soul knoweth right well*, either the drift thereof was to intimate, that even that understanding wherewith God had endued him, & whereby he was able to take notice of the excellency of Gods works, was one of those things that were wonderfull in Gods making of him; or else rather to signify, that through frequent meditation of Gods works herein, he knew full well that they were exceeding wonderfull, though how they were done he was not able to conceive, or, though in words he was not able to expresse them.

Verf. 15. *My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought, &c.*] To wit, with nerves, sinews, veins, & variety of bones and limbs, like a piece of embroider'd or needle-work, as the word in the Originall signifieth. And it may well be, which some say, that because in the first fashioning of an infants body in the mothers womb the severall members do seem like so many little thrids, therefore in allusion thereto David useth this expression of his being *curiously wrought*; and where? *in the lowest parts of the earth*, that is, in the clay-house

house of my mothers womb : for this he calls *the lowest parts of the earth*, only to imply, that his forming in the womb was as far from the reach of any mortall eye, as if he had been made in some deep & dark cave of the earth, and no more to be discerned, then we can discern the growth of metals and other things that are hid-den beneath in the womb of the earth. And indeed some conceive that where the Apostle saith of Christ Eph. 4. 9. that *he descended into the lowest parts of the earth*, he spake that of his Incarnation in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and used that expression as in reference to these words of David. I know some conceive that there is no more intended in these words then this, that though he were made beneath on the earth, yet that was no hinderance but that God from heaven did in every thing see how he was made. But the former exposition is the best.

Vers. 16. *Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, &c.*] That is, so soon as ever I was conceived, whilst I was yet an imperfect embryo : *& in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them*; that is, all those members of my body, which in continuance of time grew to have their perfect shape, were as clearly seen by thee, even when as yet there was none of them that had their shape & proportion, as those things are seen by men, which for the help of their memory they have particularly written down in a book; or as they see the fashion of any work they intend to make, in those draughts and models which they have beforehand drawn in a book, for their better direction. For this he means in saying that all his members were written in Gods book, to wit, in the book of his eternall prescience. And as for that clause, *which in continuance were fashioned, &c.* if we read it, as it is in the margin, *what daies they should be fashioned, &c.* then the meaning may be, that God had determined how many daies his members should be fashioning in his mothers womb, & that before any of those daies were come, yea even from all eternity.

Vers. 17. *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God? &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, The thoughts which I have of thee; or rather thine eternall purposes & counsels, as particularly concerning the framing of mans body in the womb, so concerning all other things whatsoever, how incomprehensibly excellent are they, and how delightfull to me to think of? how highly do I esteem of them? *how great is the summe of them?* see the Note Psal. 40. 5.

Vers. 18. *When I wake, I am still with thee.*] That is, I am still meditating of thy works; some admirable thing or other comes still to mind, which sets me afresh on work to admire thine incomprehensible works, so that I can never find out the full number of them. Yea some conceive that by this word *still, I am still with thee*, David would imply, that falling asleep with these thoughts in his mind, awaking he had them still fresh in his thoughts, yea and haply that even in his sleep they were still in his mind: see also the Note Psal. 73. 23.

Vers. 18. *Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God, &c.*] Because God being every where present, as he had said before, and seeing all things, must needs see all the wicked counsels & practises of ungodly men, therefore he concludes that God would destroy them. And his drift herein might be to imply, that being thus perswaded of the end of wicked men, it was not likely that he should be guilty of

those wicked plots and practises which his enemies did accuse him of; but rather that he must needs resolve, not to have to doe with any such, lest partaking with them in their sins, he should also partake with them in their plagues; as he expresseth himself in the following words, *depart from me therefore ye bloody men*: but see also the Notes Psal. 6. 8, and 26. 4.

Verf. 20. *For they speak against thee wickedly, &c.*] That is, not covertly, but openly; they manifest their contempt of thee, & belch out blasphemies against thee: and therefore it is no wonder though they slander me. Or, the meaning may be only this, that they spake wickedly against God, in that they spake against Gods servants, & against those things which they could not but know were done by Gods command. *And thine enemies take thy name in vain*; to wit, by their perjuries and profane speeches of God; or, in that they talked of God, but in the mean season fancied a God according to the conceits of their own brains, a God that did neither mind, nor would judge the wickednesse of men.

Verf. 21. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? &c.*] As if he had said, So farre am I from those waies of wickednesse with which they charge me, that, Lord, thou knowest there is nothing I so much abhorre, as those cursed waies of wickednesse, whereby men doe evidently declare themselves to be haters of thee and enemies to thee.

Verf. 22. *I count them mine enemies.*] That is, I do not conceal my hatred, but declare it openly, by avoiding their society, & carrying my self towards them in every other respect, as if they were mine enemies; though indeed I doe this not because they are enemies to me, but because they are enemies to thee.

Verf. 23. *Search me, O God, &c.*] To wit, whether I be such a man as I am accused to be, or as I have now professed my self to be; as if he had said, And accordingly deal both with me and my accusers, that all men may see whether I or they be guilty before thee. See the Notes also Job 31. 6. & Psal. 26. 2.

Verf. 24. *And see if there be any wicked way in me, &c.*] In the Hebrew it is *any way of pain or grief*; that is, say some, any way of wickednesse, which may hereafter prove matter of anguish to mine own conscience; or rather, any thing wherein I do wrong or hurt to any man whatsoever; or, that may be grievous either to God or man. It is therefore as if he had said, My heart is deceitfull; do thou therefore, Lord, try me, and see whether there be any way of wickednesse in me, that is, any sinfull way, to which I do wittingly give up my self; or, any grosse way of injustice and rebellion against thee. *And lead me in the way everlasting*; that is, in the way that leads to life everlasting; or, the way that lasts for ever, the way which ever was and ever shall be the way wherein thou hast appointed thy servants to walk, to wit, the way of piety; as if he had said, Uphold me in this mine integrity all my daies.

P S A L M CXL.

Verf. 1. **D**eliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, &c.] That is, from men that persecute me of mere malice, without any provocation thereto on my part. And he means Saul and his complices.

Verf. 2.

Verf. 2. *Continually are they gathered together for war.*] That is, to make war, or to plot how to make war, or by their slanders to stir up others to make war against me.

Verf. 3. *They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent, &c.*] That is, They have framed their slanders so, that thereby they wound as mortally as doth the biting of a serpent, see the Note Psal. 57. 4: *adders poison is under their lips*; see the Note Psal. 58. 4.

Verf. 4. *Who have purposed to overthrow my goings.*] That is, to frustrate and overturn all my counsels and undertakings; or, to overthrow and ruine me.

Verf. 9. *As for the head of those that compasse me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.*] That is, say some expositours, let their imprecations fall upon themselves; see the Notes Psal. 109. 17, 18: or rather, let their own lips be their ruine; for which see the Note Psal. 64. 8. Having said in the seventh verse, that God had covered his head in the day of battell, here he desires that, on the contrary, the mischief his enemies sought to bring upon him by their lyes and slanders, might fall upon their own heads, & so overwhelm & destroy them; see the Note Psal. 7. 16. But yet some understand this verse thus. *As for the head of those that compasse me about*, that is, As for the chief & ringleader of mine enemies, to wit, Saul; *let the mischief of their own lips cover them*, to wit, him & his parasites.

Verf. 10. *Let burning coals fall upon them, &c.*] To wit, as cast forth upon them from the God of heaven; and see the Note Psal. 11. 6. Yet some think that the drift of these words is this, Let the burning coals of their cruell slanders fall upon themselves. *Let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that they rise not up again*; that is, into mischiefs which may be their utter ruine, and out of which they shall never be able to recover themselves. It is as if he had said, As they digged pits for others, so let them fall into pits irrecoverably: yea and some understand this of the pit and fire of hell.

Verf. 11. *Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth, &c.*] That is, let him not prosper in his waies; or, let him not long continue upon earth, either in himself or in his posterity. That which we translate *an evil speaker*, is in the Original *a man of tongue*; but thereby is meant, at least principally, one that by slanders and evil deceitfull speaking seeks the ruine of Gods servants, rather then by open violence: of which he speaks in the following clause, *evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him*; to wit, as he hath hunted the righteous to destroy them.

Verf. 13. *Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name, &c.*] That is, Though they may be sorely oppressed for a time, yet sooner or later, by delivering them, thou wilt certainly give them occasion with great joy to praise thy name: *the upright shall dwell in thy presence*; that is, say some, they shall be alwaies offering sacrifices to thee; or rather, they shall alwaies enjoy thy favour and protection, (as those of a mans family are continually under his eye & care) & shall at last dwell for ever with thee in heaven. But see also the Notes Psal. 56. 13, & 61. 7.

P S A L. CXLI.

Verf. 2. **L** *Et my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, &c.*] It is in the Original, *Let my prayer be directed before thee as incense;* which is all one as if he had said, By the assistance of thy spirit, let me be so directed in praying to thee, that my prayer may ascend up to heaven as incense, & find as much acceptance with thee, as that legal service which thou hast appointed to be given thee in the Sanctuary: *& the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice;* that is, as the daily sacrifice that was offered every morning & evening; for under one of these both are implied: though indeed some think, that *the evening sacrifice* is only here mentioned, either because therewith still the worship of every day was finished, or because haply he did at first offer up this prayer, or composed this Psalm to be used by him, in the evening. However doubtlesse the rather did David desire, that this prayer might be accepted of God as incense, and as the daily sacrifice, because he knew that one main end of those ceremoniall services was, to signify how acceptable through Christ the prayers of the Saints were unto God; see the Notes Exod. 29. 38, and 30. 1. whence it was also that about that time, which was the ninth hour of the day (about three a clock in the afternoon) the godly used to pray; as it is noted of Daniel, Dan. 9. 21. that he was praying *about the time of the evening oblation,* and Act. 3. 1. that *Peter and Iohn went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.* Yea and very probable it may seem, which some say, that because David in his banishment could not come at the tabernacle, therefore he desires that yet his prayers might be in stead of incense, and of the evening sacrifice, and as acceptable to God.

Verf. 3. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*] Because the lips are as a two-leaved door before the mouth of a man, through which when they are opened our words do issue forth, hence is this expression. And this now is that request which in the two foregoing verses he had desired might find acceptance with God. Either because living in Sauls Court amongst a crew of ungodly wretches, he feared he might be so far infected with their society, as to learn of them to talk profanely, at least might speak amisse to gratify them; or rather, because in the time of Sauls persecuting him, his temptations were so many and great, by reason of his unjust sufferings, that he judged it impossible for him of himself to bridle his tongue, at least he feared lest through impatience or incogitancy he might speak something whereby he might dishonour God, or grieve the godly, or wound his own conscience, therefore he desires that the Lord would keep him from offending herein. Indeed he elsewhere tels us that for for this he had resolved very carefully to watch over himself, and yet within a while he forgot himself, see the Note Psal. 39. 1; and therefore now he commits himself to Gods keeping.

Verf. 4. *Encline not mine heart, &c.*] Because it is not enough to watch the mouth, except the heart be also kept in awe, therefore is this next clause added, *Encline not mine heart to any evil thing;* that is, suffer it not to be enclined: *to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity;* that is, to joyn with them in their wicked

wicked practices, or to live wickedly as they doe: & let me not eat of their dainties; that is, say some, let not me delight in those things wherein they delight, or, let not me feast with them, lest I be corrupted by their society; or, let not me feed on that which is gotten by rapine & oppression, as their dainties are; or, let not me live in such prosperity and plenty as they doe, lest thereby I be puffed up in wickednesse as they are, let not the pleasant lives which they live in all prosperity, plenty and pleasure, whilst God lets them alone as if they should never be called to an account, tempt me to walk in their wicked waies; or, let not their flatteries & courtesies insnare me.

Verf. 5. *Let the righteous smite me, &c.*] That is, reprove me, according to that Prov. 23. 35. *They have stricken me, and I was not sick,* and 27. 6. *Faithfull are the wounds;* that is, the reproofs, of a friend. This place may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Let the righteous smite me kindly and reprove me; let not their precious oyl break my head:* & then the meaning is clearly this, Let the righteous reprove me, though it be never so sharply, so it be done sincerely out of kindnesse and love; but let not the flatteries & feastings of wicked men mischief me or destroy me. But indeed if we read the words as they are in our Translation, *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindnesse; and let him reprove me, it shall be excellent oyl, which shall not break my head,* the sense is much the same: for so this may be added as in reference to the last clause of the foregoing verse, *and let me not eat of their dainties;* as if he had said, Let me be rather smitten by the righteous, then insnared with the flattering dainties of the wicked: such reproofs I shall take kindly, for I know they will not hurt me, but rather do me good, as refreshing healing oyls are wont to doe, whereas the flatteries of the wicked would destroy me. Yet some do otherwise conceive of the manner how these words are here brought in upon that which went before: as 1. that having prayed verf. 4. that God would not suffer his heart to be enclined to any evil thing, &c. to shew how sincerely he desired this, he professeth here, that to prevent that he was most ready to accept of the reproofs of any good man whatsoever; or 2. that having prayed verf. 3. 4. that he might not by the wicked practises of his enemies against him be provoked to speak or doe any thing that was evil, here he professeth, that if there were any good men that joyned themselves with his malicious persecutours, being merely misled by the false reports that were spread abroad of him, let such come to him and reprove him, he should take it as a kindnesse, not doubting but he should satisfy them. *For yet my prayer shall be in their calamities:* which may be understood either 1. of his wicked adversaries, thus, *for yet,* that is, yet a little while, or yet notwithstanding their rage, I shall pray for them when they are in misery; as if he should have said, And hereby the righteous that joyn with them may see, that mine enemies do persecute me without a cause: or, of those good men, that being deceived by his enemies, did in the simplicity of their hearts aid them; as if he had said, I pity them for their unhappy engagement in so bad a cause, and am so far from wishing them any hurt, that when these their evil courses shall bring misery upon them, I shall heartily pray for them.

Verf. 6. *When their judges are overthrown in stony places, &c.*] That is, When

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their

their princes & rulers, that are now mounted up in high places, shall be utterly destroyed, as men thrown headlong down from the top of high craggy rocks, or as men that stumble in stony places (& some think that this might be prophetically spoken, with reference to the overthrow of Saul & his army on the mountains of Gilboa) *they shall hear my words*; that is, the common people, warned by their example, shall then hearken to me. The meaning is, that when they should see how God had avenged him upon his persecutors, and how unexpectedly he was advanced to the kingdom, they would then be brought to a right understanding of him and of his cause, and so would hear his words, to wit, when he should declare the righteousness of his cause, or when he counselled them to take heed hereafter of joyning with wicked men in any sinfull waies. *For they are sweet*; that is, though now they cannot relish them, nor endure them, yet they are good and profitable, and then with comfort to themselves they shall accept them as such. Some, I know, understand these last words of the judges themselves, to wit, that when Gods judgements should seise upon them, they should then hear his words, that is, they should then call to mind what he had spoken to them, and should approve of it, wishing they had not stopped their ears against it. But the former exposition I judge the best.

Verf. 7. *Our bones are scattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth or cleaveth wood, &c.*] 1. Some understand this clause thus, that David & his friends & followers were dispersed & scattered abroad, & thereby in manifest danger of death. 2. Some take it as an hyperbolicall expression of the terrours that often seized upon them, that in their fears their bones were sometimes shaken, as if they would fall asunder. 3. Some take it to be a figurative expression of the desperate danger they were in, as if he should have said, We are all as dead men, as it were at deaths door; we are sure to be hacked & hewed in pieces, and so to be scattered abroad upon the earth, whereever they light upon us, if the Lord do not the more miraculously preserve us; such traitours, as they account us to be, are like to find no mercy from them either dead or living: & this is that which Saint Paul calls the having the sentence of death before-hand in themselves, 2 Cor. 1. 9. 4. Again, others take it as a poetical expression of the barbarous cruelty of their enemies, to wit, that they used him and his party with as much inhumanity, as if men should cut a mans throat, & then tear him in pieces before they would bury him. And 5. others understand this literally, that Saul and his party did thus use Davids followers, if any of them were but at any time surprized, to wit, that they chopped them in pieces, & so left them unburied: yea some adde, that they digged up their dead bodies and bones, and so scattered them about the graves mouth; which I see not indeed why we should judge incredible, considering with what exceeding rage Saul and his favourers did a long time make war against David.

P S A L M CXLII.

Verf. 2. **I** *Poured out my complaint before him.*] See the Notes 1 Sam. 1. 15. Psal. 42. 4, and 62. 8.

Verf. 3. *When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, &c.*] That is, When I was so per-

perplexed, that I was ready to faint; or that I was at my wits end, not knowing which way to turn my self; see the Note Psal. 61. 2: *then thou knewest my path*; which may be understood three severall waies: either 1. that God knew the dangers he was in, & did accordingly deliver him, to wit, out of the snares which his enemies had laid for him, of which he speaks in the following words, *in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me*; or 2. that in those his troubles God knew & approved his innocency, though that could not hinder his enemies from laying snares for him; or 3. that God knew the way whereby he might & should be delivered, though he for his part knew no way how to avoid their rage, & that because what way soever he took, they had privily laid a snare for him.

Verf. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.*] Either the right hand is only mentioned, because that is the place for men to stand in for the defence of one they desire to aid, according to that Psal. 16. 8. *because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved*, for which see the Note there; or else, under the right hand the left is also comprehended.

Verf. 5. *Thou art my refuge and my portion, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 16. 5: *in the land of the living*; see the Note Psal. 27. 13. It is as if he had said, that even in this life he hoped to find God mercifull to him.

Verf. 6. *Bring my soul out of prison, &c.*] That is, Bring me out of this cave, wherein I am now forced to hide my self; or, out of these streights I am in, being beset on every side, as if I were in a prison: *the righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me*; that is, upon Gods delivering me, the righteous will flock about me, either to gaze at me, as by way of admiring at the great things that God had done for me; or to congratulate my deliverance, to rejoyce and to praise God with me and for me; or to hear what God had done for me; or lastly, to set the crown of Israel upon my head.

P S A L M CXLIII.

Verf. 1. **I**N thy faithfulness answer me and in thy righteousness.] See the note Psal. 5. 8. This is the last of those that are usually called the seven penitential Psalms. See the Note on the Title Psal. 6.

Verf. 3. *For the enemy hath persecuted my soul, he hath smitten my life down to the ground, &c.*] That is, he hath brought me to the very gates of death, to the pits brink, he hath brought me to so low a condition, that I look upon my self no otherwise then as a dead man; see the Note Psal. 7. 5: *he hath made me to dwell in darknesse, as those that have been long dead*; that is, he hath brought me into as hopelesse and desperate a condition, as are those that are in the darknesse of the grave, yea as those that have been long since rotted in the grave; and I am as much disregarded, in a manner, and forgotten, as they are; see the Notes also Psal. 88. 5, 6. Yet some understand all this of lying hid in dark caves of the earth, during the long time of his banishment.

Verf. 4. *Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 61. 2, and 142. 3: *my heart within me is desolate*; that is, destitute of all strength, and void of all comfort.

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Verf. 5.

Verf. 5. *I remember the daies of old, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 25. 6, & 77. 5, 11.

Verf. 6. *My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 42. 2, and 63. 1.

Verf. 7. *Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that goe down into the pit.*] See the Notes Psal. 28. 1, & 88. 3.

Verf. 8. *Cause me to hear thy loving kindnesse in the morning.*] That is, say some Expositours, When in the morning I pray unto thee, let thy spirit inwardly assure me of thy mercy to me; or rather, let me speedily find that thou hast been mercifull to me: see the Notes Psal. 5. 3, & 51. 8. That which he intended hereby might be, that he might speedily, or in the morning, heare that Saul had given over seeking and pursuing after him.

Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, &c.] That is, how I may in all things conform my self to thy commandements; or rather, what course I may take, that I may escape out of the hands of mine enemies, who now know not which way to turn my self: for I lift up my soul unto thee; see the Note Psal. 25. 1.

Verf. 10. *Teach me to doe thy will, for thou art my God, &c.*] That is, Enable me to live so, that I may not doe any thing which is contrary to thy commands: & chiefly he intended hereby, that he might not be provoked by the injurious dealings of his adversaries to speak or do any thing that was evil, nor might be tempted by any sinfull way to rid himself out of his troubles. *Thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness*; as if he had said, Leave me not to mine own corrupt spirit, which will certainly mislead me, neither suffer me to be seduced by wicked men, or by any unclean spirits, (which he might the rather intend, because he knew how Saul had been troubled with an evil spirit sent from the Lord, 1. Sam. 16. 14.) but let thy blessed and holy spirit, the authour of all the good that is in thy people, lead me into the land of uprightness, that is, into the way of upright walking, or, into such a way or land or ground, where all is plain, & clear & even, (see the Note Psal. 5. 8.) that is, into such a condition, where I may be amongst those that walk uprightly, or where there may be nothing to draw me aside from walking uprightly, or to drive me into any crooked by-waies of wickednesse. For so this phrase is used likewise Isa. 26. 10. *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness, in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly*; that is, he will persist in his wicked waies, though he live where righteousness is both taught & professed & practised by others; or he will turn aside out of Gods way where it is evenest & straightest, plainest & easiest, both to find & follow. This, I conceive, is the meaning of these words. Others understand *by the land of uprightness* the city of Jerusalem, where uprightness was taught, & where God was sincerely served & worshipped: & others understand thereby the state of the Saints in heaven, wherein uprightness shall dwell for ever; those *new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*, as S. Peter speaketh 2 Pet. 3. 13.

Verf. 11. *Quicken me, O Lord, for thy names sake.*] That is, Deliver me out of those desperate dangers, wherein I am no other then as a dead man in the eye of reason: see also the Note Psal. 80. 18.

Verf. 12. *Destroy all them that afflict my soul; for I am thy servant.*] That is, Thou hast

hast chosen me to be thy servant, and I am desirous to doe thee the best service I am able, and therefore I know thou wilt take my part against mine enemies. See the Note Psal. 86. 16.

P S A L M CXLIV.

Verf. 1. **B**lessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight.] To wit, that had been formerly inured only to handle a sheep-hook and to play on a harp, and not to meddle with weapons of war; this discovering clearly that he had been extraordinarily taught of God herein. And thus too by alledging what God had done for him, he makes way for that request which follows in this Psalm, that God would deliver him from his enemies, as he had formerly done.

Verf. 2. *My goodnesse and my fortresse, &c.*] See the Note 2 Sam. 22. 2. As for the last clause of this verse, *who subdueth my people under me*, though it may be extended to the Lords making him victorious over forreign nations, which thereby became tributaries to him; yet I conceive it is chiefly meant of Gods chusing and exalting him, who was before of a mean condition, to be king over his own people, and of Gods bowing the hearts of that people to own him, and submit to him as their king.

Verf. 3. *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? &c.*] See the Note Psal. 8. 4.

Verf. 4. *Man is like to vanity, &c.*] That is, to a vain thing, or thing of nought; there is nothing in him whereof he can boast, wherein he can trust, or wherewith he can deserve thy favour; see the Note also Psal. 62. 9: *his daies are as a shadow that passeth away*; to wit, as the shadow of a bird flying over ones head; or as any other shadow that goeth speedily out of ones sight and remembrance, and is then gone as if it had never been: but see the Notes also Psal. 102. 11, and 109. 23.

Verf. 5. *Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down, &c.*] See the Note 2 Sam. 22. 10: *rough the mountains, and they shall smoke*; that is, draw forth from the mountains those exhalations, that may afterwards produce tempestuous storms; or rather, with thy black clouds and storms of rain, thunder and lightning, cause the mountains as it were to smoke; see the Note Psal. 104. 32. But however, that which hereby he desires is doubtlesse this, that God would appear for him, and by some extraordinary way destroy his mighty enemies, that they might vanish as smoke.

Verf. 6. *Cast forth lightnings, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.*] See the Note 2 Sam. 22. 15.

Verf. 7. *Send thine hand from above, &c.*] See the Note 2 Sam. 22. 7: *rid me & deliver me out of great waters*; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 5, Psal. 32. 6, and 69. 1: *from the hand of strange children*; which some understand of enemies of forreign nations, living in a strange land, as such countreys are called Psal. 137. 4. and worshippers of strange gods, see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 45. But the words of the following verse do make it clear, that it is rather meant of those that were his enemies amongst his own people, whom he tearms *strange children*, because they were

but bastard Israelites, *an adulterous generation*, as our Saviour termeth such as these were: but see the Note Psal. 54. 3.

Vers. 8. *Whose mouth speaketh vanity, &c.*] That is, words of falshood and treachery: *and their right hand is a right hand of falshood*; to wit, in that their confidence in their own power will deceive them; or that they are wont to deceive those to whom they promise assistance, yea that often their power is employed in practises of treachery and falshood. Yet some would more particularly restrain this to their swearing falsely with hands lifted up to heaven; concerning which custome see the Note Gen. 14. 22. or to their breaking the promises they had made, & which they had confirmed by clapping of hands together, according to that Prov. 11. 21. *though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not goe unpunished.* And indeed it is well known that Saul did often doe that which was contrary to the oaths & promises whereby he had engaged himself to David.

Vers. 9. *I will sing a new song unto thee, O God.*] See the Note Psal. 33. 3.

Vers. 10. *It is he that giveth salvation unto kings.*] That is, that takes special care to preserve and prosper them, and without whom even kings are not able by their own power to preserve themselves.

Vers. 11. *That our sons may be as plants, &c.*] As if he should have said, And this I desire chiefly, that being delivered from the rage of mine enemies, thy people may live under my government peaceably & prosperously; *That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth*, that is, that they may be like young flourishing plants: and indeed except trees sprout out fairly whilst they are young and tender, they seldome thrive or grow up to any height afterwards. But see the Note also Psal. 128. 3.

Vers. 14. *That there be no breaking in nor going out, &c.*] That is, no going out to war against an invading enemy, or against enemies that have wronged them; or, no going out into captivity, nor no flying out of the land to avoid the rage of invading enemies or oppressors: *that there be no complaining in our streets*; that is, no publick wailings & outcries upon any sodain uprores & tumults amongst them, any tidings of distasters befallen them, or dangers approaching by reason of any enemies invading them, or upon any other calamity whatsoever.

P S A L M CXLV.

The Title. **D** *Avids Psalm of praise.*] This is the last of the Alphabetical Psalms; wherein all the Hebrew letters are found one after another in the beginning of the verses, one only excepted. But see the Note Psal. 25. 1.

Vers. 1. *I will extoll thee my God, O king, &c.*] This title of *king* David here gives unto God, either because he meant in this Psalm to set forth the glorious works of God, as he was the king of the whole world, and in Christ more peculiarly the king of his Church; or else as desiring to acknowledge, that he himself, though a king, was Gods vassal, & that he above other kings did in a speciall manner hold his kingdome from and under God: *and I will blesse thy name for ever and ever*; see the Note Psal. 85. 1.

Vers. 4.

Verf. 4. *One generation shall praise thy works to another.*] That is, One generation after another; in every generation God shall work works of wonder, that shall put men upon praising his name: or, The men of one generation shall praise thy works to others of a succeeding generation, and so shall stir up them to doe the like.

Verf. 7. *They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodnesse, &c.*] That is, the many glorious things which they remember thou hast done out of thy great goodnesse; and so by this means they shall likewise perpetuate the memory of them in succeeding generations: *and shall sing of thy righteousness;* to wit, as it follows in the next verses, *The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, &c.*

Verf. 14. *The Lord upholdeth all that fall, &c.*] That is, that are in danger to fall, or that are ready to sink under any affliction. And so likewise the same may be meant in the following words, *and raiseth up all those that be bowed down;* that is, those that are even now tumbling down, or that are in danger to yield under their burdens. And yet some understand the first clause, of Gods bearing up those that are ready to fall; & the second, of Gods raising up those that are fallen, or that are overpressed & crushed down with sicknesse, or any other affliction or sorrow whatsoever. But however, his meaning is only, that whenever any are upheld from falling, or raised up again when they were fallen, it is the Lord only that doth uphold them, and raise them up.

Verf. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, &c.*] To wit, in that by the instinct of nature, which God hath planted in them, they seek for their food in the way that God hath ordered and established for the feeding of them; see the Note Psal. 104. 21: *and thou givest them their meat in due season;* see the Note Psal. 104. 27.

Verf. 16. *Thou openest thine hand, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 104. 28: *& satisfiest the desire of every living thing;* that is, thou givest unto each of them severally such meat, as according to their kind they desire and are pleased with.

Verf. 21. *Let all flesh blesse his holy name for ever & ever.*] That is, all men; see the Note Psal. 65. 2. Yet some extend this to all living creatures.

P S A L. CXLVI.

Verf. 3. **P***Vt not your trust in Princes, &c.*] To wit, that so God may have all the praise and glory; for in the two foregoing verses the Psalmist had stirred up Gods people to praise the Lord: *nor in the son of man;* that is, nor in any men, whoever & how great soever they be, & that because however they are but men, poor frail creatures: *in whom there is no help;* that is, no power to help, not so much as to help themselves, and much lesse therefore to help others.

Verf. 4. *His breath goeth forth, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though any man should be both able & willing to help, yet there were no trusting in him, because he may die on a sudden: *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;* that is, the earth of which he was formed in his first creation, and wherein it is decreed he must at last be laid: *in that very day his thoughts perish;* that is, all those great designs which he had in his thoughts, and consequently whatever he had purposed.

fed and determined to doe for those that depended on him; do vanish away and come to nothing.

Verf. 7. *The Lord looseth the prisoners.*] So that the meanest that are may trust in God. And indeed that which is here said concerning Gods setting prisoners at liberty, may be also extended to the freeing of those that are in any great streights, or under thraldome and oppression: see the Notes Psal. 107. 10. and 116. 16.

Verf. 8. *The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind, &c.*] This may be also extended 1. to the curing of all other desperate bodily infirmities whatsoever; 2. to the Lords enlightening the eyes of his peoples minds, either by teaching them the way of life & salvation, or by directing them by his spirit what to doe, when being in streights they are in the dark, & know not which way to turn themselves; and 3. to the comforting of those that are in a manner overwhelmed with the terrors of death & desperation, either by shewing them some hope of escape, or by delivering them out of their fears and dangers: *the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down*; see the Note Psal. 145. 14. But now that this which hath been spoken is meant only of the righteous, when they are in any of these distresses, he sheweth by adding the next clause, *the Lord loveth the righteous*; to wit, though he suffers them for a time to lye under those sad calamities that are before mentioned.

Verf. 9. *The way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*] That is, He utterly overthroweth all their counsels and enterprises, so that all things come to passe quite contrary to what they expected.

Verf. 10. *The Lord shall reign for ever, &c.*] And so his people may safely rest upon him in all generations.

PSALM CXLVII.

Verf. 1. **P***Raise ye the Lord; for it is good to sing praises to our God, &c.*] To wit, because it is a duty we owe to God, a service wherewith God is much delighted, and which yields much benefit and advantage to us: *for it is pleasant*; to wit, to those that are truly the children of God, though to the wicked nothing is more wearisome, then are the duties of his worship & service: *& praise is comely*; see Psal 33. 1. Now for the occasion of composing this Psalm, some passages make it most probable, that it was written, either to encourage Gods people that were captives in Babylon, to wait with hope for their deliverance; or rather when they were already returned, & were repairing their city & temple, as appears verf. 13. *He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates, &c.* but especially by that which follows in the next verse.

Verf. 2. *The Lord doth build up Ierusalem, &c.*] As this is meant of the Lords promoting the work of the Jews in repairing the city Ierusalem after their return from Babylon; so it may be also meant of the spirituall building of the Church, which is not done by any power or wisdom of man, but merely by the mighty power of God, who encreaseth their number, & advanceth their prosperous estate, at his pleasure, and restores them to a better condition, when their enemies

mies have made any havock amongst them. And so likewise the following clause, *he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel*, may be understood both of Gods bringing home the scattered Israelites from the Babylonian captivity, & likewise of Gods gathering together all his elect for the building up of his Church, or of his reducing the straying members of his Church, that have been as oft for a time.

Vers. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, &c.*] To wit, with sorrow, either for their afflictions or sins: & *bindeth up their wounds*; that is, cureth them both of their miseries & sorrows. For it is a metaphoricall expression taken from surgeons, who by their skilfull binding up the wounds of their patients, do chiefly promote the healing of them.

Vers. 4. *He telleth the number of the stars, &c.*] That is, He knoweth exactly how many stars there are. As for the next words, *he calleth them all by their names*, either the same thing is again there repeated in other terms, to wit, that God knoweth them all as exactly & particularly, as we know those men whom we can presently upon sight call by their names; or else the meaning is, that he gives them all their severall names: whereby may be implied 1. the perfect knowledge that he hath of them, in that he can give them names answerable to their severall qualities and operations; & 2. the power and command that he hath over them, because masters were wont to give names to their servants, & parents to their children; and consequently that he knoweth all, as a master knoweth those of his household that are at his disposing, and that he assigns to each of them their severall and distinct places & offices & motions & influences, so that though there be such an innumerable multitude of them, yet there is no confusion amongst them. The place is much like that Isa. 40. 26. *Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number, he calleth them all by names, &c.* where God is compared to a captain or commander, and is said to muster and keep a list of the stars, as they do of their companies; & to bring them forth, as they draw forth their souldiers into the fields on a training day, each one in his rank and order. But however the drift of the Psalmist in these words is, to shew how praiseworthy God is in regard of his infinite power & wisdom. And many adde too, that hereby he would imply, that therefore it cannot be unlikely that this God should distinctly know all his people, that shall one day shine as stars before him, though scattered abroad in severall countries, & that he should gather them and bring them home together to their own land, according to what was said before vers. 2. And indeed if this were intended, it might well be judged probable, that these expressions were here used in reference to that promise made to Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars for number, Gen. 15. 5.

Vers. 6. *The Lord lifteth up the meek, &c.*] To wit, both by comforting them, and by raising them from an afflicted estate to live prosperously: *he casteth the wicked down to the ground*; to wit, such as were exalted with a high conceit of their own power, and despised and derided the judgements of God.

Vers. 8. *Who maketh grasse to grow upon the mountains.*] See the Notes Job 38. 26. and Psal. 104. 13.

Verf. 9. *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry.*] To wit, though they are of those sorts of fowls that are most despised by men, as being rather hurtfull, then any way profitable, and such as they never use for meat. But see the Note Job 38. 41.

Verf. 10. *He delighteth not in the strength of the horses; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.*] That is, in mens nimbleness, high stature or strength. The meaning of the whole verse is, that God cares not for companies of horse or foot, or any such outward helps, for the delivering of his people out of trouble; nor consequently for any outward means that may be helpfull for their good.

Verf. 13. *For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates, &c.*] Many conceive that this is spoken with reference to what was done in Nehemia's time, when they repaired the severall gates of Jerusalem, and as it is said Nehem. 3. 3. *set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof:* And so likewise that which follows, *he hath blessed thy children within thee;* that is, thy inhabitants, or their children.

Verf. 14. *He maketh peace in thy borders, &c.*] That is, He preserveth the borders of thy countrey round about from the invasion of forreign enemies: and *filleth thee with the finest of the wheat;* which is in the Hebrew, *the fat of the wheat,* for which see the Note Deut. 32. 14.

Verf. 15. *He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth; his word runneth very swiftly.*] That is, Whatever he commandeth, it is presently done. And this he proves by the snows and frosts, mentioned in the following verses, which come many times in sudden changes of weather suddenly and unexpectedly. Whereby also is covertly hinted to us, that God can make as sudden changes also in the civil state and condition of his people.

Verf. 16. *He giveth snow, like wolle, &c.*] To wit, not only because it is white and soft & light, and when the flakes are any thing great, seems to fall like so many locks of wooll, (whence the heathens of old have also called it *neve*, *neve*, woollly water;) but also especially because it keeps the corn in the earth warm, and covers it from the cold wind like a garment of wooll. And observable also it is, that because the snow doth usually fall gently from the clouds, therefore is the expression here used for this, *he giveth snow like wolle;* so different from that which is used in the following verse concerning the hail, *he casteth forth his yce,* because that doth commonly fall with a violent tempest. And so likewise that next expression, *he scattereth the hoare frost like ashes,* is grounded upon this, that it falls not so thick as the snow doth, nor is so white, but rather indeed of an ash-colour, and likewise because it warms and battens the earth, even as dung and ashes do.

Verf. 17. *He casteth forth his yce like morsels, &c.*] That is, great yce hailstones. Some, I know, understand this of those pieces or cantles of yce, which will be in severall places on the ground in frosty weather, whereever there was any water standing; and that it is said that God casts it forth, because it comes suddenly at Gods command: for of the hail they conceive it cannot be meant, because that falls most frequently in the spring or summer. But because those words, *He casteth forth his yce,* do seem clearly to be meant of an yce that is cast down with violence from the clouds, (see the foregoing Note) I rather think it is meant of hail.

hailstones, which fall like bits or gobbets of bread. And I conceive that that which is noted here as observable is, that the water that freezeth in the air doth not freeze & fall down in huge pieces and rocks of yce, such as are in rivers and other waters here below, which must needs overwhelm & destroy the creatures on earth, but piece-meal, as we see it doth in showers of hail. *Who can stand before his cold?* that is, say some Expositours, the cold that usually follows such storms of hail; or rather, the cold which God sometimes sends in such frosty and snowy weather. And the meaning is, that men cannot but be very sensible of it; or rather, that were it not that men have clothes to cover them, and other means to keep them warm, they would never be able to endure the cold in its extremity, but would perish by it.

Verf. 18. *He sendeth out his word, and melteth them, &c.*] That is, He commandeth, & immediately they are melted, frost & hail and snow, yea & the yce too, which perhaps a little before men could scarce break with levers and pickaxes; and that either by the sudden breaking out of the sun, or by sending some warm and moist thawing wind, as it followeth in the next words, *he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow*; that is, the waters of the rivers & streams, being then melted, run down their channels, which were before bound up, as it were, with yce, see the Note Job 37. 10. Yea being encreased by the snow water, they swell and flow beyond their ordinary bounds.

P S A L M CXLVIII.

Verf. 1. **P**raise ye the Lord from the heavens, &c.] In stirring up all the creatures to praise God, (the drift whereof is only to shew, that Gods transcendent excellencies are clearly discovered in them all) first he begins with those in the heavens, (which in the following verses are particularly mentioned) and that because being exalted in place above others; it was fit that they should, as it were, begin to others; & then afterwards he stirs up all the sub-lunary creatures verf. 7. *Praise the Lord from the earth, &c.* So that *Praise ye the Lord from the heavens* is all one as if he had said, Praise ye the Lord all ye creatures in the heavens; or, Praise the Lord so that your praise may be heard from thence.

Verf. 2. *Praise ye him all his angels, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 103. 20, 21.

Verf. 4. *Praise him ye heavens of heavens, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, the highest heaven, for which see the Note Deut. 10. 14: but according to our translation, where it is not as in Deut. 10. 14. & 1 Kings 8. 27. *the heaven of heavens*, but, *ye heavens of heavens*, I conceive that hereby is meant all the severall orbs of the heavens: and ye waters that be above the heavens; see the Note Gen. 1. 6.

Verf. 6. *He hath also stablished them for ever and ever, &c.*] That is, He hath created the heavens, & the angels therein, yea & all the heavenly bodies before-mentioned, to continue unto the end of the world, yea unto all eternity; to wit, in that he hath created them of an incorruptible substance, or in that he hath decreed that they shall continue for ever, & doth accordingly uphold and preserve them by the same word of his power, whereby they were created (whereas otherwise they would vanish to nothing, as well as other creatures;) whence it is that they

continue unchangeably the same as they were in the first creation, and do herein differ from many of the sublunary creatures, that decay and die, and then others spring up in their room. But now how this may be reconciled with other places, where it is said that the heavens shall perish & be no more, see in the Notes Job 14. 12. and Psal. 102. 26. *He hath made a decree*; to wit, that they shall continue incorruptible, or rather concerning their severall situations, motions, operations and influences: *which shall not passe*; that is, which shall never be abrogated, nor shall ever cease, but shall be observed by an unchangeable order; see Matth. 24. 35.

Verf. 7. *Praise the Lord from the earth, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 1: *ye dragons*; whereby may be meant all those huge formidable creatures which live in caves of the earth, but especially such as live in the sea, as whales, &c. see the Note Psal. 74. 13: & therefore is that which follows added, *& all deeps*, to wit, with all things contained therein. But see the Note Psal. 135. 6.

Verf. 8. *Fire and hail, &c.*] By *fire* here is, at least especially, meant lightnings, which are frequently seen in storms of hail, & all other fiery meteors in the air: *snow & vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word*; to wit, all exhalations, cold & hot; which are all here numbred with the earth, because they rise originally from the earth, and their force is chiefly felt here.

Verf. 11. *Kings of the earth, and all people, &c.*] Man is here mentioned last, because he was last created: but amongst the sons of men kings are first named, (as before the angels were first named amongst all the creatures in heaven, & the sun amongst all the heavenly lights) because they, in regard of their dignity, were most engaged to doe this, & yet were hardliest wonne thereto; whence it is also that such great ones are again and again urged to it in the following words, *princes and all judges of the earth*.

Verf. 13. *His glory is above the earth and heaven.*] See the Note Psal. 8. 1.

Verf. 14. *He also exalteth the horn of his people, &c.*] See the Notes 1 Sam. 2. 1, 10. 2 Sam. 22. 3. and Psal. 89. 24: *the praise of all his saints*; that is, and this that God doeth for them is indeed the glory of his people, and yields them continuall matter of praising God: *even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him*; to wit, in regard of their near relation to him, as being by covenant his peculiar people, yea their spirituall alliance in Christ, Joh. 20. 17; as also in regard of Gods familiar revealing himself to them, and their drawing nigh to God in all the duties of his worship and service: see Eph. 2. 13. and Heb. 10. 19, 22.

PSAL. CXLIX.

Verf. 1. **S**ing unto the Lord a new song, &c.] See the Note Psal. 33. 3. Most of our best Expositours conceive that this Psalm was composed immediately upon or before the deliverance of the Jews out of the Babylonian captivity, & that one main scope of the Psalmist therein was, to arm them against the streights they were still to goe through, and the fore calamities that would again befall them, especially under the persecution of Antiochus, and that by putting them upon the expectation of that their full redemption, which was then

then shortly to be accomplished by Jesus Christ, whereof their deliverance out of Babylon was but only an outward pledge. And if this were the drift of the Psalmist, it may be probably thought that he took this expression from that prophesy of Isaiah, chap. 42. 10. where speaking of the kingdome of Christ, he hath these very words, *Sing unto the Lord a new song, &c.* But the truth is, I see not in any clause of the Psalm, why it might not be as well written concerning the victories of David over the nations round about him. However, in the next clause, *and his praise in the congregation of saints*, there is an intimation, that however Gods people had been scattered, or disturbed in the publick service of God, yet now they should have their holy assemblies again.

Verf. 4. *For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people, &c.*] That is, of his own free grace he hath set his love upon them, & so he delighteth in them, and in their service: *he will beautify the meek with salvation*; that is, he will make his poor afflicted & despised people, that meekly wait upon him, glorious by the wonderfull deliverances he will work for them: Gods taking their part shall be an honour to them; according to that Psal. 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him & honour him*; see the Note also Psal. 132. 16. And for this word, *the meek*, see the Note Psal. 22. 26. Yea and this may be extended also to the honour that God puts upon the faithfull, when they are delivered from the state of wrath, and translated into a state of adoption, and especially when in heaven God shall cloath them with unexpressible glory.

Verf. 5. *Let the Saints be joyfull in glory, &c.*] That is, Let them rejoyce gloriously; or rather, Let them rejoyce in or for that glory which God shall put upon them, to wit, by bringing them into a flourishing condition again. Yet this too may be extended to the spirituall glory of the saints here, and their eternall glory in heaven. *Let them sing aloud upon their beds*; that is, by night, as well as by day; see the Note Job 35. 10. Or else this expression of *singing upon their beds* may be used, to imply the cause of their joy, to wit, that God should bring them to live peaceably and securely again, according to that Levit. 26. 6. *ye shall lye down, and none shall make you afraid*: and that the rather, because their consciences should now also be quieted, and should yield them much sweet refreshing, whereas before, the apprehension of Gods wrath in the sad condition they were brought into, had sorely perplexed them.

Verf. 6. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, &c.*] It is in the Hebrew, *in their throats*; thereby to set forth, that they should sing aloud, which is not done without some straining of the throat, as we may see also Isa. 58. 1. where that which we translate, *Cry aloud*, is in the Hebrew, *Cry with the throat*. As for the following words, *& a two-edged sword in their hand*, that seems to imply, that whereas of late years they had been of abject spirits, & in a servile condition, forced to undergoe any thing the heathens round about would doe to them, now they should take courage again, & go out against their enemies with weapons in their hands, to defend themselves, & to destroy them. And indeed, if we understand this of the beginning of Davids reign, that which follows in the next verses, *To execute vengeance, &c.* may well be meant of the many glorious victories which he obtained over the heathen na-

tions round about him. But now because many of our best Expositours do understand this of the times after the Babylonian captivity, & we cannot find that ever the Jews after that did so universally prevail against the heathen, as seems to be set forth in the following verses, *To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, &c.* (for that which was done by the Maccabees cannot amount to so much, especially considering in what a sad condition they did at last leave that people;) therefore they doe generally referre this to the daies of Christ, & do accordingly hold that this, with that which follows in the 2. next verses, is meant either 1. of the Churches victories in the daies of the Gospel over her mighty enemies; or 2. of the saints subduing the heathens, and bringing them to submit to the yoke of Christ, by the preaching of the Gospel, that two-edged sword of the word, as it is called Heb. 4. 12. and Revel. 1. 16. wherein the high praises of God, in giving his son for mans Redemption, are set forth, and thereby men are subdued unto God; or 3. of the saints judging the world together with Christ at the day of judgement, the sword being a sign of judiciary power.

Verf. 7. *To execute vengeance upon the heathen, &c.*] It is hard to conceive how this can be applyed to the subduing of the heathen by the preaching of the Gospel, though some tearm it a holy revenge, to seek the eternall salvation of implacable enemies, and others refer us to that of the Apostle 2 Cor. 10. 6. *having in a readinesse to revenge all disobedience*: And indeed because of this passage, I conceive the whole place is rather to be understood of the Churches outward victories; for which see the foregoing Note.

Verf. 8. *To bind their kings with chains, &c.*] This, as is noted before, some understand of bringing the greatest under the yoke of Christ, which at first they count as bonds and fetters, see the Note Psal. 2. 3: and others, of the saints passing that judgement with Christ at the last day, Matth. 22. 13. *Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darknesse.* But see the Notes above verf. 6, 7.

Verf. 9. *To execute upon them the judgement written, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, decreed by God; or rather the judgment which God in his written word hath enjoined them to execute, or foretold they should execute: which some refer to that Deut. 7. 12. when God gave them that charge concerning the Canaanites, *thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them*; and others to that more generall prediction concerning the destruction of the Churches enemies, Deut. 32. 43. *Rejoyce, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, &c.* However, observable it is, that hereby they were bound up not to proceed otherwise against the worst of their enemies, then according to the rule of Gods written word. And there might be also in these words an allusion to the old custome in courts of judicature, of writing down the sentence the court had determined should be executed upon malefactours, which was accordingly read out of that writing they had before them, when sentence was pronounced against them. *This honour have all the saints*; that is, all the people of God have the honour of doing what is before

fore mentioned, to wit, of destroying the Lords & their implacable enemies. This, I conceive, is the plain meaning of the words: though others, I know, do understand this, according to their different exposition of the foregoing passages, of the honour of subduing men by the word, and of sitting with Christ on thrones to judge the world.

P S A L M C L.

Verf. 1. **P**raise God in his Sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power.] Divers waies this may be understood: as that the people of God are hereby stirred up to praise the Lord, who had his habitation both in the Temple below, & in the heaven above; or, that in the first clause the people of God in the Temple are called upon to praise God, & in the second the angels in heaven, and, as some think, all the heavenly lights besides; or, that in the first clause the Israelites in the Temple are excited to praise God, & in the second all men that are within the compasse of the firmament, to wit, all men throughout the world. But Frather understand it thus; *Praise God in his Sanctuary*, that is, Praise him for his Sanctuary, to wit; for his vouchsafing to dwell there amongst his people, and to reveal himself there to them in his ordinances: or, by his Sanctuary may be meant the heaven; for which see the Note Psal. 20. 2. And then what is said in the first clause; is repeated again and explained in the second, *praise him in the firmament of his power*; that is, praise him for that glorious work of the firmament, wherein there is such a clear and stupendious discovery of his infinite power, and from whence he doth also by his mighty acts declare the absolute power that he hath over all his creatures.

Verf. 4. *Praise him with the timbrel and dance.*] See the Note Psal. 149. 3.

Verf. 6. *Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.*] That is, every living creature. Yet many learned Expositours conceive, that as often in Scripture by *all flesh* is meant all men, so here by *every thing that hath breath* is meant every living man. And so, say they, in the close of the Psalms there is an intimation given, that the time was coming, when the Gentiles should sing these Psalms of praise to God, as well as the Jews. And indeed this expression of *every thing that hath breath for all men*, seems thus also to be used both Deut. 20. 16. and Josh. 11. 11.

A N N O T A

ANNOTATIONS

Upon the Book of PROVERBS.

CHAP. I.

Verf. 1.



THe Proverbs of Solomon, &c.] The first six verses here contain the Inscription of this Book: & accordingly in these first words we are told 1. what the chief subject of this Book is, to wit, *Proverbs*, or, as some translate it, *Parables*, certain choice, divine, master-sentences, called by other writers axiomes and apophthegms; for which see also the Notes Numb. 21. 27. & 23. 7: & 21y, who was the authour of it, *Solomon*, who *was wiser then all men*, 1 King. 4. 31; so that here we are admitted to hear his wisdom, which to hear the Queen of Sheba came *from the uttermost parts of the earth*, Math. 12. 42. Indeed though all Expositours agree, that the Proverbs in this book are the chief of those *three thousand* which it is said Solomon spake, see the Note 1 King. 4. 32; yet many think that this book was not composed by Solomon himself, but by some other holy man of God, who gathered these Proverbs out of the writings of those that had taken them from Solomons own mouth as he spake them, & so digested them into a book, as now we have them. But because 1. it is probably thought by most, that the nine first chapters, which contain an Introduction to the Proverbs, were written by Solomon; & 2. that which is said Chap. 25. 1. *These are also Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah King of Judah copied out*, may seem to imply, that the former Proverbs from the beginning of the 10. to the end of the 24. chapter were not only Solomons, but also written by Solomon himself; I see not why we should question, but that the book it self was of Solomons composing: though it seems it was afterwards enlarged by some other, long after Solomons daies. However observable it is, that this is the first book of the Scripture that hath the authours name prefixed to it; which is done to make men prize it the more: to which end also the following words are added, that he was *the son of David king of Israel*; & so not only both a prophet, & the son of a prophet, David, a man after Gods own heart, by whom he was educated with all possible care, but also a king, and the son of a king, (whose words are usually by men highly esteemed and regarded) yea *the king of Israel*, which shews that these proverbs were first delivered for the use of the Church and people of God.

Verf. 2. *To know wisdom, &c.*] That is, To teach & stir up men to know, and that more & more, those things whereby they may become wise unto salvation, as to live piously, &c: *and instruction*; that is, that way of holinesse & righteousness,

ness, which by *instruction* is taught men; or rather to make men to know and understand the *instruction* of their teachers, as it is explained in the following clause, *to perceive the words of understanding*; that is, to conceive & apprehend the wise sayings and profound sentences of their instructors, wherein understanding is taught.

Verf. 4. *To give subtilty to the simple, &c.*] That is, To make those silly ones, that of themselves are easily induced to believe any thing, prudent and circumspect, that they may not be misled by the cunning craftinesse of men, and that they may wisely manage all their affairs: see the Note also Psal. 19. 7. And now because young men are usually thus simple, therefore is the next clause added, *to the young man knowledge and discretion.*

Verf. 5. *A wise man, &c.*] That is, The man that truly fears God, & so hath withall attained some good measure of knowledge: *will hear*; to wit, the words of this book, & consequently all other holy instruction: *& will encrease learnings*; that is, will yet farther grow in knowledge, yea and be the more able to teach others: *and a man of understanding shall attain to wise counsels*; that is, wisely to contrive & determine how to manage all his affairs, or to give wise counsels for the direction of others. However the drift of this is to shew, that these proverbs would be usefull for the learned and the wisest of men, as well as for the simple and unlearned.

Verf. 6. *To understand a proverb, &c.*] That is, say some, to invent proverbs, or rather to find out the meaning of proverbiall speeches: *and the interpretation*; that is, to interpret them, either for their own good, or for the edifying of the Church: *the words of the wise & their dark sayings*; to wit, either by reason of the profoundnesse of the matter therein contained, or by reason of the figurative and obscure expressions, wherein after the manner of riddles they are delivered: see the Notes Psal. 49. 4. and Judg. 14. 12.

Verf. 7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, &c.*] Heré begins the introduction to the proverbiall sentences, contained in the nine first chapters, wherein Solomon stirs up men to seek after that wisdom which is taught in this book; & accordingly he begins with that which is the beginning & foundation of all saving knowledge, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*; a lesson that he had learnt of his father David, Psal. 111. 10. for which see the Note there. It may also be render'd, *The fear of the Lord is the principal part of knowledge*; that is, not only the foundation, but also the top & perfection of it. *But fools*, that is, ungodly men, see Psal. 14. 1. *despise wisdom*, therein discovering their folly, *and instruction*, which is the means of getting wisdom; & therefore their despising that is a clear evidence that they despise wisdom too. The opposition that is betwixt these two clauses (which it is evident that Solomon intended in most of his proverbs) stands thus, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*, and therefore wise men will esteem highly of this filial fear, without which there is no knowledge any thing worth; but men that fear not God are fools, and therefore despising the fear of God, they must needs despise knowledge that depends thereon.

Verf. 8. *My son, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 34. 11: *hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.* Solomon, say some, speaks thus of himself, as desiring by these tearms to expresse that he spake this with the affection of a father, yea & of a mother too; as we find the like expressions often in Paul, as 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat,* & Gal. 4. 19. *My little children, of whom I travell in birth till Christ be formed in you.* But I rather conceive that Solomon undertaking to teach men wisdom, even from their tender years, (as he had said before verf. 3:) he doth accordingly here urge upon them, next after the fear of God, that they should carefully obey the pious instructions & counsell of their naturall parents, teaching them, and pressing upon them the law of God. And observable it is, that because fathers are fittest to instruct their children, therefore he saith, *hear the instruction of a father:* & because mothers, though not so able to instruct, yet are wont with great earnestnesse to charge them to doe well, therefore he saith of them, *and forsake not the law of thy mother.* And besides this word, *forsake not*, doth covertly also give warning, 1. that they should not slight & reject the advice of a mother, because of the weaknesse of her sex; and 2. that they should take heed of that which is the usuall fault of children, namely to be much affected and guided by the counsell of their mothers whilst they are young, but then in their grown years to forsake their counsell.

Verf. 9. *For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*] That is, Thy obeying the counsell & instruction of thy parents, & walking in those holy waies which they prescribe thee, will be as ornaments to thee: they will be no burden at all, but will make thee amiable, both in the sight of God & man. Yea & some conceive that hereby also is implied, that God would for this conferre many good blessings upon them, which should be an ornament to them, as long life, riches & honours, & a crown of eternall glory hereafter: which may seem the more probable, because such ornaments, as chains of gold & jewels, have been usuallly given to those that for their wisdom have been advanced to places of honour; as to Joseph, Gen. 41. 42. & to Daniel, Dan. 5. 16. But indeed I rather think that seeking here (as is noted upon the foregoing verse) to train up children in the waies of piety, he useth expressions suitable to the affections of children, that do usuallly delight in chains & jewels & gay apparel.

Verf. 11. *If they say, Come with us, &c.*] Having undertaken in the foregoing verse to dissuade young men from hearkening to the enticements of wicked men, he instanceth here particularly in the inticements of those cut-throats & ruffians that live by robbing on the high way: (for this I conceive the words do plainly hold forth; though under this particular we may comprehend also the enticements of those that by oppression and couzenage do utterly ruine men to enrich & exalt themselves, & that because even this is no better then man-slaughter & laying wait for blood, in Gods account, for which see the Note that follows verf. 19.) And observable it is, first, in what a confident & jocund manner they expresse themselves, *Come with us:* as who should say, No men live a braver freer life then we do, & having us to side with you, who by our number & strength are so well able to carry on our designs, you need not fear any thing; and 2. that

that they endeavour to embolden them against the feare both of shame and punishment, by assuring them, that they would lurk privily in such close secret places, that they would on a sodain rush forth, & surprize those that passed by, so that it should never be known, *Let us, say they, lay wait for bloud; let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause.* Yea & the same some conceive is implied in their speaking of surprizing *the innocent without cause*; and that because such men are wont to travel by the way the more securely & fearlessly. Had they watched to take revenge on any that had wronged them, there would have been more danger in that, because they might well expect, that such men would be the more jealous and watchfull over themselves: but when they should set upon poor simple-hearted innocent men, that had never done any thing, for which any man should seek to take away their lives, it would be a very easy work to surprize them. But then withall we must know, that Solomons purpose was not to set down the very words, wherewith such varlets are wont to entice young men to joyn with them in their waies of villany. For it were enough to fright & to beat off a young novice, not yet fleshed in sin, to have this at the first dash propounded to him, *Come with us, let us lay wait for bloud, &c.* And besides, it would have been more available for the inveigling of such young men, to have pleaded, that those whom they meant to prey upon, were covetous carles, & that they should but take from them what they had before unjustly gotten from others, then to talk of surprizing *the innocent without cause.* But the holy Ghost doth expresse their solicitations in such odious tearms, only to signify, that whatever they might pretend when they sought to draw young men into their society, it was all one in effect, as if they had impudently expressed themselves thus, *Come, let us lay wait for bloud, &c.* for this their robberies would end in at last; & whatever they might pretend, their own consciences could not but bear witnesse against them, that they did causlessly lye in wait to undoe poor innocent men: see the following Note vers. 16.

Verf. 12. *Let us swallow them up alive as the grave, and whole as those that goe down into the pit.*] As if they should have said, We will sodainly & easily dispatch them, & withall make such a clean riddance of them, that there shall be nothing left, whereby any discovery may be made of what we have done. So that there are two arguments couched in these words, whereby they seek to draw in the young man they speak to, to joyn in their robberies: to wit, 1. that there would not be the least difficulty in effecting these things, which they propounded to themselves; they would as speedily dispatch them, & make a prey of whatever they had about them, as a man that is healthfull & lusty falling unawares into a pit is sodainly brought to destruction, or as the grave doth in an instant, as it were, swallow up & consume the dead bodies that are laid into it; see the Notes Psal. 55. 15. & 124. 3: & 2^{ly}, that what they did in this kind should never be known. For whereas it might be objected, that some of those they sought to surprize might escape from them, or that the dead carcases or the bloud of those they should slay would be found, & so there would be diligent search made to find out those that had done it; this is prevented, by affirming confidently, that they would so surely dispatch those they set upon, that they should never come to tell any

tales of what had been done to them: yea that such a course should be taken, that there should be no more appearance of bloud, or of any thing that might raise any suspicion of what had been done, then if the earth opening her mouth had swallowed them up alive. And then again the multitudes of those they would thus surprize & make away may be implied in this, that they boast of swallowing them up *as the grave*, of which Solomon saith elsewhere, that it can never be satisfied, Prov. 30. 15, 16.

Verf. 14. *Cast in thy lot among us, &c.*] These words propound to the young man they labour to inveigle, 1. that he would joyn with them, and try what their lot should be; and 2. that what money he had he would put it into a common stock with them, till they had gotten some booty. And then withall they imply a promise, that as they should get any thing by the waies propounded, they would all have share & share like. Whereas he might fear, that when they came to divide the spoil they should get, because they were many, and had been long in league together, and were experienced men in these waies, they would put him off with some small pittance; therefore they assure him that he should have an equall share with any of the rest, & that, if he pleased, determined by lot. And to the same purpose is the next clause, *let us all have one purse*: for hereby they imply, either that they would justly divide their booties amongst them all; or that they would all spend upon one common stock; if they spent upon what he had at one time, he should as freely at other times spend upon what they had.

Verf. 15. *My son, walk not thou in the way with them, &c.*] That is, joyn not with them in any of their wicked waies; yea that thou maist not be insnared by them, keep not company with them.

Verf. 16. *For their feet run to evil, & make haste to shed bloud.*] That is, They are carried violently into sinfull courses, or to doe mischief unto poor innocent men; yea they run headlong to the shedding of innocent bloud. But, may some say, why doth Solomon inform young men of this, as of a thing which they knew not, thereby to beat them off from hearkning to such mens inticements, seeing they themselves are brought in before verf. 11. plainly professing thus much, *Come with us, let us lay wait for bloud? &c.* I answer, To evade this objection, some expound the words thus, *For their feet run to evil*, that is, they run headlong upon their own destruction, they make all the speed they can to the gallows; *& make haste to shed bloud*, that is, to shed their own bloud. But for my part, I do rather look upon this as a farther confirmation of that which is noted before upon those words verf. 11. to wit, that Solomon did there expresse the solicitations of that kind of men in those tearms, *Come, let us lay wait for bloud, &c.* not because he would have us think that they were wont to use any such language, but only to intimate that whatever they might pretend, this they would in the conclusion draw them to. Yet withall I see not but that Solomon might use this as an argument to keep young men from hearkning to such evil counsellors, yea though it be supposed that they had in expresse tearms encouraged them to lye in wait for bloud, seeing the drift of these words, *for their feet run to evil, &c.* might be all one in effect as if he had said thus, Mind not so much the great riches they promise

mise you in these waies, as the evil & sin they tempt you to, which is no lesse then shedding blood.

Verf. 17. *Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.*] According to this Translation of ours, there are only two literall expositions that can be given of this parabolical expression. The first is, that it is to no purpose for a fowler to spread a net in the sight of any bird, because if she espies the net, she will not come near it, but will presently betake herself to her wings, according to that of the Poet, *Quaque nimis patent retia, vitat avis*; and for this very reason it may be probably thought, that it is in the Hebrew, *in the eyes of every thing that hath a wing*. And if we so understand it, that which Solomon might intend thereby may be, 1. to imply the reason why those robbers, of whom he had spoken, do lurk in thickets, & lye in wait in secret places, to wit, because otherwise they should be frustrated of their hopes & purposes, as the unskillfull fowler is when his nets are seen; 2. to shew how little assurance those men have, that run these waies, of those great spoils which they with so much confidence promise the young novices they would draw in to be partners with them, as it was expressed before ver. 13; & that because, as the bird seeing the net or snare that is laid for her, doth usually flie away & evade the danger, so the innocent, discovering by some means or other that there are such men lying in wait for them, do often prevent the danger, and escape out of their hands, at least God, who sees all things that are done upon earth, may by his providence many waies preserve them from falling into their hands; or 3. rather to intimate, that seeing poor silly birds will thus eschew a danger when once they discern it, much more should reasonable men carefully avoid the snare that is laid for their lives in the enticement of such wicked wretches, when once it is discovered to them. But then the second & the most generally approved exposition that is given of these words is this; that *the net is spread in vain in the sight of any bird*, because though they see the net, yet poor silly creatures, so greedy they are after the bait, they will run into the net, & so are taken & destroyed: And then that which Solomon would imply hereby is, that just so it is with wicked men that are tempted to these lewd courses, though they may see the snares whereinto they are like to fall, in the gallows & gibbets that are set up in severall places for such varlets, though they may plainly see the destruction which their desperate courses are like to bring upon them, by the example of others that have run the same waies, & are daily cut off by the magistrate; yet they will not take warning, but rush headlong upon their own destruction, and bring themselves at last to a shamefull death. And so indeed this proverbiall expression seems to be explained in the following verse.

Verf. 18. *And they lay wait for their own blood, they lurk privily for their own lives.*] To wit, in that, whilst they lye in wait for others, through the just judgement of God, they bring destruction hereby upon themselves, many times a shamefull death here, and without repentance eternall death alwaies hereafter.

Verf. 19. *So are the waies of every one that is greedy of gain, &c.*] As if he had said, What hath been hitherto said of these robbers, by way of particular instance, may be in-like manner said of all other covetous wretches, that out of greediness

nesse after gain do by oppression, or any other wicked waies, impoverish and undoe men. And accordingly we must understand the next words, *which taketh away the life of the owners thereof*; that is, which greedinesse after gain causeth such men, even to take away the lives of those that have the wealth they gape after in their possession; or rather, which gain, gotten by such unjust and bloudy waies, doth usually bring destruction upon those that do so unjustly possesse it, and cut short their daies, see 1 Tim. 6. 9.

Verf. 20. *Wisedome cryeth without, &c.*] By *wisedome*, represented here to us under the person of some grave matron, Lady, or Princess, is meant the word of God, or the doctrine of life revealed by God unto men; or rather, the Son of God, the Lord Christ, who is the coeternall & personall wisedome of the Father, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisedome & knowledge*, Col. 3. 2. as is more fully expressed chap. 8. 22, 23, &c. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, &c.* And in the Hebrew it is expressed in the plurall number, *wisedomes*; and that to imply, either 1. that he is the most absolute, the most excellent and sovereign wisedome, the wisedome of wisedomes; or 2. that he is the authour of all wisedome, teaching men all that is necessary to make them wise, & to make them walk wisely, even *the manifold wisedome of God*, as the Apostle calls it Eph. 3. 10; or 3. that he hath in all ages, by many severall waies, perswaded men to forsake their sinfull waies, & to turn unto God. Now whereas it is said that this *wisedome cryeth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, &c.* the meaning is, that whereas those seducers before mentioned do secretly & closely seek to entice men to their sinfull waies, the son of God doth on the other side openly & in publick, with all plainnesse & earnestnesse, call upon all men in all places that walk in such waies, both the seducers & the seduced, to abandon their evil courses, and to live holily and righteously, shewing them that in the conclusion the following of this advice will be found to be the only true wisedome.

Verf. 21. *She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates, &c.*] See the Notes Gen. 22. 17. Judg. 5. 11. and Psal. 9. 14.

Verf. 22. *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? &c.*] By *simple ones* here are meant such as erre through weaknesse & ignorance, & are carried away even in their grown years with childish vanities: & so likewise in the following words, *and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge*, by *scorers* are meant such as deride all means used to reclaim them, and by *fools* such as wilfully run on in all kind of wickednesse.

Verf. 23. *Turn you at my reproof: behold I will pour my spirit unto you, &c.*] That is, I will fully and freely make known my mind to you, and inform you what my will is, and what I would have you doe.

Verf. 24. *Because I have called, & ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, & no man regarded.*] Many things may be here intended by wisedomes stretching out her hand. But I conceive that which is here principally meant is, either that she had by way of beckning called them to come in to her; (dealing therein with them as with deaf men, or those that were gone far off from God;) or, that she had pleaded earnestly with them, because in so doing men are wont to stretch out their hands;

hands; or, that she had offered to receive them & embrace them in her bosome, if they would come in to her.

Verf. 26. *I also will laugh at your calamity, &c.*] To wit, as you have laughed at my reproofs. It is as if he had said, I will not help you, nor mind you, when you cry & howle in your misery, no more then they regard men in distresse, that are wont to laugh at them and mock them when they are in misery; for so afterward here this is explained verf. 28: but see also the Note Psal. 2. 4. *I will mock when your fear cometh upon you*; that is, when that which you feared shall come upon you, or when in the time of your calamity you shall be overwhelmed with fear.

Verf. 27. *When your fear cometh as desolation, &c.*] To wit, as the desolation of war, which comes suddenly & with unresistable violence, see the Note Job 30. 14; or, any other desolation, that is made by any other means, that falls upon men with fury, & brings upon them insufferable misery: *& your destruction cometh as a whirl-wind*; see the Note Psal. 58. 9.

Verf. 28. *Then shall they call upon me, &c.*] That is, in their calamity, though before they never regarded to doe it: *but I will not answer*; to wit, no more then they would heretofore regard me, when I called upon them: *they shall seek me early*; that is, so soon as ever these calamities come upon them, see the Note Psal. 78. 34; or with all earnestnesse, calling upon God, as it were from morning to morning. Yea & some conceive that this word *early* implyeth, that even in their youth these calamities should seize upon them, & drive them perforce to God, but that even then it should be in vain, as the following words shew: *but they shall not find me*; to wit, because they seek me for nothing, but that I may deliver them out of their calamities; see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 42.

Verf. 29. *For that they bated knowledge, & did not chuse the fear of the Lord.*] That is, They did not before chuse to fear God with a filial fear, though now perforce they are afraid of him because of his judgements.

Verf. 31. *Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, &c.*] Wicked men may be said to *eat of the fruit of their own way* in three respects: 1. when the honours, riches and pleasures, which they have sought after, prove the occasion of much misery to them; 2. when they come to be destroyed by their own counsels and courses; & 3. when God punisheth them according to their deserts. And whereas it followeth, that *they shall be filled with their own devices*, the meaning is, that they shall be abundantly punished, they shall have enough of those sins in the punishment, whereof they could never have enough in the practise: yea and more particularly this may intend, that through the inward vexation of their minds for the evil they have done, they shall be as men that loath those meats whereon they have formerly surfeited. But however this seems to be spoken with reference to that foregoing language of such wicked wretches, verf. 12. *Let us swallow them up alive as the grave, &c.* implying, that however sweet those morsels might seem in the devouring of them, yet they would prove bitter enough in the conclusion.

Verf. 32. *For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, &c.*] This may be read

read, as it is in the margin, *For the ease of the simple shall slay them*: & then by *the ease of the simple* may be meant, either their constant & obdurate settlednesse in their evil waies, as pleasing themselves therein, being free from all fear of evil, and promising themselves all prosperity and peace, according to that Jer. 48. 11. *Moab hath been at rest from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, &c*; or else the present peace & plenty wherein they live; and then the same is meant here that is more fully expressed in the following clause, *and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*. But our Translation, I conceive, is the best, *For the turning away of the simple shall slay them*; that is, their turning away from God and his law, and the waies of holiness & righteousness therein prescribed them; or, their turning away from the reproofs & instructions of wisdom: & then this expression might be used with reference to those foregoing words of wisdom ver. 23. *Turn ye at my reproof, &c*: *and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*; that is, it hastens Gods judgements upon them, and makes them the more grievous, and that because being fools they know not how to use their prosperity, but are puffed up thereby, and mind only their worldly contentments; & especially because seeing themselves to prosper in their wicked waies, and perhaps apprehending that it is for their walking in those waies that things go so well with them, they are hereby hardened and emboldened to persevere therein. Because against the foregoing threatening of Gods just judgements, that should fall upon wicked men, it might be objected, that none do usually live more quietly & prosperously then such men, by way of preventing this objection it is here said, that even their peace and prosperity doth manifestly tend to bring the sorer destruction upon them.

Verf. 33. *But who so hearkneth unto me, &c.*] That is, to the instructions of wisdom here before in this chapter given, or that are contained in this book, or to the instructions of wisdom in the word of God in generall: *shall dwell safely*; see the Notes Levit. 26. 5. & Psal. 91. 1, 3, 10: *and shall be quiet from fear of evil*; that is, not only from evil, but from fear of evil; so that this implies not only a settled prosperous estate, wherein there should be no danger of a change, but also security of mind not subject to terrifying fears: see the Note Job 11. 15.

C H A P. II.

Verf. 1. **M***y son, &c.*] Some conceive that these are still the words of wisdom, as those were in the later part of the foregoing Chapter from the 20. verse. But because it is not said in the following verse, *so that thou encline thine ear unto me*, (as it should have been if wisdom had been still speaking) but, *so that thou encline thine ear to wisdom*, and especially because the following instructions are clearly Solomons, as we may see chap. 4. 1, 2, 3. where having said, *Hear ye children, &c.* he adds, *for I was my fathers son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother*; therefore I rather think that Solomon here returns to call upon men again in his own name, as before chap. 1. 8. *My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee*; that is, if thou wilt esteem them highly, and lay them up safely, as men do their choicest jewels; or as men will carry some things continually about with them in their bosomes, because

because they make such precious account of them, that they think no other place safe enough to hide them in. But see the Note Psal. 119. 11.

Verf. 3. *Yea, if thou cryest after knowledge, &c.*] That is, if thou callest after her to have her come to thee, as children use to cry after their mother; or rather, if in prayer thou callest earnestly upon God for knowledge. And indeed that this is meant here is evident, because verf. 6. the reason given why men should thus cry after knowledge, is, because it is only God that can give this knowledge, *for the Lord giveth wisdom, &c.* As for the second clause, *and liftest up thy voice for understanding*, it is in the Hebrew, *and givest thy voice for understanding*: which may imply a mans giving up himself wholly to this businesse of praying for understanding. But this is not so clear in the Text.

Verf. 4. *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.*] To wit, as men labour to get wealth, or as men seek to find & to get silver & gold out of the mines in the earth, or as men, when they have lost silver, or any such thing that they highly esteem, do endeavour by all possible means to find it again; that is, if thou seekest wisdom with all earnestnesse, sparing no cost nor labour, seeking it all manner of waies, & renewing thine endeavours again and again, if a while thou failest of what thou seekest for. Yea & withall, by comparing wisdom with silver and hid treasures, Solomon doth also imply, how precious wisdom is, how hard to be obtained, and how delightfull it is at last when it is gotten.

Verf. 5. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.*] That is, Hereby thou shalt be brought truly and experimentally to know what it is to fear God, to worship him, & to walk in his fear, and so thou shalt attain the true knowledge of God, wherein consists true wisdom. But yet withall we must know, that the promise here made must be understood of growing up unto farther perfection in the fear & knowledge of God; for some measure of the fear and knowledge of God there must be in men, before they can labour & pray for wisdom, as is before prescribed.

Verf. 6. *For the Lord giveth wisdom, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 3: *out of his mouth cometh knowledge & understanding*; that is, he revealeth it to men by his word, & teacheth it effectually by the inspiration of his spirit.

Verf. 7. *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous, &c.*] That is, saving wisdom, which hath not an appearance only of wisdom, but is indeed true wisdom, in regard it will doe men good unto all eternity; this God gives not to all, but layeth it up, to wit, as a treasure, for the righteous, & is most ready to bestow it upon them when they seek it of him: *he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly*; to wit, chiefly in regard of defending them from spirituall evils, as the following verses set forth.

Verf. 8. *He keepeth the paths of judgement, &c.*] Some understand this of Gods being exactly just in all his waies, and the next clause, *& preserveth the way of his saints*, they understand of Gods preserving his servants in all their waies & enterprises. But I rather take the meaning of these words to be this; *He keepeth the paths of judgement*, that is, he causeth them to keep the paths of judgement;

he keeps his servants in the paths of judgement, not suffering them by any temptations to be drawn aside to the right hand or to the left: *and preserveth the way of his saints*; that is, both from being drawn out of those waies, and from all evil whilst they walk in that way.

Verf. 9. *Then, &c.*] To wit, when thou hast, according to the advice given in the beginning of this chapter, sought earnestly to God for wisdom; or, when God thereupon hath given thee wisdom, as was promised above verf. 6: *shalt thou understand right conscience and judgement and equity*; see the Note chap. 1. 3.

Verf. 10. *When wisdom entereth into thine heart, &c.*] That is, When thou hast attained wisdom, and art become truly wise; or, when thou art seriously delighted with it: and then it is the same with that which followeth, *and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul*.

Verf. 11. *Discretion shall preserve thee, &c.*] To wit, from sinfull waies, and the dangers thereupon ensuing.

Verf. 12. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things.*] That is, from all seducers, that teach false doctrines, or entice men to wicked waies: see the Note 2 Sam. 22. 27.

Verf. 13. *Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the waies of darkness.*] That is, Who do wilfully against knowledge live constantly & with delight in the waies of ignorance & wickedness, yea in those abominable waies, which men are ashamed to commit in the light, and for the freer doing whereof they seek to be in the dark, such as are robbing, and drunkenness, and filthiness. See the Note Job 24. 13.

Verf. 14. *Who rejoyce to doe evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked.*] That is, both in their own and other mens wickednesses; and that because walking in darkness, as was said in the foregoing verse, they discern not the danger of those lewd waies.

Verf. 16. *To deliver thee from the strange woman, &c.*] That is, To preserve thee from being entangled by her, and to rescue thee out of her power, if thou hast already been ensnared by her. Now though by *the strange woman* may be meant any whore, & that because God had severely forbidden this sin, & so such a one might be called *the strange woman*, as ordinary fire which might not be used in the Sanctuary is called *strange fire* in the Scripture, and the idol-gods which the Israelites were forbidden to worship are called *strange gods*; yet I rather think it is meant here of a whorish wife, and that because that suits best with the words in the following verse, *which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God*: & such a one may best be called *the strange woman*, because she is not the adulterers wife, but another mans, and therefore ought to be held as a stranger to any other; which is also intended in the following clause, *even from the stranger which flattereth with her words*. Only we must know, 1. that because the Hebrew word, here translated *the stranger*, doth, as some conceive, most properly signify an alien, a woman of a foreign nation, therefore some think that the common whore is so called, because if any such were through abuse or toleration suffered amongst the Israelites, contrary to that expresse law Deut. 23. 17. they were looked

looked upon as heathens & excommunicate persons; and others hold that the adulteresse is so called, because she had alienated her self from God & his people by her filthy conversation, or because it was as unlawfull for a man to goe in to such a one, as it was for the Israelites of old to marry with the daughters of Canaan: & 2. that though the adulteresse is wont to flatter her husband, the better to hide her sin, yet here Solomon speaks of the flatteries wherewith she enticeth other men to commit folly with her, alledging this as the excellency of wisdom, that it will preserve a man from the flatteries of such harlots.

Verf. 17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, &c.*] Should we understand the foregoing verse of the unmarried whore, then by *the guide of her youth* might be meant her father, or any other guardian or governour under whom she had been brought up; & accordingly likewise the following clause, *and forgetteth the covenant of her God*, might be understood of the law of God, or the covenant whereby all Gods people stand engaged to God, not to commit any such abomination as whoredome is. But doubtlesse Solomon speaks here of the adulteresse: and accordingly by *the guide of her youth* is meant her husband, to whom she was married in her youth, as one she took to be her head and guide, even as the same title is given to God in relation to his spouse the Church, Jer. 3. 4. *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?* and it is of her breaking the marriage covenant, whereof God is the authour & witnesse, that the following clause is meant, *and forgetteth the covenant of her God*. And this, I conceive, is here added, to render such adulteresses the more abominable, & to shew how little cause there is why any man should be moved with such a womans flatteries, that hath been already so perfidious, not only to her husband, to whom she was married in her youth, (when the love of women to their husbands useth to be most fervent,) & from whom consequently she hath received many expressions of love and kindnesse, but also to the Lord himself, before whom she had solemnly promised to be faithfull to her husband.

Verf. 18. *For her house enclineth unto death, &c.*] Though it be most true, that the whoredomes and adulteries of women do bring upon themselves without repentance certain destruction; yet that this is not here, as some would have it, at least principally, intended, is evident, because this is added to shew how great the benefit is, that wisdom delivers men from the strange woman, as was said before verf. 16. For, saith Solomon, *her house enclineth to death*; that is, the very being with her in her house, or the frequenting of her house, is infectious and deadly, and tends to the utter ruine of men, both in regard of temporall and eternall death: *and her paths unto the dead*; that is, the way that leads to her house, or the wicked courses wherein she brings men to live, that follow her and converse with her, are the sure way to destruction. The summe therefore of these words is this, that adultery is the way to death, not only eternall, but temporall here in this world, to wit, both in regard that lust doth usually waste the vital powers, and shortens mens lives; & sometimes they die of filthy diseases contracted by their uncleannesse, and also in regard they are often cut off, either by the rage of the jealous husband, or by the sword of the magistrate, or by some quarrels arising a-

mongst those that are rivals in the love of these harlots, or by some other way of divine wrath, as usually by the Lords suffering them to fall into other sins that bring them to the gallows: see Heb. 13. 4. As for the phrases here used, that *her house enclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead*, they import as much as if it had been said, either that her house is even bending and sinking, & ready to fall upon the heads of those that are there (implying that both she and those that keep her company are continually in danger of utter ruine;) or else that her house is in the way that leads down-hill to death and eternall destruction; or that the way to her house carries men down headlong to utter ruine.

Verf. 19. *None that goe unto her, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, that lye with her, according to that Isa. 8. 3. *And I went unto the propheteſſe, and she conceived, &c.* But I rather take it thus, *None that goe unto her*, that is, that keep her company & converse with her: *return again*; that is, do ever get out of her power, and leave this sin, and turn to the Lord by unfeigned repentance; no more then dead men (of whom he had spoken in the foregoing verse) do ever return from the grave or hell: *neither take they hold of the paths of life*; that is, neither do they reform themselves, or betake themselves to live a holy & spirituall life, that they may be saved: though upon some sudden motions they may sometimes seem to catch at the paths of life, yet they do not seriously & constantly lay hold on them. Indeed, because it cannot truly be said, that none that are insnared with harlots do ever repent & turn to the Lord, therefore I take it to be an hyperbolicall comparative expression; *none that goe unto her, return again*, that is, few or none of them, none to speak of, according to that Isa. 64. 7. *there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*, that is, none in a manner. And upon this account, because whoremongers & adulterers do so seldome return to the Lord by repentance, in allusion thereto the same is said concerning the idolatrous Israelites, Hos. 5. 4. *They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God; for the spirit of whoredome is in the midst of them.*

Verf. 21. *For the upright shall dwell in the land, &c.*] To wit, when wicked men shall be cut off; see the Note Psal. 37. 3: *and the perfect shall remain in it*; to wit, they and their posterity; see the Notes Psal. 37. 9, 18.

Verf. 22. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressours shall be rooted out of it.*] That is, they shall be violently taken away; see the Note Psal. 52. 5.

C H A P. III.

Verf. 1. *My son, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 1. 8. and 2. 1: *forget not my law*; that is, neither let my doctrine slip out of thy memory, neither be unmindfull to put it in practise: *but let thine heart keep my commandments*; that is, get sound knowledge of them, love them, & delight in them, let thine heart be ever thinking of them, and fully set upon the keeping of them.

Verf. 2. *For length of daies and long life shall they adde to thee:*] That is, My commandments kept & obeyed shall bring thee to enjoy these blessings. For *length of daies & long life*, see the Note Psal. 21. 16; & for *peace*, see the Note Psal. 119. 165.

It is as if he had said, For the lengthening out of thy life, this shall be in stead of diet & physick, &c. and for procuring thee peace, this shall be in stead of all endeavours & policy of thine own: and for that expreffion, *shall they adde to thee*, I conceive it may particularly imply, that hereby these blessings should be renewed and continued to him day after day; or else the joynt conferring of both these blessings upon him.

Verf. 3. *Let not mercy and truth forsake thee, &c.* If we understand this of Gods mercy and faithfulness, (for which see the Note Psal. 57. 3.) it is as if he had said, By keeping my laws make sure that thou mayest never fail of finding God mercifull and faithfull to thee; and so the words do also covertly imply a promise, that thus it shall surely be with those that conscionably observe Gods commandments. But I rather understand it of mercy & truth which Solomon commends to us to practise. And accordingly by *mercy* may be meant all acts of mercy and compassion and free grace towards those that stand in need of our help; and by *truth*, all the duties which in justice we owe to God or man, and without which we do not deal faithfully with them. And indeed mercy & truth are often thus joynted together for mercifull & faithfull dealing; see the Notes 2 Sam. 15. 20. and Psal. 85. 10. Or by *mercy and truth* may be meant shewing mercy to men, when it is done with a true & sincere heart; or mercy in deeds, & truth in words. But I rather conceive that by *mercy* here may be meant all the good offices that we are to perform towards men, & by *truth* or faithfulness all the duties of Gods worship and service prescribed in his law; and that because so, this will be a generall precept including all the particulars afterwards mentioned; & because thus the promise annexed in the following verse will the more fitly answer this precept, if here the duties be enjoined that we owe both to God & man, & then thereupon that promise followeth, that hereby we shall find favour both in the sight of God and man. As for that expreffion, *Let not mercy and truth forsake thee*, first it enjoyns a constant care to remember & practise our duty herein, as if he had said, Be ever mercifull to men, and true and faithfull in performing the duty you owe to God; & 2. it implies, that mercy and truth not being naturall to men, through our corruption we are prone, even after we have gotten these graces, to loose them again, & therefore there had need to be the more care taken constantly to keep & practise them. All which is again pressed in the following words with figurative tearms, *bind them about thy neck*; to wit, as a chain or jewell, (see the Notes chap. 1. 9. & Exod. 13. 9.) that is, mind them continually & keep them fast and safe: *write them upon the table of thine heart*; to wit, as God wrote the precepts hereof on tables of stone, that is, let them be imprinted on your heart; or think often on them to practise them, as men do often remember those things which they have set down in writings or table-books. I know some understand it thus, *write them on the table of thine heart*, that is, on the tablet which thou wearest on thy heart; for, they say, in those times they used to wear hanging down upon their breasts certain jewels or tablets (and some adde too, that they were made after the fashion of a heart) whereon they were wont to have engraven the pictures or names of those they loved most dearly, to the end they might have them still in mind;

mind; & that in allusion thereto this expression is here used, *write them on the table of thine heart*. And indeed if there were any such custome, it may the rather seem probable that Solomon doth in these words allude thereto, because in another place, where he seems plainly to allude to some such engravings that they used to have on the rings they wore upon their fingers, chap. 7. 3. this clause is there again added, *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart*: to which purpose also observable is that which follows vers. 4. *Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, &c.*

Verf. 4. *So shalt thou find favour & good understanding in the sight of God & man.*] That is, say some Expolitours, God will cause thy good estate to testify thy good understanding; & accordingly some translate the words thus, *So shalt thou find favour & good successe, &c.* But reading the words as they are in our translation, either the meaning must be this, *So shalt thou know how to behave thy self with good understanding in all thine actions, whether thou hast to deal with God or man; or rather this, So shall thy good understanding be taken notice of, and thou shalt be commended for a wise & understanding man both by God and man.*

Verf. 6. *In all thy waies acknowledge him, &c.*] To wit, 1. that he is thy God & thy Lord, whom therefore thou art bound to honour & obey, that so thou maiest consider what he requires to be done, not what seems good in thine own eyes, & to that end maiest still ask counsell at his word, and when thou knowest his will, maiest doe it, leaving the successe of all to God, and aiming at his glory in all thy doings; 2. that he is the fountain of all thy blessings, & of all thy abilities to do any thing as it ought to be done, & of all the successe thou dost at any time find in any of thy affairs, & hereupon call upon him by prayer, trust in him, & be thankfull to him upon all occasions; & 3. that he is an omniscient God, that sees thee at all times, & all that thou doest, that so thou maiest be the more fearfull to offend him, & the more confident of his protection & blessing: *and he shall direct thy paths*; to wit, by informing thee what to doe, by enclining thy heart thereto, and assisting thee in it.

Verf. 7. *Be not wise in thine own eyes, &c.*] This may be here inserted both with respect to the foregoing direction that was given concerning trusting in God, because self-conceit doth usually make men trust in their own wisdom, with neglect of God, thinking that they can well enough order their waies without direction from the word & wisdom of God: or else with respect to the following words, *fear the Lord, and depart from evil*; for because self-conceit makes men think they doe well when they sin greatly, & so to run on securely, yea to defend themselves in their evil waies, therefore first he gives this advice, *be not wise in thine own eyes*, which will make you follow your own corrupt reason, both in matters of Gods worship, and in the ordering of your life and conversation, and then he addes, *fear the Lord, and depart from evil.*

Verf. 8. *It shall be health to thy navel, & marrow to thy bones.*] That is, It shall be the health & strength of thy whole body: see the Note chap. 4. 22. By this word *It* may be meant wisdom, or rather that which was mentioned in the last words of the foregoing verse, *fear the Lord, & depart from evil*, (which is indeed the on-

ly true wisdomes;) or it may be referred to all the foregoing precepts. And the navel & bones are mentioned in stead of the whole body, either as comprehending the outward parts of the body under the navel, & the inward under the bones; or else as putting the navel for the belly & the inwards, and all the tender vitall parts which have no bones in them, & the bones for all the severall bony limbs of the body. Or else rather, to expresse that the whole body shall be in health, the navel is only mentioned, either because the navel is the center of the whole body, & is as it were the button or knot, whereby the sinews of the upper & lower part of the body are knit together; or because the health of the whole body doth chiefly depend on the soundnesse of the entralls & vital parts, which are here all comprehended under the navel, because they are all, as it were, knit up within the belly by the navel, and are together fastened by certain arteries to the navel; see the Note Job 40. 16. And then to expresse that the body should be strong, the marrow in the bones is only mentioned, because the bones are the main strength of the body, & bones full of marrow are a sign of a strong and vigorous body: see Job 21. 4. I know that some Expositours conceive that this promise is chiefly meant of restoring health to those that are sick, and accordingly that there is in these words, *It shall be health to thy navel*, an allusion to the fomentations, plaisters and unctions usually applyed to the navel for the healing of divers infirmities. But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 9. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, &c.*] To wit, by giving freely & chearfully to charitable & pious uses; for hereby we acknowledge Gods Soveryaignty over all, and with thankfulness confesse that all we have we have received from him, & professe the reverent & high account which we have of him; yea & hereby his publick worship by his ministers, which is the Lords chief glory in this world, is maintained. Only still we must remember that what we give in this kind must be of that which is justly our own, *Honour the Lord with thy substance*; & it must not be given out of vain-glory, but with a sincere aim at Gods glory alone. As for the next clause, *and with the first-fruits of all thine increase*, see the Note Deut. 26. 2.

Verf. 10. *So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*] This may be spoken with reference to the wine-presses running over. But I rather take it to be an hyperbolicall expression.

Verf. 11. *My son, despise not the chastering of the Lord, &c.*] That is, slight it not; as those do that ascribe it to chance or fortune, or that otherwise hardening their hearts against it, are never troubled at it: *neither be weary of his correction*; that is, be not impatient, and discontented, so as to be faint under it.

Verf. 12. *For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*] See the Note Deut. 8. 5.

Verf. 13. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, &c.*] To wit, upon diligent search made for it, according to the direction formerly given, chap. 2. 3, 4: *and the man that getteth understanding*; it is in the Hebrew, *that draweth out understanding*, to wit, as silver is drawn up out of a mine, whereto he had alluded before, chap. 2. 4. *If thou seekest her as silver, &c.* Yet some understand this of mens bringing;

bringing out the wisdom they have gotten, for the instruction and good of others.

Vers. 14. *For the merchandise of it is better then the merchandise of silver, &c.*] As if he had said, By making use of wisdom there is more to be gotten, then by trading with any merchandise whatsoever; or rather, that wisdom is a more precious commodity then silver or fine gold, & that there is more to be gotten by trading for wisdom, then by trading for any other commodity whatsoever.

Vers. 16. *Length of daies is in her right hand, &c.*] See the Note above vers. 2. wisdom is here set forth as some great Lady, that doth plentifully, as it were with both hands, bestow rewards upon her favourites & followers: *and in her left hand riches and honour;* that is, wealth & great preferments; or at least an honourable esteem amongst those with whom they live.

Vers. 17. *Her waies are waies of pleasantness, &c.*] As if he had said, Though men do usually judge wisdoms waies sowre & bitter, yet they do indeed yield great joy & pleasure to those that walk in them: *& all her paths are peace;* that is, they yield unconceivable peace of conscience, yea all kind of peace & prosperity to those that frequent them. See the Note above vers. 2.

Vers. 18. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, &c.*] To wit, never parting from her when they have gotten her, but persevering in her waies unto the end, as is expressed in the following words, *and happy is every one that retaineth her.* There is an allusion in the words to the tree of life which was in the midst of Paradise Gen. 2. 9. for which see the Note there. And the meaning thereof is, that wisdom doth restore men to that life and happiness, which they lost in Adam; it is a sure means to preserve life here, and to bring them to life eternall hereafter.

Vers. 19. *The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, &c.*] To wit, by his word and Son, who is indeed the coeternall wisdom of God the Father; see the Note chap. 1. 20. Nor may we think that Solomon speaks here impertinently, in that having spoken of the wisdom that is in men, consisting in their obedience and conformity to the word & law of God, whereby they attain length of daies, &c. he should now come to speak of the wisdom of God, whereby the world was created; for this wisdom that is in man flows from that, Christ is the authour of it, & it is indeed a kind of participation of that divine wisdom. And accordingly the scope of Solomon in inserting this here may be either 1. the more to endear that wisdom to us, which is here pressed upon us; if the son of God be the authour of it, if it flows from that wisdom whereby the world was created, have we not cause to prize it the more? or 2. to assure us that all the blessings here promised to them that seek after wisdom shall be made good to them, seeing by that wisdom that invites us hereto the world was created.

Vers. 20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up.*] This may be meant of the great channels & hollow places in the earth made for the receiving of the waters, when God separated them from the earth in the creation, Gen 1. 9. for which see the Note there, as likewise Job 38. 8. or else of the fountains & floods breaking out from the nethermost parts of the earth, even as if the earth did cleave it self asunder

asunder to give them a passage. And indeed these are called *depths* Deut. 8. 7. *a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills.*

Vers. 21. *My son, let not them depart from thine eyes, &c.*] That is, *wisdom & discretion*, which are mentioned in the next clause, *keep sound wisdom & discretion*: yea this word *them* may comprehend all the precepts and instructions here given for the gaining of wisdom, with all the reasons given to move them to seek it, and particularly that which was before said concerning the Lords creating the world. As for that expression, *let them not depart from thine eyes*, it is doubtlesse used with respect to that above vers. 3. *Bind them about thy neck, &c.* & implies that we should never forget them, yea that they should be the delight of our eyes.

Vers. 22. *So shall they be life unto thy soul, &c.*] That is, *wisdom and discretion* shall make thy soul active & lively in the works thereof; or rather they shall quicken thee in the inward man, animating thy soul, which otherwise is but a spiritual carcase, as thy soul doth animate thy body. This I take to be the plain meaning of these words: yet this word *they*, *so shall they be life*, may comprehend all that is comprehended in that clause in the foregoing verse, *let them not depart from thine eyes*. And because *soul* is usually taken for the whole man in the Scripture, some take these words, *so shall they be life unto thy soul*, as a promise of long life here, & eternall life hereafter. As for the second clause, *& grace to thy neck*, see the Note chap. 1. 9.

Vers. 23. *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, &c.*] That is, thou shalt walk in the way of wisdom without danger of erring: *and thy foot shall not stumble*; that is, being freed by wisdom from mans naturall blindness, & weakness, & carelesse-ness, there shall be nothing to make thee stumble; or rather, *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely*, that is, thou shalt prosper & be safe whereever thou goest, & in all thine affairs thou shalt walk without danger, or fear of danger: *and thy foot shall not stumble*; to wit, neither into sin, nor any evil whatsoever.

Vers. 25. *Be not afraid of sudden fear, &c.*] Which is all one as if he had said, Thou shalt not be afraid of sudden fear: *neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh*; that is, the havock and desolation which wicked men shall make, when in an hostile manner they shall break in upon the place where thou livest; or rather, of the desolation which God shall bring upon wicked men.

Vers. 26. *For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*] To wit, either in the snares of sin or misery.

Vers. 27. *Withhold not good, &c.*] That is, Withhold not any good thing from them to whom it is due, whether by the laws of justice, equity, or charity; as just debts where they are owing, the hirelings wages, any thing that hath been lost, or committed to a mans trust, or the alms we are bound to give to them that want, or any other act of charity whatsoever. And accordingly we must understand the following clause: for if we understand the first words of withholding any thing that is in justice due, then the meaning of the following clause may be this, *when it is in the power of thine hand to doe it*, that is, though thou hast power to withhold it, and to bear thy self out in the doing of it. But if we understand the

first clause of withholding any act of charity from those that stand in need of our help, then the meaning is clear, that we must not withhold doing them good when we have power to do it: & there may be also a reason hinted in the words, to wit, lest afterwards we become unable to do it, though we would. And indeed it seems the more probable that the words are, at least chiefly, meant of withholding alms from the poor, because the following verse speaks also of giving, *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee:* though I know that some do extend that also to deferring payment of what is in justice due.

Verf. 31. *Envy thou not the oppressor, and chuse none of his waies.*] See the Notes Psal. 37. 1. 8.

Verf. 32. *For the froward is abomination to the Lord, &c.*] Because of that before v. 30. *Strive not with a man without cause, &c.* some by the *froward* here understand such as are contentious & quarrellsome with men; but I rather conceive that thereby is meant such stubborn men, as will by no means be wonne from carrying themselves perversly towards God; see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 27. & Job 5. 13: *but his secret is with the righteous*; that is, he is to them an intimate friend, & as such revealeth to them his secret counsell, see the Note Psal. 25. 14. & his fatherly affection to them, which is hidden from the world. Yea some do understand this particularly of Gods making known to them, what torments are reserved for those that by wickednesse do flourish in this world.

Verf. 33. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesteth the habitation of the just.*] To wit, though it be never so poor a cottage.

Verf. 24. *Surely he scorneth the scorers, &c.*] Who they are that are here called *scorners*, see in the Notes chap. 1. 22. & Psal. 1. 1. It may be here more particularly meant of those that being in great prosperity do scoffe at the poor. And what is meant by Gods scorning them, see in the Notes chap. 1. 26. & Psal. 2. 4. to wit, that God shall pull them down from their great prosperity; see Jam. 4. 6. *But he giveth grace unto the lowly*; that is, favour amongst men, yea all good blessings, but especially the graces of his spirit.

Verf. 35. *The wise shall inherit glory, &c.*] That is, They shall have it as due to them, & continue in it, both here, being honoured both of God & man, and hereafter eternally in heaven: *but shame shall be the promotion of fools*; that is, that shall be all the promotion they shall have; or, if they be at any time promoted, it shall turn to their greater shame.

C H A P. IV.

Verf. 1. **H**EAR ye children the instruction of a father.] See the Notes chap. 1. 8. and Psal. 34. 11.

Verf. 3. *For I was my fathers son, &c.*] As if he should have said, his darling son: *tender & only beloved in the sight of my mother*; see the Note 1 Chron. 3. 5. And by *tender* here is meant both that he was a young child, of tender years, & so weak in knowledge; & also that he was accordingly tenderly regarded, & daintily & tenderly brought up by his mother. Now Solomon intending to shew how his father

father taught him, he premiseth 1. that concerning his parents dear affection to him; both to imply how necessary instruction is in the waies of wisdom, in that his parents, though very fond of him, would not neglect that, but rather were therefore the more carefull to teach him; and likewise to hint to those to whom he now speaks, that it was out of the same fatherly love, that moved David to instruct him, that he now pressed these things upon them: and 2. that concerning his own tender years, thereby to presse the youngest to learn from his example, who had gotten so much by it.

Verf. 4. *He taught me also, &c.*] To wit, my father David, who was a great prophet, and a man after Gods own heart; *he taught me* the same things that I teach you, & therefore my words ought to be received with the more attention and ready obedience; neither can you reject me, without rejecting him too: *and said, Let thine heart retain my words, keep my commandments and live;* see the Notes chap. 3. 1, 2. Now both these, & all the following words to the end of the 9. verse, may most probably be taken as the words of David to Solomon, recited here by him.

Verf. 6. *For sake her not, and she shall preserve thee, &c.*] See the Note chap. 2. 11.

Ver. 7. *Get wisdom, & with all thy getting get understanding.*] That is, even with the expence of all that thou hast gotten; or with all the care and diligence which thou canst use for the getting of any thing: be sure to get that, whatever thou goest without.

Verf. 8. *Exalt her, &c.*] To wit, by loving her, and making precious account of her, seeking her with all possible diligence, & preferring her before all things whatsoever: *and she shall promote thee;* that is, advance thee to great dignities, and make thee to be highly honoured both by God and man: and indeed the wisdom of Solomon it was, that made him so renowned, and that confirmed the crown of Israel upon him.

Verf. 10. *Hear, O my son, &c.*] Here Solomon returns again to his own exhortation; see the Note above verf. 4.

Verf. 11. *I have led thee in right paths.*] That is, in waies of righteousness, agreeable to the straight rule of Gods law: yet others by *right paths* understand plain and even waies, wherein there is no danger of stumbling; according to that which followeth.

Verf. 12. *When thou goest, &c.*] To wit, say some Expositours, in the way of wisdom: *thy steps shall not be streightned;* that is, though those waies may seem at first very irksome & difficult, yet by degrees they shall become pleasing, and no way troublesome to thee. But I rather take it thus: When thou goest about thy businesses & affairs, thou shalt not be brought into any streights, not knowing which way to turn thy self; see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 37. & Job 18. 7. *And when thou runnest thou shalt not stumble;* that is, though thou makest never so much haste in any thing thou undertakest, thou shalt not miscarry therein. But see the Note chap. 3. 23.

Verf. 13. *Take fast hold of instruction, &c.*] That is, Be sure to persevere in the waies wherein I have instructed thee: *let her not goe, keep her;* to wit, wisdom; see the

the Note chap. 3. 1: *for she is thy life*; that is, the guide of thy life, or the means of life to thee; see the Notes chap. 3. 2. and Psal. 91. 16.

Vers. 14. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 15: & *goe not in the way of evil men*; that is, if thou hast been tempted into any of their waies, yet at least goe not on therein.

Vers. 15. *Avoid it, passe not by it, &c.*] That is, Keep aloof, & come not nigh it, for fear of being tempted into it: *turn from it, & passe away*; to wit, with all the speed you can, lest you be indangered thereby.

Vers. 16. *For they sleep not except they have done mischief, &c.*] Some conceive that Solomon doth here set forth the time when wicked men play their lewd pranks, namely, that before they sleep, in the dark of the night, they goe forth to accomplish their mischievous devices, & then, & not till then, they betake themselves to their rest. But the words are clearly an expression of their eagerness to do evil, namely, that they cannot sleep in their beds for plotting & contriving how to doe evil, and that hence it is that they many times rise so early to bring about their wicked projects: which is yet clearer in the following clause, *& their sleep is taken away, unlesse they cause some to fall*; to wit, into the snares they have laid for them; or into the mischief they have plotted against their persons or estates; or into the sins to which they have tempted them.

Vers. 17. *For they eat the bread of wickednesse, and drink the wine of violence.*] That is, Wickednesse & violence are as meat & drink to them; see the Note also Job 15. 16: or rather, They live by wickednesse and violence; the meat they eat, & the wine they drink is gotten that way.

Vers. 18. *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more & more unto the perfect day.*] That is, As the morning light doth by little & little shine brighter & brighter unto noon; so the righteous, though at first they have their light much darkened with thick mists of ignorance & sinfull infirmities, & with divers clouds of afflictions & sorrows, yet by degrees they grow in knowledge & grace, yea their joy & glory & prosperity doth encrease; see the Notes 2 Sam. 23. 4. Job 11. 17. & Psal. 97. 11. till they come at last to perfect joy and blisse in heaven.

Vers. 19. *The way of the wicked is as darknesse, &c.*] To wit, as the evening darknesse, which grows darker and darker even unto midnight; for thus these words must be understood, as in opposition to what was said of the righteous in the foregoing verse. And the meaning is, that in regard of ignorance & misery, terrours & fears, their condition grows usually by degrees worse & worse: even that light of reason, which at first they had, by the just judgement of God they many times loose, & they become stupid and brutish, and in a manner void of all understanding: their joy and prosperity comes by degrees to extreme sorrow and misery, till they be at last cast out into utter darknesse in hell. *They know not at what they stumble*; that is, they go they know not whether, and do they know not what, not discerning the dangers of sin & misery, which lye in their way; they must needs be unable to avoid them, & so they run on in their wickednesse without repentance, often thinking to please God in those things wherein they grievously sin against him; and then think themselves most secure, when the judgements

judgements of God are readiest to seize upon them. See the Note Job 5. 14.

Verf. 21. *Let them not depart from thine eyes, &c.*] That is, *my sayings*, verf. 20. see the Note chap. 3. 21: *keep them in the midst of thine heart*; that is, hide them deeply and surely in thy mind; see the Note Psal. 37. 31.

Verf. 22. *For they are life unto those that find them, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 3. 2, 18, 22. and Psal. 91. 16: *and health to all their flesh*; that is, to their whole bodies; namely, because piety, besides that it brings the blessing of God upon men in every regard, doth also keep men from all excesse, and lusts of uncleannesse, and violent passions, which do usually bring upon men many and many diseases. But see the Note chap. 3. 8.

Verf. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, &c.*] It is in the Original, *above all keeping*, that is, with more diligence then is used for the keeping & preserving of any thing else; even as men are more carefull to safeguard their hearts, then any part of the body besides: *for out of it are the issues of life*; that is, as the heart in the body is the fountain of all naturall life, so is the mind and will, the heart here intended, the spring of spirituall life, & thence all our actions both good and bad do proceed, Matth. 12. 35, & 15. 19. Unlesse the heart be pure, all conformity to the word in the outward man is but mere hypocrisy, nor will there be any constant stability in it.

Verf. 24. *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.*] To wit, with loathing & detestation. But doubtlesse, as the foregoing verse speaks of keeping our own hearts, so this is meant of ordering our own lips: because as the outward parts receive defilement from the heart, so they also reflect defilement upon it; therefore in the next place charge is given concerning them. And because next to the keeping of the heart, the keeping of the tongue is both most difficult and most necessary, therefore of the outward parts this is first mentioned.

Verf. 25. *Let thine eyes look right on, &c.*] That is, Let them look constantly to that only which is just & right: *& let thine eye-lids look straight before thee*; that is, to that straightnesse of way which God hath prescribed thee; & he mentions the eye-lids, to intimate that they are given us of God as a covering for the eyes, to guard them from looking after any thing that is evil: or, Look diligently to the end thou propoudest to thy self: or, Doe nothing rashly and unadvisedly, but mind what thou doest, as men are wont to observe the way where in they are going; consider seriously of every thing thou meanest to undertake, before thou undertakest it. I know that some understand these words more particularly, 1. of taking care that we look modestly, & avoid all vain roving & wandering of our eyes; & 2. that we should mind our own businesse, & not look after those things which belong not to us. But the more generall Expositions before mentioned are the best. And to the same purpose is that which follows in the next verse.

Verf. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, &c.*] That is, Weigh well & consider seriously with thy self, whether that you intend to doe be just & right according to the direction of Gods word: *and let all thy waies be established*; to wit, by this means: as

if he had said, and so shall all thy waies be established, that is, so shall all thy waies succeed prosperously; or rather, so shalt thou be sure to goe on constantly in the right way: and accordingly some translate this last clause, *and all thy waies shall be ordered aright.*

C H A P. V.

Verf. 2. **T**Hat thou maiest regard discretion, &c.] To wit, that spirituall policy, whereby men are enabled to order their way circumspectly, and to avoid the snares whereinto others fall; see the Note chap. 1. 4: and that thy lips may keep knowledge; that is, that thou maiest be able upon all occasions to speak wisely, both for the resisting of temptations, & in other waies, and as opportunity is given even for the instructing of others also.

Verf. 3. *For the lips of a strange woman, &c.*] See the Note chap. 2. 16. It is as if he had said, Therefore do I call upon thee so carefully to attend unto my words, or, Therefore is it fit that thy lips should keep knowledge, that amongst other things thou maiest be able to avoid & repell the flatteries of a harlot; whose lips drop as an honey-comb, are full of sweet words, which without any pressing do plentifully flow from her: and her mouth is smoother then oyl; that is, her words are soft and gentle, and have no harshnesse in them.

Verf. 4. *But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.*] To wit, in regard of the bitter terrours of conscience, and the death and destruction which do usually at last fall upon those that are insnared with her flatteries. The first clause, *her end is bitter as wormwood*, may be principally meant of the terrours of conscience, which at last are wont to surprize those that defile themselves with harlots, as in opposition to the first clause of the foregoing verse, *the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-combe*; & then the next clause, *sharp as a two-edged sword*, may be meant principally of the death and destruction which such uncleannesse brings men to, as in opposition to the last clause of the foregoing verse, *her mouth is smoother then oyl*. And besides these words may be spoken as in allusion to the effects of honey eaten: that look as honey, when men eat much of it, doth usually turn to gall & choler in the stomach, & so doth cause there exceeding bitter gripings & pains; so the flatteries of a strumpet do usually bring upon men many bitter & deadly terrours & miseries.

Verf. 5. *Her feet goe down to death, &c.*] That is, thither she leads those that follow her; see the Note chap. 2. 18: *her steps take hold on hell*; that is, both she and her associates are at the very brink of hell.

Verf. 6. *Left thou shouldest ponder the path of life; her waies are moveable, thou canst not know them.*] This is a very hard place. But two expositions are most commonly followed. For 1. some understand it of the young mans pondering the waies of the strange womans life & conversation; *Left*, saith he, *thou shouldest ponder the path of life*; that is, lest thou shouldest mark her way of life, which being discovered were indeed enough to make thee loath her: *her waies are moveable, thou canst not know them*; that is, her waies are so variable, she will have so many severall devices to intangle thee, & will be so cunning to transform her self into

all forms & fashions, that though thou shouldest observe her never so diligently, and as it were weigh her actions, & the waies she takes in a balance, it would be lost labour, thou wilt never be able to find her out, nor to evade all her snares, but wilt be overthrown by her pestilent enchantments, before thou canst discern her villanous designs & courses. But now, because it is not render'd in our Bibles, *Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of her life*, but, *Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life*, we may see that our Translatours did rather understand it of the young mans pondering *the way of life*, that is, the way how he should preserve his life, or the way of holinesse, which is the true way of life, and the way that leads unto life eternall. Because the young man might think, that though he kept company with the whorish woman, yet he would take care to preserve his life, by getting in time away from her, or that yet he would in time repent, and have a care of his soul; to beat him off from thus flattering himself, Solomon tells him here how impossible this was: *Lest*, saith he, *thou shouldest ponder the path of life*; that is, *Lest thou shouldest consider what course thou mightest take for the preservation of thy life*; or, *Lest thou shouldest bethink thy self of saving thy soul, and of betaking thy self to the waies of holinesse*: *her waies are moveable, thou canst not know them*; that is, her waies are so variable & inconstant, sometimes pretending one thing, sometimes another, that thou wilt never be able to know what thou maiest give credit to & what not, and consequently what course it were best for thee to take to escape the danger thou art in; or, her waies are so crafty & crooked, so many severall devices she will have to ensnare thee, that thou wilt never be able to discover her devices therein, that so thou shouldest bethink thy self of avoiding the danger of them, but it will be with thee as with men that goe in by-paths full of windings & turnings, thou wilt be sure to loose thy self; or, her waies run headlong to hell, & thither they will carry thee, without suffering thee to discern the danger thou art in, or to bethink thy self of the waies of life. This expresseion of the moveableness of the harlots waies may be used, either with reference to the impossibility of thoroughly discerning those things that are in continuall motion, & so may imply, that by reason of the harlots continuall various waies and devices she hath to delight and ensnare the young man that converseth with her, though he now & then may think of the evil of her waies, and of betaking himself into the path of life, yet she will soon cause such motions to vanish away, neither will he be able seriously to ponder them in his mind; or else by way of allusion to malefactours, or foxes & badgers, that have usually many secret holes and hiding-places to shelter themselves in, that they may not be taken, thereby signifying the many wiles the harlot hath to keep her lovers from finding out her mischievous designs.

Verf. 9. *Lest thou give thine honour unto others, &c.*] That is, Lest thou suffer others to rob thee of thy good name, the credit & good esteem which formerly thou didst enjoy. And by *others* may be meant either simply harlots, because usually one doth not satisfy the lustfull person; or else together with them bawds & parasites, & such other lewd companions, with whom such unclean persons do usually converse. I know that some Expositours do under this word *honour* comprehend

prehend the wealth wherewith God hath honoured a man, & the children he begets of the adulteresse, as likewise the flower of a mans life, his strength & beauty, all the honourable endowments both of his body & mind, (yea & some extend it also to that honour of a mans being created after Gods image.) But because these may be better comprised under the following clauses, I rather take this to be meant of the shame & dishonour which this sin brings upon men. *And thy years to the cruell*; that is, lest thou suffer cruell harlots to wast & shorten the years of thy life; or lest thou spend the precious time of thy youth upon them, which might be spent otherwaies to Gods glory, & thine own great advantage. And indeed well may the harlot be called *cruell*, because whereas the wife is carefull of her husbands estate & health & safety, the harlot cares not how she wasts them, & yet afterwards, when he is brought to poverty, will never mind him nor pittie him: besides that often such kind of women will not stick to poyson or make away their lovers, that so some other may be entertained in their stead. I know that by *the cruell* some understand the strange womans husband, that in his jealousy will fall upon the adulterer with all possible fury, not admitting of any excuse or satisfaction, see chap. 6. 34, 35; & others, those that are the young mans rivals, or else those bawds & ruffians & usurers that do cruelly wast his estate. But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 10. *Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, & thy labours be in the house of a stranger.*] That is, Lest thou dost wast thy substance upon whores & bawds, and such like vile persons; upon the adulteresse, her husband, children, & servants; upon usurers of whom thou must borrow money, or such as must be bribed to conceal thy wickednesse. And hereby Solomon doth covertly intimate, what a folly it is for a man to squander away that which he hath gotten, by wasting his strength in hard labour, upon mere strangers, so that neither his wife, children, kindred or friends, shall be any way the better for it. The first clause is in the Original, *Lest strangers be filled with thy strength*, that is, with thy wealth gotten by strength, or which is thy strength, according to that Hos. 7. 9. *Strangers have devoured his strength*, that is, the riches of the land: yet some understand it of mens wasting their strength to satisfy the lust of a harlot.

Verf. 14. *I was almost in all evil; &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, I had almost fallen into all kind of wickednesse; I was almost grown to that, that I was not ashamed to commit all kind of wickednesse openly *in the midst of the congregation and assembly*. But I rather take it thus, *I was almost in all evil, &c.* that is, I had almost been overwhelmed with all kind of miseries, openly and in the sight of all men, or in the place of arraignment & execution; for adultery by Gods law was punished with death: or, *I was almost in all evil*, that is, I had almost fallen into hell, which is worse then all other evils whatsoever, there was but a step betwixt me & hell: *in the midst of the congregation and assembly*; that is, even then when in the publick assemblies I had good instructions, & saw many good examples, and was pressed to doe better by many sweet motions of Gods spirit within me. So that it is all one as if he had said, that he was in a manner in the portall of hell, even whilst heaven in the means of grace was daily set open before him.

Verf. 15. *Drink waters out of thine own cistern, &c.*] That is, say some, Enjoy that estate which God hath given thee for thy use & benefit; husband it as may be most for thine advantage, & then enjoy it with comfort, & do not lavish it away upon strangers. Yea & some adde very well, that whilst men are thus advised to take the comfort of their own estates themselves, *Drink waters out of thine own cistern, &c.* there is covertly herein a promise implied, to wit, that if a man will live soberly & chastly, he shall then through Gods blessing keep his possessions, & enjoy them with comfort, whereas the whore-monger shall drink of the bitter cup of penury & want. Now for the better clearing of this exposition, it must be considered, that in regard they made such precious account in those hot countries of their springs & wells of water, it is no wonder though drinking of their own cisterns be here put for the comfortable enjoying of their estates in generall. But now most conceive that Solomon, in these words, prescribes the lawfull and undefiled use of the marriage-bed, as a remedy against adultery & fornication; alluding, in the expression he useth, to those that having a cistern or spring of water of their own at home, use not to fetch water from other mens houses: *Drink waters out of thine own cistern;* that is, Quench the heat and thirst of thy naturall desires by the enjoying of thine own wife; & do not follow after harlots, which indeed doth rather encrease then quench this thirst, even as the dropsey-man the more he drinks the more thirsty he is. But see the Note also Numb. 24. 7.

Verf. 16. *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets, &c.*] That is, As men are wont to pleasure their neighbours with the water of their springs & fountains, so let thine estate be laid out for the publick benefit of the place where thou livest, especially for the relief of the poor that lye in the streets. And observable it is, that the expression here used may seem to imply, that a mans giving to the poor should be as the flowing of a fountain, which hath never a whit the lesse water in it, because of that which is given. Yea and this also may imply a promise, as is noted in the foregoing verse, that if they do not waste their estates upon harlots, in stead of wanting themselves, they should through Gods blessing be able to doe good unto others. Or 2. thus, So shall thy children, which shall numerously spring from thee & thy wife, (see the Notes Numb. 24. 7. & Deut. 33. 8.) be disposed abroad in severall places & employments, or be playing & sporting in the streets, being a delight to their parents, & an ornament to the places where they are, like so many rivulets of pure spring-water running along in the streets. So that the drift of this place seems to be, both to advise, that this should be the aim of men in their marriage, & also to promise, that this shall be the fruit of their marriage, to wit, the having of a numerous & comfortable off-spring: which cannot be expected from common whores, both because children of whoredome men dare not usually own; and because such lewd women seldome have children, according to that of the prophet Hos. 4. 10. *they shall commit whoredome, and shall not encrease;* and because the curse of God doth usually cut off such children, or at least make them uncomfortable to their parents.

Verf. 17. *Let them be only thine own, and not strangers wish thee.*] That is, 1. Do not

not squander away thine estate and goods upon harlots, and others that are mere strangers to thee, but keep them for thine own use, and for those that belong to thee, or to be disposed at thine own will, in any good use as thou shalt see cause. For Solomon doth not contradict in this what he had said in the foregoing verse, *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad*, &c. And therefore this which he saith here is only a charge to young men, not to waste their estates in lewd courtes; though indeed it may be extended to that also, as we find in some Expositours, that even in giving to good uses men should be careful not to dispossesse themselves of all, & so bring themselves to poverty. Or 2. thus, *Let thy children be, or, So shall thy children be only thine own, and not strangers with thee*: & the meaning is, that if he kept to his own wife, he should be sure not to be put to father other mens children; & that both because by avoiding harlots, he should be sure they should not doe him this mischief, whose children might be other mens, though they pretended they were his; and also because by being faithfull to his wife, he might the rather assure himself that she would be faithfull to him.

Verf. 18. *Let thy fountain be blessed*, &c.] That is, say some Expositours, Be carefull to keep thine own vessel in holinesse and honour. 1 Thess. 4. 4. But I conceive that the two expositions given of the foregoing verses are here likewise most probable. 1. *Let thy fountain be blessed*, that is, Lay not out thine estate upon lewd women, but live chastly, and so the blessing of God shall be upon what thou hast; or, Be ready to disperse thy fountains abroad, that is, to give liberally of thine estate for relieving the poor (as this phrase was expounded before verf. 16.) that so God may blesse thine estate, and the poor may pray for a blessing on it. Or 2. *Let thy fountain be blessed*, that is, Let thy wife be blessed, or, so shall thy wife be blessed with children, & thy children shall be blessed that shall flow from her. And this expression, I conceive, is the rather used, because barrenesse was looked upon in those times as a heavy curse; and because it tends not a little to the fruitfulness of the wife, when the husband hath not, nor doth not, spend his strength upon harlots. However, the drift of these words is, to shew how much better it is for a man to live chastly in honest wedlock, then to haunt the company of lewd women. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *and rejoyce with the wife of thy youth*, see chap. 2. 17. For herein either the husband is enjoined to make use of his wife for his delight, to wit, of her & of no other woman; or, taking delight in her is prescribed as a remedy against lusting after others. Yea & this may also intimate, that there was no true pleasure but in this way of living: in this lawfull way of wedlock he should rejoyce in his wife and children, & should take the more delight in his wife because of his children; whereas in whores, as he hath already shewed, there is nothing but bitterness and sorrow to be expected.

Verf. 19. *Let her be as the loving hindes & pleasant roe*, &c.] That is, Let her be as delightfull to thee for her beauty & love, as hindes & roes are usually to great men, who are wont, when they are brought to be tame, & to follow the man, and down, to play with them, & to take great delight in them, as being very beautifull & comely creatures. And some add too, that is these creatures are tamed by gentle

neither vantage to the wife should be allowed to delight in her husband, by all possible gentleness & love. But I rather take it thus. As the hart doth dearly love the hinds, and the doe buck the doe, following their mates up and down, and, as it is said, keeping to them & no other: so, if thou wilt not be worse then beasts, do thou as ardently love thy wife, delight in her, and be faithfull to her. Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; which cannot be done with harlots, to whom men goe only at some times, and by stealth; and let this be as a sure remedy to keep thee from minding the strange woman; and be thou ravished *alwayes* with her love; which is in the Original, *and erre thou alwayes in her love*, (alluding to the wandring of these creatures up & down after their mates,) that is, be enamoured with her even to some fondnesse & doting, some erring in her love, to wit, so as not to see any blemish that is in her, to have too high rather then too mean an opinion of her; & that *studies*, not suffering any thing to alienate thine affection from her, continuing as constant a liking to her to the last, even when her beauty shall be decayed, as when she was in the flower of her youth, and when thou didst first set thy love upon her.

Verf. 20. *And why with thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, &c?* To wit, considering what hath been said concerning the dreadfull dangers and miseries that attend whoredome; and the many blessings and comforts which they enjoy that live honestly in the married estate.

Verf. 21. *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, &c.* And therefore though the unclean person commit his sin never so secretly, that will doe him no good: see the Note Joh 31. 4.

Verf. 22. *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.* In three severall regards it may be said, that wicked men, and so particularly fornicators & adulterers, are taken and held with the cords of their own sins. 1. Because by reason of the guilt of their sins they stand bound over before God, and liable to destruction; so that though they may escape for a time, & thereupon may think themselves as safe as may be, yet the truth is, that whereever they goe, they carry their chains & fetters about them, their own consciences do condemn them, and their wickednesse shall certainly at last bring destruction upon them. 2. Because their own iniquities are actually the very means and occasion of their ruine: see the Notes Psal. 2. 16. and 9. 16. And 3. because they are so by custome intangled in their sins, that they cannot possibly leave them which is more especially true of unclean persons: though they see the evil & danger of their sin, & so may think they will repent hereafter, yet it will not be, they are so fast held in the cords of their lusts. And this agreeth best with the following words.

Verf. 23. *He shall die without instruction, &c.* That is, because he hath despised instruction; or, God shall at last deny him the means of instruction, because whilst he had it, he would not regard it: *in the greatness of his folly he shall goe astray*; that is, God shall leave him to run on in great folly to eternall perdition. Now his running on in a way of impenitency is ascribed to *greatnesse of folly*, either because he is so, or not the folly of children & idiots, is so great as that when

men to satisfy their own carnall desires will reject Gods counsell; or else because wicked men do befool themselves so many severall waies; as in that they mind not Gods displeasure, or can be content for a little momentany pleasure to hazard their eternall salvation, or in that they can flatter themselves with such vain conceits, as that God will not punish them, or that they will repent hereafter, &c.

CHAP. VI.

Verf. 1. **M***Y son, if thou be surety, &c.*] Solomon here sheweth the danger of suretiship: yet not as condemning all suretiship whatsoever, (for as it is a work of mercy to lend in some cases, Psal. 37. 26. so also in some cases it may be to be surety for another, as Paul for Onesimus Philem. 19.) but only rash suretiship, when men will unadvisedly engage themselves for any that desire it of them, without due consideration of the persons for whom they doe it, or of that for which they are engaged, whether it be not more then they are willing or well able to discharge, without the ruine or exceeding great prejudice of them & their families, if it should fall upon them. *If thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand* (see the Note Job 17. 3.) *with a stranger;* that is, if thou hast with or for a stranger engaged thy self to any man. I know that many by the *stranger* here do understand the creditour to whom a man gives his hand, & so engageth himself for his friend. But I rather conceive that Solomon doth here advise men what they should doe in case they have been sureties for another man, whether he were friend or stranger.

Verf. 2. *Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, &c.*] As if he had said, Though thou hadst not the money thy self, nor any benefit by it, and before thou didst undertake as a surety, thou wert free whether thou wouldest have done it or no; yet having once passed thy promise, thou art now bound.

Verf. 3. *Do this now, my son, and deliver thy self; when thou art come into the hand of thy friend, &c.*] By *thy friend* here may be meant, either the friend for whom a man hath engaged himself as a surety, into whose hands the surety may well be said to be fallen, because if he doth not now discharge his debt, it will fall heavily upon the surety; or else it may be meant of the creditour, (for to friends men may be sureties for others, as well as to strangers,) & then the meaning must be this, When thou art fallen into the hands of the creditour, who may take the forfeiture of thy engagement, & bring thee into great troubles, though he be thy friend, & much more if he be a stranger, take care to free thy self. And accordingly we must understand the following words, *go, humble thy self;* to wit, to him for whom thou art engaged, pressing him, yea with begging it of him, that he would discharge his debt himself, & not suffer it to fall upon thee; & so likewise, yea rather, to the creditour, fall down before him, & by all humble deportment & entreaties sue to him for favour, to wit, that he would not proceed in extremity against thee, but that he would forbear thee for some time, till thou maiest bring him to discharge the debt, whose proper debt it is, or that thou maiest pay it by little & little, or that he would accept of some reasonable composition from thee: *and make sure thy friend;* that is, make sure that thy friend, for whom thou art engaged, do discharge his debt; and so free thee; or, make sure that thy friend, to whom thou hast engaged thy self, may deal favourably with thee.

Verf. 6.

Verf. 6. *Goe to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her waies, and be wise.*] That is, Be so wise as to learn of her; or be wise according to the wisdom thou maiest learn of her. And though there be many things which may be observed concerning the industry and providence of this poor creature, as that they will carry grains of corn as big as themselves, & will labour herein by night, when the moon shines, as well as by day, that they will, when they discern it will be a fair season, bring out their corn that hath taken any wet, to dry it in the sun, that it may be kept sweet & good (whereupon they say that the husband-man concludes it will be fair weather, when he sees these creatures laying out their store a drying) & that they are wont to bite off the end or eye of the grains of corn they gather, where the seed useth first to sprout forth, that so they may not grow with lying in the earth, & many other particulars; yet that which Solomon here intends, at least principally, is that which followeth verf. 8. that *she provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest*, that so in winter she may have whereon to live. However, observable it is, that Solomon doth here put up, as it were into the pulpit, this little despicable creature, to instruct brutish men. And some think that those words, *consider her waies*, are spoken with reference to those tracks which are sometimes made in the very stones, by their continuall going up & down.

Ver. 11. *So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth &c.*] That is, it shall come into thine house speedily, suddely & unexpectedly, as a Post, say some, or pursivant that rides post to apprehend a man, or rather as a guest that comes to an house unlooked for; or it shall overtake him as a swift traveller overtakes one that walks slowly; whereby also is intimated, that therefore it should be the more grievous to be born: & *thy want as an armed man*; that is, irresistably; for what hope can there be that a sluggard half a sleep & half awake should resist an armed man? The drift is, that poverty should rush upon him as an armed robber, or as souldiers that break in upon a house and plunder it, scarce leaving any thing behind them.

Verf. 12. *A wicked man walketh with a froward mouth.*] That is, it is his constant course to talk perversly & wickedly. And though the most of Expositours understand this particularly of the wicked mans lying & dissembling, yet I rather understand it of all wicked speaking whatsoever; for whatever it is wherein men do perversly crosse God in what he requires of us, that the Scripture calls frowardnesse. See the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 27. and Job 5. 15.

Ver. 13. *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.*] As if he had said, So eager he is to utter the mischief that is in his heart, that if he be in company where he dares not speak openly, yet by some privy sign or other he will make known his mind in a manner with all the parts of his body, as by winking with his eyes, or by stamping with his feet, or by the holding up of his fingers, &c. Most Expositours, I know, understand this particularly of the secret tokens, which wicked men are wont to give to their companions for the doing of some mischief to those, to whom at the same time they make a fair shew of friendship, as by winking with the eye, or treading secretly on their feet, or some such hint given them. But I rather understand it more generally, of any intimations given closely, whether by eye, hand or foot, of any wicked thoughts that are in his heart, as of lust, or malice, or any such.

Verf. 15. *Suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.*] That is, No power nor policy,

liey, nor any means whatsoever shall be ever able to prevent his ruine: or, he shall be ruined irrecoverably, there shall be no possibility of restoring him to a good condition again; he shall be broken as a potters vessel, which being broken cannot be mended and made up again. And herein also may be implied, that when God began to punish him, there should be no more place for repentance then.

Verf. 16. *These six things doth the Lord hate; yea seven are an abomination to him.*] Though God hates and abhorres all sin, yet some are more abominable to him then others; and so these are here mentioned as horrible villanies, and such as God doth above many other sins abhorre.

Verf. 17. *A proud look, &c.*] It is in the Original, *haughty eyes*. And thus Solomon expresseth most of these seven abominations by the members of the body wherewith they are acted, beginning with the eyes, & so going downward till he comes to the feet, as we see in the following words, *a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood*; & then verf. 18. *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief*: see the Note chap. 1. 16. And withall observable it is, that the heart is here placed in the midst, as the fountain from whence all kind of wickednesse doth stream forth on every side to all the members.

Verf. 21. *Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.*] See the Notes chap. 1. 9. & 3. 3.

Verf. 22. *When thou goest, it shall lead thee, &c.*] That is, The command or counsell of thy godly parents, mentioned before verf. 20. or, which is all one, the word of God which they presse upon thee, shall direct thee in all thy waies, still carrying thee on unto greater perfection; see the Note chap. 3. 23: *when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee*; that is, say some Expositours, meditating thereon in the day, or falling asleep with some good meditation thereof in thy mind, it shall keep thee in the night from all foolish & sinfull dreams & illusions of Satan; or rather, being carefully observed by thee, it shall be a sure means of thy preservation, in that the Lord will thereupon be tenderly watchfull over thee when thou sleepest, to keep thee from all evil: *and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee*; that is, it will bring to thy remembrance some spirituall & heavenly meditations, haply some meditations which thou hadst before in the night season, according to that of David Psal. 139. 18. *when I awake, I am still with thee*: & thus, before thou canst make thy self ready that thou maiest be fit to talk with any body else, that will be as it were conferring with thee; and as masters are wont early in the morning to appoint their servants what they shall doe all the day after, so will that direct thee how to carry thy self in all the businesses of the following day.

Verf. 23. *For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.*] That is, as a candle in the night, & as the light of the sun by day. Yea & some Expositours conceive, that having spoken in the foregoing verse of the benefits that redound to men by the word, both whilst they sleep by night, & when they wake in the morning, therefore in allusion thereto he adds here, that it is *as a lamp or candle*, whereof men have great use both when they goe to bed at night, and when they rise in the morning. But see the Notes Psal. 119. 8, and 119. 105.

Verf. 25.

Verf. 25. *Let not after her beauty in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids.* That is, with the handfomenesse of her eyes, wherein the beauty of the countenance doth chiefly consist, whence is that Cant. 4. 9. *thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes*; or with her casting her eyes upon thee; or with her pleasant and wanton looks, which are the very pit-fals & trap-doors wherewith harlots are wont to catch those that haunt their company.

Verf. 26. *For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread, &c.* That is, to such extreme poverty, that he hath scarce a piece of bread to eat, or that he is forced to beg from doore to doore for a morsell of bread: *and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life*; that is, she pursues men time after time, seeking by all possible craft and subtilty to bring them to that wickednesse, which doth usually cost them the losse of that which men do naturally esteem above all earthly things, and that is their lives: and hence is that also which Solomon saith of the whorish woman, Eccles. 7. 26. *that her house is furnished with snares, and her hands as sharps.* But see the Note Prov. 2. 18.

Verf. 27. *Can a man take fire in his bosome, & his cloths not be burnt? &c.* Why the sin of adultery is compared to fire, both here, and in the following verse, *Can one gather up hot coles, & his feet not be burnt?* see the Note Job 31. 12.

Verf. 29. *So he that goeth in to his neighbours wife, &c.* That is, that lyeth with her (for so this phrase is often used in the Scripture, as Gen. 29. 21, 23;) *whosoever toucheth her*, to wit, in that kind, *shall not be innocent*, that is, the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse; he shall be as surely punished either by God or men, as he that taketh fire in his bosome is sure to be burnt: or he that usually keeps her company, & converseth familiarly with her, *whosoever toucheth her*, that is, cometh near her, or any way dallieth with her, *shall not be innocent*, that is, whatever his intentions may be, or however confident he may be to the contrary, he shall not keep himself from sinning with her, either by a usuall uncleannesse with her, or by secret lusting after her, which also by degrees will bring on the other; at least he shall not avoid scandal, he shall be commonly reputed an unclean person, the smell of this fire will at least be upon him. See also the Note chap. 2. 19.

Verf. 30. *Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.* That is, his naturall desire after meat. In this case men are not wont to entertain any hard thoughts of such a one, as they do of the adulterer, but rather to pitty him; and much lesse will they seek to take away his life, or to put him to any publick shame; yea though he may lye under some disgrace for a time, yet men are soon ready to forgive & forget it. Now all this Solomon speaks with respect to what was usually done in those times amongst the Israelites, who were not commanded by the law of God to punish theft with death.

Verf. 31. *But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold, &c.* See the Note Exod. 22. 4. It is as if he had said, It is true, full satisfaction shall be required of him, yea if it cost him the parting with all the estate that he hath, if there be no other way to appease those from whom he hath stolen, and to satisfy for his theft according to Gods law, even this must be done; which is implied in the following words,

words, *he shall give all the substance of his house*: well but yet this is the utmost that is done to him, his life is not indangered, as the adulterers is, and that justly, because he can make no restitution nor satisfaction to the abused husband, as the thief doth to those he hath wronged.

Verf. 32. *But whoſo committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding, &c.*] That is, he is not compelled by necessity, as the thief is, but being meerly besotted by his lusts he doth that which none but a mad man, a man void of all reason & understanding would doe, to wit, in that not considering the greatnesse of his sin, & Gods wrath against it, nor contenting himself with the lawfull use of the marriage-bed, which God hath appointed as a remedy for such unlawfull lusts, he wilfully chuseth to hazard his life & eternall salvation by seeking to satisfy his brutish desires upon another mans wife; which is expressed in the following words, *he that doth it, destroyeth his own soul.*

Verf. 33. *A wound or dishonour shall he get.*] By his getting a wound here may be meant, that he should be wounded in his name & credit; & so much was happily implied by adding the word *dishonour*, to explain the other, *A wound and dishonour shall he get*: or else thereby may be meant the punishments inflicted on him by the magistrate, or the wounds given him by the womans enraged husband; which may seem most probable, because of the following words.

Verf. 34. *For jealousie is the rage of a man, &c.*] That is, It is that which above all things enrageth a man; though an effeminate person may bear, he that hath any true manhood in him cannot bear it: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance; that is, he will not spare him his life, or he will not afford him the least mercy, whenever he gets opportunity to take vengeance on him: for herein Solomon shews what was usually done, not what might lawfully be done, seeing God did never allow private revenge, no not in this case. Yet the words may be also understood of the enraged husbands prosecuting the adulterer to death before the civil magistrate, and not suffering himself to be stopped by any mediation of friends, or by any gifts that came to be profered him, as is expressed in the following verse.

C H A P. VII.

Verf. 1. **M**T son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.] See the Notes chap. 2. 1, and 3. 1, 2. and Psal. 119. 11.

Verf. 2. *Keep my commandments, and live; and my law, as the apple of thine eye.*] That is, with all possible diligence, as esteeming it of all things most dear to thee, & most necessary for thee, and as charily avoiding the least sin forbidden by the law, as men are watchfull to keep the least mote out of their eyes.

Verf. 3. *Bind them upon thy fingers, &c.*] That is, think continually of them, let them be alwaies in your eye and mind, as are those things which men use to wear as memorials upon their fingers, see the Note Exod. 13. 9. that you may by continuall meditation on them be so expert in them, that you may have them upon all occasions, as we use to say at your fingers ends. And if that were truly so which some say, that in those daies they used to have the names or pictures of those

those they loved most dearly engraven upon their rings, (whereto there may seem to be an allusion in that Jer. 22. 24. *As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence*) Solomon might also with respect hereto use this expression: for weh, and for the following clause, *write them upon the table of thine heart*, see the Note ch. 3. 3.

Verf. 4. *Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.*] That is, Love her as thy sister, & be familiarly acquainted with her as with thy kinswoman. It may seem all one in effect as if he had said, Since young men will have their Loves, their Ladies & Mistresses, let me commend a Love to thee, my son, & that is wisdom: There is none more honourable, rich, affable, beautiful & lovely then she is; and therefore in stead of those wantons that foolish youngsters hunt after to their own ruine, do thou set thy heart upon wisdom, and to thy love shall be a pure and chaste love, such as may be between a brother and sister, *Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, &c.* Some Expositours conceive that in reference to this place Christ used those words, Matth. 12. 50. *Whosoever shall doe the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*

Verf. 6. *For at the window of my house I looked through my casement.*] To wit, that I might the more clearly see what was done in the streets. Whether this were really done by Solomon, as is here related, or whether he only propounds it in the way of a parable, is not evident from any thing in the Text, neither is it indeed much materiall.

Verf. 9. *In the twilight in the evening, in the black and dark night,*] That is, when it began to be black and dark: the usuall time when such youngsters are wont to frequent such lewd places, because then they hope that they shall not be seen.

Verf. 10. *And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot.*] Some Expositours understand this of such an attire as was peculiar & proper to harlots, and whereby they were distinguished & known from other women. But though this were usuall amongst other nations, see the Note Gen. 38. 15. yet I conceive it was not so amongst the Israelites, where none were allowed to be open professed whores. And therefore the meaning of the words I take to be only this, that the woman that met him was dressed in a wanton whorish attire, as haply with crisped hair & naked breasts, an attire fit to entice men to uncleanness, and which none therefore but harlots would wear.

Verf. 11. *(She is loud and stubborn, her feet abide not in her house.)*] By her loudness may be meant in generall, that she is ordinarily bold & free in talking, and that her tongue will be heard above all whereever she comes: but yet I conceive it is principally meant of her brawling with her husband; agreeable whereto is that which is next added, *She is loud and stubborn*, that is, froward and rebellious against God & her husband: and that this is the rather expressed, to shew, that when wives are once disquiet with their own husbands, and despise them, and rebell against them, there is no little danger of their being unfaithfull to them, and becoming unclean with other men.

Verf. 12. *Now she is without, now in the streets.*] By being *without* may be meant either her being any way from home, as in the fields, or in any other mens houses, or in taverns and other drinking-houses, &c. or else, her standing or sitting *without* at her door: as if he had said, One while she is sitting without at her door, another while she is gadding up & down in the streets, &c.

Verf. 14. *I have peace-offerings with me; this day I have paid my vows.*] See the Note Levit. 7. 15. Some conceive that the harlot doth here tell the young man of her peace-offerings & her vows (which was an extraordinary act of piety, a voluntary gift not enjoined, & therefore usually offered only by those that were devout above others) thereby to pretend piety & devotion: & that either 1. because this might draw him on to the sin wherein she desired to inveigle him, by hinting to him, that as long as they were mindfull to make their peace with God, by performing the duties of his worship & service, though they did a little transgress in their mutuall solacing of themselves one with another, there would be in that no fear or dangers; or 2. because she knew that men are more easily drawn to commit wickedness with one that hath the reputation of an honest woman, then with such as are open professed strumpets. But I should rather think that the only, at least the main thing intended in her speaking of this to him, was to let him know, that she had good cheer ready prepared for his entertainment. For the greatest part of the flesh of their peace-offerings belonged to the sacrificers, and therewith they used to feast their families and friends. See the Note 1 Sam. 1. 4.

Verf. 15. *Therefore came I forth to meet thee, &c.*] That is, Being thus provided with good cheer, I desired to enjoy thy company, & that thou shouldest have thy share in it, and therefore not contenting my self to send a messenger for thee, I came out my self to seek thee, *diligently to seek thy face*; that is, to look thee out, and earnestly to beg this favour, that thou wouldest be my guest this day. And to this some adde too, that in this expression she sought also to imply how much she was taken with his beauty, and delighted to look upon him. As for the last clause, *and I have found thee*, that is spoken with a kind of ravishing joy, as if she blessed the day and hour wherein she had so happily met with him; yea as if she would intimate, that upon her sacrifices & the payment of her vows, God had answered her desires in bringing him to her: it is as if she had said, I came forth to meet thee, and lo presently I have found thee, even according to mine own hearts wish and desire.

Verf. 19. *For the good man is not at home.*] She saith not, My husband is not at home, but, *the good man is not at home*, in a kind of contempt & scorn; and it may be, as fearing lest the very naming of her husband should awaken the young mans conscience, and stagger him as concerning that wickedness she was drawing him to.

Verf. 20. *He hath taken a bag of money with him, &c.*] To wit, say some Expositours, as having many great businesses to dispatch, and many rich merchandises to buy; or rather, because he is therewith to defray the charges of a long journey: *and will come home at the day appointed*; as if she had said, He hath appointed me

me the day when I may expect him, which is many daies hence, and till then to be sure he will not come.

Verf. 21. *With much fair speech she caused him to yield, &c.*] To shew how perilous the flattering language of a harlot is, the Spirit of God doth here ascribe her prevailing over the young man rather to this, then to her embraces and kisses.

Verf. 22. *He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, &c.*] To wit, no otherwile then as if they were driving him to some fat pasture: or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; who goeth jesting and laughing, not considering the punishment he is like to undergoe. But in this last comparison there may be something more implied, to wit, that the adulterer can no more rid himself out of the harlots snares, then such a fool can get out of the stocks when he is shut up therein.

Verf. 23. *Till a dart strike through his liver, &c.*] This may be referred both to that which went before, & to that which followeth after: but I rather referre it to that which went before. *He goeth after her straightway, as an ox, &c.* Till a dart strike through his liver; that is, till his soul be mortally wounded with the sin of adultery; or rather, till he be suddenly by some means cut off by the just vengeance of God; see the Note chap. 2. 18. Because the wounding of the liver must needs be deadly, therefore is his destruction set forth by the striking through of his liver: yet haply this expression may also be rather be used, because lust doth purrify the bloud & corrupt the liver. As for the following clause, *as the bird hasteth to the snare*, that hath clear reference to that in the foregoing verse, *He goeth after her straightway*. And then for the last words, *and knoweth not that it is for his life*, I conceive they are clearly meant of the birds hastening to the snare immediately before mentioned; though I know some understand it of the young man, that knoweth not that the enticements of the harlot tend to the bereaving him of his life.

CHAP. VIII.

Verf. 1. **D**o not wisdom cry? &c.] See the Note Prov. 1. 20: *and understanding put forth her voice?* that is, freely discover unto men the whole will of God. Having shewn in the foregoing chapter how young men are seduced by harlots, here he sets forth how wisdom doth every where instruct men better; & so hereby he proves, that neither these, nor consequently any other wicked men, can plead ignorance, but that they wilfully run upon their own perdition, because they will not hearken to the instruction of wisdom.

Verf. 2. *She standeth in the top of high places, &c.*] To wit, where she may best be heard: *by the way in the places of the paths*; that is, where severall waies meet together; or rather, in all places where men use to walk, or where they are wont to resort & meet. The drift of the words is, to shew that wisdom instructs men in all places whatsoever: see the Note chap. 1. 20. But in the expressions here used there may seem to be an allusion to magistrates, that cause their proclamations to be published by their heralds & other officers, standing aloft above the people, & that in places of greatest concourse. Neither is that altogether improbable, which some conceive is signified hereby, to wit, that wisdom doth direct

men when they are in the greatest streights, not knowing what course to take, as travellers use to be, when they come to a place where severall waies meet together.

Vers. 3. *She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 21 : *at the coming in at the doors* ; to wit, of mens private houses : so that the meaning is, that wisdom instructs men both in publick and private.

Vers. 4. *Vnto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man.*] That is, all men whatsoever. Yet by *men* may be more particularly meant aged men, or men of chief rank and quality ; and by *the sons of man*, young or mean men.

Vers. 5. *O ye simple, understand wisdom, and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.*] This may be spoken to all wicked men, and that with an intention to give them to understand, that how wise soever they thought themselves, yet they were indeed but simple fools. But see also the Notes chap. 1. 4, 22.

Vers. 6. *The opening of my lips shall be right things.*] See the Note Psal. 19. 8.

Vers. 9. *They are all plain to him that understandeth, &c.*] That is, to those that do with honest & upright hearts use all holy means to find out the meaning of them, & so thereupon God doth enlighten them, & takes away that vail of ignorance that is naturally upon the hearts of all men. It is want of understanding in us, & so of diligence in searching into the knowledge of them, if they seem dark and obscure.

Vers. 10. *Receive my instruction, & not silver, &c.*] That is, rather than silver, as the following clause explains it, *& knowledge rather than choice gold*. Yet withall this may imply, that unlesse men take off their affections from an over-eager pursuit after worldly riches, they will never mind wisdom as they ought to doe.

Vers. 12. *I wisdom dwell with prudence, &c.*] As if he should have said, we are never asunder. So that this expression doth imply, 1. that Christ hath both wisdom & prudence essentially in him; & 2. that by his word & spirit he doth teach men prudence, & to carry themselves prudently, that is, discreetly & circumspectly, in all their waies. It may be translated, *I wisdom dwell with subtilty*, for which see the Note chap. 1. 4. *And find out knowledge of witty inventions* ; that is, I suggest to men all those inventions whereby they contrive the effecting of any good to themselves, whereby they may doe things cautelously and prudently according to the will of God, or may doe well in the best manner, wherein the wit as it were of religion appeareth.

Vers. 13. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, &c.*] And this is added here, because the fear of the Lord is the fruit, the first & chief part of wisdom; see the Notes chap. 1. 7. & Psal. 111. 10: *pride and arrogancy*, which is first mentioned because it is the root of all vices, *and the evil way*, that is, every sinfull practise and custome, *and the froward mouth do I hate*; see the Note chap. 6. 12. As if it had been said, And consequently I teach others to hate them, and am the fountain from whence every good grace must flow into their souls. See the Note also Psal. 45. 7.

Vers. 14. *Counsell is mine, &c.*] Whence it is said of Christ Isa. 9. 6, *his Name shall be called wonderfull, Counsellour*: All policy that is not from Christ, and according to the word of God, is no better then folly: *and sound wisdom*; see the Note chap. 2. 7. *I am understanding*, that is, I give men understanding, or I teach men pru-

prudently to effect what by good counsell hath been well contrived. Yet the phrase is here changed; he saith not, Understanding is mine, but, *I am understanding*, to shew that understanding is essentially and perfectly in Christ. As for the last clause, *I have strength*, either it may be meant 1. of that almighty power that is in Christ, whereby he is able to doe whatsoever he pleaseth, and whereby he hath conquered hell and death & sin; or 2. of that spirituall strength, that fortitude and magnanimity & strength of grace, which by the word & spirit of Christ men attain, whereby they are enabled to bear all afflictions, and to resist all temptations, and to carry themselves in all things as strong Christians; or 3. that divine assistance whereby they accomplish the greatest enterprises which upon due consultation they have resolved upon.

Verf. 15. *By me kings reign, &c.*] This is ascribed to wisdom, 1. because all government is the ordinance of Christ, the son & wisdom of the Father; 2. because by his providence they are advanced to the throne, (and that many times too for that excellent measure of wisdom which he hath given them,) & by his providence they are supported & protected in their places; & 3. because by the wisdom which he gives them they govern the people prudently & justly & successfully, & by his providence they are prospered in their enterprises: *& princes decree justice*; that is, they make just laws, and pronounce just sentences, when they sit in the judgement-seat. And now by all this may be also implied, that if the great ones of the world have so much advantage from wisdom, much more may others expect the like in their private affairs.

Verf. 17. *I love them that love me, &c.*] The meaning is, that they who heartily affect wisdom shall find her ready to impart her self to them, according to that which followeth in the next clause, *and they that seek me early shall find me*. And though it be true that Christ loveth us before we can love him, 1 Joh. 4. 19. *We love him, because he first loved us*; yet it is true also, that when we love him, the more we love him, the more he loveth us.

Verf. 18. *Riches and honour are with me, &c.*] See the Note chap. 3. 16: *yea, durable riches, and righteousness*. And this is added, either to shew, that even the outward wealth & honour which wisdom confers upon men are better then the riches & honours of worldly men, and that because that which she confers is ever gotten with *righteousness*, & is therefore durable, whenas theirs are usually gotten by injustice & wickedness, and so continue not long with them: or else to shew, that besides outward riches and honour, he gives also durable riches; or that the riches and honour which he intended in the first clause, was not the riches & honour of this world, but riches which were durable, even spirituall & eternall riches and honours. And by *righteousness*, which is particularly added, may be meant either the imputed righteousness of Christ, or the righteousness of mens lives and conversations. Now this last exposition seems to agree best with the following verses.

Verf. 19. *My fruit is better then gold, &c.*] See the Note chap. 3. 14. If we understand this not of the gain of wisdom, but of that which is gotten by wisdom, then hereby may be meant the righteousness mentioned in the foregoing verse;

or more generally both remission of sins, and sanctification and a holy conversation here, and eternall life hereafter.

Verf. 20. *I lead, &c.*] It is in the Original, *I walk* but the meaning is, I cause men to walk: *in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgement;* to wit, where there is no danger of erring, or, without turning aside to the right hand or to the left. And the drift of this is to shew, either that the riches which wisdom gives are not gotten by unrighteousness, as wicked men are; or rather, that this is, or this brings men to, that durable riches before spoken of, or that fruit of wisdom, which is *better then gold, &c.* as it is in the foregoing verse.

Verf. 21. *That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, &c.*] Some Expositours conceive that under this word *substance* even worldly riches are comprehended, to wit, when they are well gotten, & so continue with men, & are enjoyed with contentment; which last they take to be implied in those last words, *& I will fill their treasures.* But the most & best Expositours do by *substance* understand true happiness, which consists in the enjoyment of God, in having our souls adorned with true grace here, & in the blisse of life eternall hereafter: and that because these have true substance & solid consistency in them, and shall be possessed by them that have them as an inheritance for ever, and fully satisfy the desires of their souls; whereas worldly wealth (though for that men are usually miscalled *substantial men*) in true judgement is not, but only in shew & semblance, in opinion and imagination, Prov. 23. 5. *wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* at least such things can only be reckoned amongst mens moveables, nor can ever fill the desires of our souls; it is only life eternall that deserves to be counted our inheritance.

Verf. 22. *The Lord possessed me, &c.*] To wit, as his wisdom & as his son, that was alwaies with and in the Father, according to that Job. 1. 1. *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God; and the word was God: in the beginning of his way;* that is, say some, of his eternall decrees; or rather, of his works of Creation, and consequently from eternity, as the following words explain it, *before his works of old;* see the Note Psal. 93. 2: for he that was in the beginning of the creation, must needs have had a being before, and that must needs be an eternall being.

Verf. 23. *I was set up from everlasting, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, I was appointed to be the Mediatour, the anointed king of his Church; or rather, I was with and in the Father, of equall majesty and power with him, and by me he appointed to make and govern all his creatures: *from the beginning, or ever the earth was;* to wit, so much as in the Chaos, when it was yet *without form and void,* Gen. 1. 2.

Verf. 24. *When there were no depths, &c.*] To wit, of water; no seas, lakes or rivers; see the Note chap. 3. 20: *I was brought forth;* that is, I was from all eternity begotten of my Father: for the wisdom of the Father speaks here of himself after the manner of men.

Verf. 26. *While as yet he had not made the earth, &c.*] That is, He had not yet separated the waters from it, & compacted it into a solid body, and made it dry land,

land, that it might be habitable for man & beasts; see the Note Gen. 1. 9: and thence are those following words added, *nor the fields*, that is, he had not yet adorned and furnished the earth with grasse & herbs and plants & trees; *nor the highest part of the dust of the world*, that is, those parts of the earth which are above the water, the dry land, that admirable superficies of the whole earth, which is now so goodly to behold. Yea hereby may be implied, that there was not yet so much as a little dust made. I know that because those words in the Original, which we translate *the fields*, may be render'd *the open places*, therefore some conceive that thereby is meant the air, or the whole superficies of the continent, so far as it may be seen by the eye of man, or the plains & champian countries, as opposed to the mountains and hills mentioned in the foregoing verse. And so likewise, because those last words, *nor the highest part*, &c. may be read, *nor the chief part of the dust of the world*, therefore some understand thereby the habitable part of the world, or the most commodious, goodly and delightfull parts of the earth. But the former exposition seems to me the clearest.

Verf. 27. *When he prepared the heavens, I was there, &c.*] To wit, as an agent and fellow-worker with the Father: *when he set a compasse* (or, *a circle*) *upon the face of the depth*; that is, when he reduced the immense depth of the earth and water into a perfect globe, making it exactly round, as if it had been measured with a pair of compasses.

Verf. 28. *When he established the clouds above, &c.*] That is, When he caused them to abide in the firmament, notwithstanding they are full of water, which one would think might make them break in pieces at all times, and fall down to the earth; see the Note Job 26. 8: *when he strengthened the fountains of the deep*; that is, when he gave power to the springs & fountains, that come originally from the sea, or however out of the deep places of the earth, to yield continually, without being ever drawn dry, abundance of waters, which run in their severall channels with mighty strength & violence; whence is that expression of the Prophet Isa. 8. 7. *the waters of the river strong and many*.

Verf. 29. *When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not passe his commandment.*] See the Note Job 26. 10.

Verf. 30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, & I was daily his delight, rejoicing alwaies before him.*] The Son of God, the wisdom of the Father, applying himself to our capacity, doth here compare himself to a child that is precious in the eyes of those that bring him up, to a nursing smiling upon his nurse, or to a little child sporting and playing before his father; & that to set forth 1. the mutuall delight and complacency which the Father & the Son took in each other from all eternity, & the great delight which they joyntly took in the excellency of the work of wisdom, to wit, the creation, as likewise his wise ordering of all the creatures that he had made; and 2. more particularly, the delight which the Father took in his Son, in whom he was alwaies well pleased, & in whom he rejoiced more then in the works that were made by him, which is expressed in that clause, *and I was daily his delight*.

Verf. 31. *Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, &c.*] To wit, as some say,

in that the wisdom of God made it with ease, & without any toil & labour; or rather, as taking pleasure in the excellency of the work, as likewise afterwards in the governing of it by his providence, & in doing good unto all the creatures therein. *And my delights were with the sons of men;* to wit, first, in that he delighted in man as the master-piece of the whole work of creation, for whom the whole world was made, & who himself was made after the image of God, & so only capable both of observing the works of wisdom, & of being instructed in the waies of wisdom: and 2. in that he loved them dearly, & so accordingly delighted in them, as 1. to be with them; whence it was that he often appeared to the patriarchs & prophets, and at last, when the fulnesse of time was come, took upon him mans nature, and dwelt amongst them, & as the son of man conversed familiarly with them, & doth still, where his Church is, dwell amongst them by the presence of his grace in his Ordinances, and by his spirit in their hearts; & 2. to teach and instruct them; and 3. to doe all the good that might be done for them, to redeem them, to reconcile them to his Father, to sanctify them, to watch over them for good here, and then at last to bring them to live for ever with him in his kingdome of glory.

Verf. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*] That is, that seeketh me with all diligence and constancy. In the words there seems to be an allusion to suiters or clients, that will be betimes at the doors of princes & great men, and will wait there day after day, till they get that which they wait for; or to Scholars, that will be so early at school, that they are faine to stand waiting when they come thither, till the doors be open; or to young men that wait at the doors of their mistresses; or to those that resorted diligently to their Synagogues that they might hear the Word.

C H A P. IX.

Verf. 1. **W***isdom hath builded her house, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 20. Solomon having shewn chap. 7. 14. how the harlot tempted the young man with the feast she had provided, here, as in opposition thereto, he shews how much better a feast wisdom had provided for those that would hearken to her. And some conceive that he begins with the building of her house, upon occasion of the mention that was made in the foregoing chapter verf. 34. of her gates & doors and posts, *Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates.* The great question is, what is meant here by the house which wisdom is said to have built, & the seven pillars thereof, & why her house, or, as some more peculiarly conceive of it, her banqueting house, is here set forth as such a goodly, stately & spacious palace. To which I answer, that there are some that by this house understand the soul of every just man, & that because there Christ dwells by his spirit, & because the soul is the proper seat of wisdom, & is in the Saints adorned with manifold graces. But there are two other expositions which seem to be most probable. The one is, that by this house is meant the third heaven, of which Christ speaks Joh. 14. 2. *In my fathers house are many mansions;* which shall not perish, as the lower heavens shall, 2 Pet. 3. 10. *the heavens shall passe away with*

with a great noise, but shall continue unto all eternity the most glorious habitation of Christ and his members, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. & Joh. 17. 24. & is therefore ſaid here to be built upon *ſeven*, that is, many *pillars*; ſee the Note 1 Sam. 2. 5. The other is, that by this houſe is meant the Church of God which Chriſt hath raiſed from the beginning of the world, & richly adorned with the gifts & graces of the holy Ghoſt, & is now ſpread over the whole world, & ſo eſtabliſhed by the mighty power of Chriſt, that it ſhall certainly continue unto all eternity, and ſo may well be compared to a ſtately houſe built upon ſeven pillars. Yet the moſt of Expoſitours alſo adde, that by the ſeven pillars are meant the Prophets & Apoſtles, & other Teachers which in all ages Chriſt hath raiſed in his Church, & hath furniſhed with gifts & graces, that they might be enabled for their work, & might be great means to bear up & ſupport the faith of others; ſee Gal. 2. 9: and that this might alſo be expreſſed thus by Solomon, with reference to that material Temple which, by the wiſdome that God had given him, Solomon had built, and that upon many pillars, and which was a type of the Church of God.

Verſ. 2. *She hath killed her beaſts, &c.*] This which is here added concerning wiſdomes feaſt, following immediately upon that in the foregoing verſe concerning the building of her houſe, ſeems to imply an alluſion to the feaſts they were wont to make at the dedication of their new-built houſes: *ſhe hath mingled her wine*; to wit, with ſome choice kinds of waters, as they uſed to doe in thoſe hot countries, to allay the heat thereof, wherewith they were exceedingly reſreſhed; or rather with ſpices, for by mixed wine ſeems to be meant the choiceſt ſort of wine, Prov. 23. 29, 30. *Who hath woe? &c. They that tarry long at the wine, they that goe to ſeek mixt wine.* And now by this feaſt which wiſdome provides for her gueſts is meant, 1. that ſpirituall food of the Word and Sacrament, with all thoſe ſpirituall bleſſings & reſreſhing delights & comforts which thereby are conveyed unto our ſouls; as a partaking in the body and bloud of Chriſt, the aſſurance of Gods love, & our ſalvation, the ſanctifying graces of Gods ſpirit, & peace of conſcience, which is a continuall feaſt; and 2. the glory & joyes of heaven, which Chriſt alſo ſets forth under the ſimilitude of a feaſt, Luk. 22. 30. *That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdome.* This I conceive is the full drift of theſe words. Yet ſome adde too, that by wiſdomes mingling her wine is implied, that ſhe condeſcends to the capacity of the weakeſt, as it is noted of our Saviour Mark 4. 33. that he ſpake the word unto the people, *as they were able to hear it.* As for the laſt claufe, *ſhe hath alſo furniſhed her table*, it may imply, that all things being in a readineſs, it was fit that her gueſts ſhould make haſt to come in.

Verſ. 3. *She hath ſent forth her maidens, &c.*] Becauſe wiſdome hath been hitherto repreſented as ſome great Princeſſe or Lady, therefore her ſervants, whom ſhe ſends forth to invite men to her feaſt, to wit the Prophets & Apoſtles, & other incorrupt teachers of the word, are here ſutably tearmed *maidens*; & that haply the rather to ſet forth the weakneſſe and contemptibleſſe of Gods meſſengers, and to ſhew that wiſdome draws in men, not by force, but by gentle invitations. And it may be that theſe modeſt maidens are here oppoſed to that harlot mentioned afterwards verſ. 13. However observable it is, how expreſſly this agreeth with

that of our Saviour, Luk. 11. 49. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and Apostles, &c.* And then for the following words, *she crieth upon the highest places of the city*, see the Note chap. 8. 2.

Verf. 4. *Who is simple, let him turn in hither, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 4. He seems to intend those that are simple, and do see and with all humility acknowledge that they are so.

Verf. 7. *He that reproveth a scorner, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 1. 1: *getteth to himself shame, &c.* to wit, in that the scorner will not only mock & deride him, but also cast some aspersions or other upon him; & likewise because others will be ready enough to censure him for his imprudent meddling with such a one. Now this is here added, either to shew why in the foregoing verses wisdom did invite none but the simple to come in to her; or at least to shew who they are that reap no good by wisdoms invitations.

Verf. 8. *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee, &c.*] As if he had said, and so thou shalt to no purpose expose thy self to his malice, & withall shalt be an occasion of farther sin to him. But now this must be understood only of those, that after sufficient trial, are by their continued obstinacy found to be incorrigible; and so likewise it must be understood only of private reproofs; for in the publick ministry the worst of men must be reprov'd. *Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee* to wit, sooner or later.

Verf. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 1. 7. and Psal. 111. 10. Here this is inserted, either 1. as a reason why the wise and just man is the better for reproof & instruction, as is said in the two foregoing verses, namely, because such men do fear God; or 2. to shew what it is wherein the wise are to be instructed, to wit, that they are to be taught to fear God; or 3. rather, to shew what that wisdom was, and where men must begin to learn it, whereunto they were invited before verf. 6. *Forsake the foolish and live, & goe in the way of understanding.* As for the following words, *and the knowledge of the holy is understanding*, the meaning is, that true understanding consists, not in the knowledge of naturall & civill things, but either 1. in the knowledge of the holy God (for though that word *the holy* be in the plurall number in the Original, yet we know the Scripture doth usually speak of God in the plurall number; and it may seem most probable, that *the knowledge of the holy* here is made to answer, as it were, *the fear of God* in the first clause, as being the same in effect with that;) or 2. in the knowledge of holy things, that is, the holy mysteries of salvation revealed in the Scriptures: or 3. the knowledge of the holy Saints & servants of God. And indeed these three are all one in effect: for what is the knowledge of the Saints, but the knowledge of those holy truths in the Scripture concerning God and his will, which by the Spirit of God is wrought in them, and which they teach others?

Verf. 11. *For by me thy daies shall be multiplied, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 3. 2, 18, 22. & Psal. 91. 16. This depends, as most Expositours conceive, upon that which was said before verf. 6. *Forsake the foolish and live, saith wisdom there, and goe in the way of understanding;* & then it follows here, *for by me thy daies shall be multiplied, &c.* And very fitly is this promise made upon wisdoms invitation of men

men to the feast she had made, since the end of eating and drinking is to preserve life, and lengthen mens daies.

Verf. 12. *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self, &c.*] See the Notes Job 22. 2, 3. This could not be said of the worldling, because he is not wise for eternity. *But if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it;* see the Note Job 35. 8. The drift of the whole verse is, as if Solomon or wisdom had said, I speak not for mine own profit, but for thine; all the good or hurt, according as thou obeyest or despisest my counsell, will redound unto thy self.

Verf. 13. *A foolish woman is clamorous, &c.*] Many learned Expositours do understand this of the whorish woman, of whom so much hath been formerly said; & conceive that she is here again described by wisdom, or Solomon, that young men might especially be warned to take heed of this sin. And indeed the description that is here given of this *foolish woman* doth well suit the harlot; as that she is *clamorous*, for which see the Note chap. 7. 11. & that she *knoweth nothing*: for though before it be said chap. 7. 10. that she is *subtle of heart*, in regard of her wicked craft & cunning, yet in regard of true wisdom & understanding it may well be said that she *knoweth nothing*, there being no sin that makes men and women more stupid and brutish then that doth. Yea in the words that are afterwards here verf. 18. used, concerning those that are overcome by this *foolish woman*, that *he knoweth not that she dead are there, &c.* there seems to be a clear reference to what was said before concerning the harlot, ch. 2. 18. & 5. 5. which indeed doth most prevail with me to account this the best exposition of the words. But yet the truth is, that the most of our best Expositours, & that with very great probability, do otherwise conceive of this place, namely, that it was intended to be an allegoricall expression: and accordingly some say, that by the *foolish woman* here is meant either philosophy, or pleasure, or carnall reason, or false doctrine, or Antichrist; & others, worldly wisdom, & that this is opposed to true wisdom before described; & others better, that hereby is meant all sinfull folly whatsoever, even whatever is contrary to that wisdom of God which is revealed in the Scriptures, which is indeed no better then folly, what shew soever it may make of wisdom; & that this sinfull folly is here set forth, as wisdoms corrivall, and represented under the person of some base beggarly harlot, to shew that whatever men set their hearts upon besides God & Christ and his grace, they are guilty of spirituall adultery: & accordingly they understand the following words; as that she is *clamorous*, that is, 1. generally, that, as Solomon saith elsewhere Eccles. 10. 14. *a fool is full of words*; & 2. more particularly, that sinfull folly useth many arguments from the pleasure & profit of it to draw men into it, & that in men of erroneous judgements & wicked lives she is eager and violent to draw men into the crooked waies of error and wickednesse: and then again that she *knoweth nothing*, that is, that there is nothing of sound and saving knowledge in all the persuasions that are used to draw men into error or wickednesse.

Verf. 14. *For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city.*] Understanding this of the harlot, it implies 1. her idlenesse, which is indeed the chief foment of lust; and 2. her impudence, in that openly and shame-

lessely at her door; and in publick assemblies, she seeks to entice men unto her. But if we understand it allegorically, according to what is noted upon the foregoing verse, of sinfull folly, it may imply 1. that sin, in wicked men & men of corrupt judgements in religion, watcheth for all occasions and opportunities to corrupt & seduce others; 2. that she is impudent in tempting and soliciting all sorts of people; 3. that she is full of proud vaunting & boasting, & doth by her pomp & carnal delights seek to inveigle men; & 4. that often she allures men by the hope of high places, & the countenance of great ones, as having many Nobles & Princes to be her agents.

Verf. 15. *To call passengers, who goe right on their way.*] That is, if we understand it of the harlot, those that are following their businesses, not having any thought of her till she allured them; or, (if we understand it, as in the verses before, of sinfull folly,) to seduce the truly godly from the right way of truth and holiness, according to that 2 Pet. 2. 18. *they allure, through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonnesse, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error:* for wickednesse cannot endure to see others vertuous, and Satan is alwaies most eager to foil the righteous.

Verf. 16. *Who so is simple, let him turn in hither, &c.*] If this be referred to the harlot, it cannot be thought that she would with such language call in men to her; only hereby is implied, that none but simple & foolish men will be inveigled by her: see the Note upon a like expression chap. 1. 11. But if we take it, as before is noted, as the invitation of sinfull folly, it is as if she had said, You that are such fools as to deprive your selves of the profits, honours and pleasures of this life, chusing to toil your selves in wisdoms waies, wherein you macerate your bodies, and expose your selves to the hatred of the world, and to manifold afflictions and crosses, be wise at length, and embrace the delights that are in my waies. And indeed wicked men count piety folly & madness.

Verf. 17. *Stolen waters are sweet, &c.*] That is, Sinfull delights taken by stealth are the more pleasant. This is follies, or the harlots banquet, opposed to that of wisdom mentioned above verf. 2. And in the words there may be an allusion to those feasts in harlots houses, where the provision is made up of such things as are stolen by filching servants and other lewd companions.

Verf. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell.*] To wit, that they are spiritually dead, in the high way to be cut off by some violent death, and as sure to be damned as if they were in hell already: see the Notes chap. 2. 18. and 5. 5. and 7. 23. And thus death is made here the effect of follies banquet, as before verf. 11. life was made the effect of wisdoms, See the Note also chap. 2. 19.

CHAP. X.

Verf. 1. **T**he Proverbs of Solomon, &c.] See the Note chap. 1. 1. Because Solomons aim in these Proverbs is chiefly to instruct young men, therefore he begins with a Proverb that may teach them to be obedient to their parents, even as before he began his exhortation with this chap. 1. 8.

A wise son maketh a glad father; to wit, both in regard of the vertues that are in him, & the blessing of God that is upon him: *but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother;* to wit, both in regard of his wickedness, & the miseries which thereby he brings upon himself. Both parents are comprehended in both clauses, though in each of them one only be expressed. Yet by most Expositours severall reasons are given, first, why gladness for the wisdom of their son is ascribed to the father particularly: as namely 1. because the father is best able to judge of any thing that is commendable & praiseworthy in him; 2. because such a son is usually a great help to his father in his businesses; 3. because the father going abroad can best take notice of the sons wise & prudent & pious carriage of himself, and the worthy things that are done by him, & doth most frequently heare how he is every where commended & applauded; and 4. because the well-doing of the son tends most to the honour of the father that gave him such good education: and secondly, why heaviness for the folly of their son is particularly ascribed to the mother: to wit, 1. because the mothers indulgence is usually judged, & is many times, the cause of the sons wickedness, as is also more clearly implied Prov. 29. 15. *a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame;* 2. because such a son lying alwaies lusing idly in her eye at home, she is chiefly troubled with it; 3. because being the weaker vessel, she is most passionate, & grieves most extreemly for it; & 4. because the mother is usually most despised by such ungracious sons: and so this Proverb seems to be explained chap. 15. 20. *A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son despiseth his mother.*

Verf. 2. *Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, &c.*] Though all wealth, even that which is justly gotten, may be called *treasures of wickedness*, as our Saviour terms them Luk. 16. 9. *the mammon of unrighteousness*, because they are usually the fuel of all kind of wickedness, neither can any wealth profit a man any thing in point of delivering him from death; yet here, by the opposition that is made betwixt the *treasures of wickedness*, and *righteousness* in the second clause, we may plainly see, that treasures gotten and kept by wicked means are here meant. And though of these it may be absolutely said, that they *profit nothing*, because whatever outward advantage they yield to men, yet they are the cause of their eternall destruction: yet here the meaning is, that in point of delivering men from the vengeance of God, & in the hour of death, they *profit nothing*; as is evident by that which is opposed hereto in the following clause, *but righteousness delivereth from death*: & therefore so this proverb is elsewhere expressed, chap. 11. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*: see the Notes also Psal. 49. 6, 7. And indeed ill-gotten wealth, though continued till death, which it seldom is, doth rather at that time hurt then profit men, in that their minds are sore troubled that they must part with it, & the remembrance of the wicked waies whereby they have gotten it doth wound their conscience, as being an evidence to them of their eternall damnation. But now *righteousness*, which men foolishly abandon to get wealth, *delivereth from death*; both because, 1. such as are righteous are never in danger to be cut off, either by the sword of the magistrate, or by the hand of divine vengeance; & 2. such are wonderfully preserved many times by the Lord, when their

enemies would put them to death, and from other deadly dangers; 3. though they do die, death is no way hurtfull to them; and 4. it alwaies delivereth certainly from death eternall. And this proverb is added next to that which went before, as some conceive, to shew that therefore the way for parents to doe good to their children, is not to hoard up for them ill-gotten goods, but to train them up in the waies of righteousness.

Verf. 3. *The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish, &c.*] Though it cannot be denied but that some of Gods righteous servants may have been starved & died by famines; yet because this is very rarely so, see the Note Psal. 37. 25. & usually God doth provide things necessary for them, yea even in times of famine God doth usually provide for them in some extraordinary way, and because however God gives them those inward refreshings and that sweet contentment of spirit, that this is in stead of food to them, therefore are these temporall promises commonly expressed in the Scripture in such generall terms. But yet still we must remember, that in all such promises this exception is implied, to wit, that thus it shall be with them, unlesse God shall deal better with them in taking them up into heaven. *But he casteth away the substance of the wicked;* to wit, so, that they are many times famished.

Verf. 5. *He that gathereth in summer, &c.*] To wit, in harvest, as it is in the opposite clause; that is, He that dispatcheth his businesse, and doth what is to be done for his own advantage, whilst time serves; as for instance, he that in his youth, or whilst he is in his full strength, stores up for himself before the winter of old age: *is a wise son;* & so consequently is himself honoured amongst men, and is an honour to his parents & family: *but he that sleepeth in harvest;* that is, neglecteth the seasons of providing well for himself: *is a son that causeth shame;* that is, by his carelesnesse & sloth, and the beggery he bringeth upon himself, he doth not only shame himself, but his parents too, men being ready to charge the faults of young men upon the parents neglect, in not giving them good education.

Verf. 6. *Blessings are upon the head of the just, &c.*] See the Notes Gen. 49. 26. The meaning of this expression is this: All men do wish & pray for the just man that he may be blessed, & God doth shewre down plenty of all kind of blessings upon him, which are openly & in the sight of all men as an ornament to him; & so consequently he can with confidence open his mouth in praising God, & in a holy boasting of Gods favour, and in maintaining his own integrity: for this is implied in the following opposite clause; *but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked;* that is, for the oppression & extortion and other violent practices of the wicked, the curses & judgements of God shall be shewred down abundantly upon them, insomuch that thereby, & by the remembrance of their former sins, they shall be even overwhelmed with shame, & their mouths shall be so stopped, that they shall have nothing to say, either by way of excuse or defence for themselves, or by way of begging mercy, or of speaking mischievously in regard of the righteous, as formerly they have done: see the Notes Job 5. 16. & Psal. 63. 11. I know some understand the last clause otherwise, *Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked;* that is, Violent judgements from God shall, as it were, choke or stop the breath of

of the wicked; they shall be condemned and executed as malefactours: see the Notes Esh. 7. 8. and Job 9. 24.

Verf. 7. *The memory of the just is blessed, &c.* That is, the remembrance of them shall be sweet & delightfull to men, and whenever they speak of such a one, they shall blesse & praise him, scarce ever making mention of him without his due commendation: *but the name of the wicked shall rot;* that is, his name shall become loathsome and abominable, it shall stink above ground like a rotten carcase, and at last it shall be utterly abolished and forgotten.

Verf. 8. *The wise in heart will receive commandments, &c.* That is, They that are truly wise, & do not only boast and make a shew of wisdom, will cheerfully and readily hearken to the instructions and reproofs, and obey the commandments of God in his word, and of those whom God hath ordained to direct and govern them, for the well-ordering of their lives, without any replies or cavils; and so consequently (for this is implied by the following opposite clause) by this means they avoid those mischiefs and miseries whereinto otherwise they might have fallen, & are abundantly rewarded of God: *but a prating fool shall fall;* that is, the man that, out of the abundance of folly that is in his heart, flights & gainsays the holy instructions and directions that are given him, as loving to speak himself rather than to hear others, & to teach and command others, rather than to be taught and commanded by others, shall certainly fall into many sins & miseries; both because he rejects with scorn those that would reach him better, and because, being full of talk, & blurring out any thing that comes into his mind, he exposeth himself thereby to manifold mischiefs. The last clause may be render'd, *but a prating fool shall be beaten;* that is, punished. And accordingly some conceive the drift of the words to be this, that whilst wise men do willingly obey what is given them in charge, fools must by stripes be beaten to doe their duty, or they will never doe it.

Verf. 9. *He that walketh uprightly, &c.* That is, He that liveth holily & righteously, & that doth all that he doth in the uprightness & simplicity of his heart, without any fraud or dissimulation: *walketh surely;* that is, safely & securely, without danger, & without fear of danger, even when in the judgement of the world he may seem to be in greatest danger: & that 1. because he fears not to be found false or deceitfull in any thing he hath spoken or done; 2. because he knoweth that God loves him, and that he is not lyable to those plagues that God hath threatned against wicked men; & 3. because, though he may be at some time in an afflicted estate, yet he is sure that God will cause all things to work together for his good, & that heaven will at last make amends for all. *But he that perverteth his ways;* that is, he that alloweth himself in any evil course, though never so secretly; or, he that dealeth deceitfully in any thing whatsoever: *shall be known;* that is, that which he feareth continually, to wit, that he shall be discovered, (so far he is from walking surely) that shall come upon him; though he carrieth his matters never so cunningly, his wickednesse & false dealings shall be discovered to his shame, & by his punishments he shall be made known, and so also be made an example to others.

Verf. 10.

Verf. 10. *He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow, &c.* See the Notes chap. 6. 13. Job. 15. 12. & Psal. 35. 19: but a prating fool shall fall; see the Note above ver. 8. There is not here an opposition made between some vertue & the contrary vice, as it is most usually in the Proverbs; but here, as frequently elsewhere, two vices are compared together, the one of the eyes, the other of the lips. And if by him *that winketh with the eye* be meant the scoffer, or the man that secretly seeks to doe mischief to those to whom outwardly he carrieth himself fairly & friendly, or more generally the man that doth by any dissimulation or cunning craftinesse deceive those with whom he hath any dealing, then the drift of the Proverb may be only to shew, that as such sly deceitfull persons are the cause of much sorrow to others, so those men that through simplicity and folly will unadvisedly be prating of any thing that comes in their minds, do as usually bring mischief and sorrow upon themselves; and that therefore though it be commendable to deal plainly and sincerely with men, without any craftinesse and dissimulation (as was implied in the foregoing Proverb) yet there is a foolish boldnesse & rashnesse in speaking, when men cannot conceal any thing, but unadvisedly babble out whatever they think of, which is as bad, if not worse then the hypocrites dissembling; & that because thereby men do usually bring so much mischief & sorrow upon themselves. Or, if by him *that winketh with the eye* be meant those that by signs only do move others to sin, or those that covertly do any evil, which may not haply be mischievous to others, then the drift of the Proverb is only to shew, that such shall be punished, and so shall be a cause of sorrow to themselves, as well as those that boldly utter any wickednesse that is in their hearts.

Verf. 11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life, &c.* That is, it is like a spring or well of living water, that continually sends forth running streams of fresh & sweet & wholesome waters, (which amongst the Jews were very highly prized:) & that, 1. because such men will be continually speaking of something that may tend to the begetting or quickning of spirituall life in those with whom they converse, and whereby they may attain at last life eternall; yea and likewise for mens civil affairs, by their counsell & advice, they doe much good both in publick & private; & 2. because such men can alwaies speak with a holy freedome and liberty in their own just defence: for that this is also intended in these words, we may well conceive by the opposition of the following clause, which shews that wicked mens mouths are stopped in this regard, *but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked*; for which see the Note above verf. 6. Yet the opposition betwixt these two clauses may be otherwise framed: as that whilst righteous men are by their communication a means of life to others, wicked men, by the wicked & mischievous things which they utter, doe not only hurt others, but also destroy & murder themselves: or thus, Righteous mens lips by holy communication save many a soules; but the guilt that lies upon wicked mens consciences stops their mouths, so that they dare not counsell others to walk in those waies of life wherein themselves have not walked.

Verf. 12. *Hatred stirreth up strife, &c.* That is, it not only raiseth new quarrels, where there never had been any before, but also stirreth up old quarrels, that were

were laid asleep, & in a manner forgotten, even as when a man stirreth up the fire, and makes it glow & burn afresh, when it was before covered over with ashes; yea and this it doth many times upon the slightest occasions, and the vainest surmises that can possibly be conceived; to wit, because men are naturally prone to suspect and to speak evil of those they hate causlessly, to interpret ill what they never intended ill, and to aggravate the smallest offences beyond all measure: *but love covereth all sins*; to wit, though they be never so many & never so great: & that because love is not suspicious, but ready to interpret all things to the best, therefore where love is, men are of a peaceable disposition; either they will take no notice of that which is done amisse; or excuse it so far as may be with truth; or, if they must reprove it, they will doe it with a gentle private admonition, & will by no means publish it to the dishonour of the party offending, and for any wrong done to them, they will be most ready to pardon it. The opposition of the two clauses in this Proverb may be set forth thus: Hatred stirreth up strife, and that frequently by upbraiding men with their sins, or by blazing them abroad to others; but love covereth sins, and so thereby makes and maintains peace.

Verf. 13. *In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found; but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.*] That is, Wise men will be still speaking wisely & graciously, (this is a sure sign of a wise man) and so they are not in danger to be corrected for their words, as many are, but rather their speech is an honour to them: But now the rod of God or man is continually upon the backs of fools, for their rash & foolish speeches, (so that they may be in a manner known by their stripes) and this is a constant shame & reproach to them. Or thus; The wise man will still be speaking of wisdom for the instruction of others; and because the fool will not be instructed thereby, therefore is the rod upon his back, or therefore he deserves the rod.

Verf. 14. *Wise men lay up knowledge, &c.*] That is, By the use of all holy means they store up knowledge as a choice treasure; and so by that means (for this is implied by the following clause) they are able to order their speech so, when occasion serves, as thereby not only to keep off destruction from themselves & others, but also to be a means of much good to them: *but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction*; they, for want of storing up this knowledge, are alwaies forward and ready to utter those things that bring present destruction upon themselves and others. I know that some Expositours give another interpretation of the first branch of this Proverb, to wit, that *wise men lay up knowledge*, that is, they doe not at all times utter all they know, which must needs only be done in a way of boasting, but reserve it for a fit place & season, when they may doe it to the profit and advantage of many, according to that chap. 12. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.* But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his strong city, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, it is the outward means whereby he secures himself and others from many miseries; as indeed Solomon saith elsewhere, that as *wisdom is a defence*, so also *money is a defence*, Eccles. 7. 12: and then on the other side, *the destruction of the*

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poor

poor is their poverty; that is, the poverty of the poor gives advantage and encouragement to the rich to devour them, even as the greater fish devour the lesse. And they that thus expound these words do accordingly conceive that Solomons aim herein is to shew, that therefore men should be painfull and industrious, that they may keep themselves from poverty. But doubtlesse the meaning of the words is rather this: *The rich mans wealth is his strong city*; that is, he trusts in his wealth as in a strong city; for so Solomon explains himself chap. 18. 11. *The rich mans wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit*: whereas on the other side, *the destruction of the poor is their poverty*, that is, the poor are ready, as despairing, to conclude that their poverty will be their destruction. And thus the main drift of this Proverb may be, hereby to shew what cause men have therefore to be contented with a moderate estate, according to that chap. 30. 8. *Give me neither poverty nor riches, &c.*

Verf. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life, &c.*] This is severall waies expounded, & that upon very probable grounds. 1. Thus; that all the endeavours of the righteous are, that they may obtain life eternall, and consequently, that they may live holily & righteously; and herein we may include also, that they labour to procure this to others too: but *the fruit of the wicked*, that is, their waies, the fruit of their thoughts, tend to sin, & so to death temporall and eternall, which is the wages of sin. Or 2. thus; *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life*; that is, they labour merely that they & theirs may live, without taking any sinfull courses to help themselves, not that they may have to spend luxuriously and to satisfy their lusts: *the fruit of the wicked to sin*; that is, the fruit of all their labours is, that they may make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Or 3. thus; *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life*; that is, the goods that righteous men get by their labour (or any other honest way) tend to life here, & eternall life hereafter, because they are carefull to imploy them for good, which the Lord will recompence with life & blessednesse: *the fruit of the wicked to sin*; that is, all their revenues are spent in sinfull courses, which must needs tend to death: and thus the poor estate of the godly labouring man, as tending to life, may in that regard be preferred here before the great revenues of wicked rich men, attending to death. The two last Expositions I judge the best.

Verf. 17. *He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction, &c.*] That is, he that is willing to receive & obey instruction and reproof: but *he that refuseth reproof erreth*; and so is in the way of death; to wit, because refusing the means of grace, he must needs straggle into the by-paths of sin, and so perish everlastingly: yea and with himself he is likely to draw others into the same condemnation; which is expressed in the last clause, according as some translate it, *be that refuseth reproof causeth to erre*.

Verf. 18. *He that hideth hatred with lying lips, & he that uttereth a slander is a fool.*] That is, they are both fools; though their practices are contrary to one another, the one dissembling his hatred, the other discovering it presently with slandering or reviling language, yet they are both wicked men.

Verf. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, &c.*] To wit, when they are

are hastily & unadvisedly uttered, and by men that effect to be alwaies talking; and therefore such men are no better then fools, Eccles. 5. 3. *A fools voice is known by multitude of words: but he that restraineth his lips is wise;* that is, that considereth what is fit to be spoken and what not, and so restraineth himself from speaking at all adventures every thing that comes into his mind. It is not therefore all speaking much that is here condemned; Act. 20. 7. it is noted of Paul, that at Troas he preached unto the disciples there, *and continued his speech untill midnight:* but Solomons aim is only to shew, that because it is a very hard thing for a weak man a long time together so strictly to watch over & order his tongue, but that at some time or other it will slip aside, therefore those men that give liberty to their tongues to run out at randome, must needs speak many things that they should not. Whence is that counsell of the Apostle, *be swift to hear, slow to speak,* Jam. 1. 19.

Verf. 20. *The tongue of the just is as choice silver, &c.*] Though we may conceive severall reasons why *the tongue of the just* may well be compared to *choice silver*, as 1. because it is purified from the drosse of all lying, flattery, vanity and babling and all other the sins whereto the tongues of men are naturally enclined, and 2. because it yields a pleasant sound, pleasing and delightfull both to God and good men, *Let me hear thy voice, for thy voice is sweet,* saith Christ to his spouse Cant. 2. 14: yet the main reason why Solomon useth this expression here, is to shew, that the speech of the righteous is precious & profitable, full of many holy instructions and admonitions, that are much for the profit and benefit of those that hear them; & therefore much more precious must their hearts needs be, from whence all this store comes, & where there are more excellent things treasured up, then with their tongues they are able to expresse. But now on the contrary, *the heart of the wicked is little worth*, like drosse rather then silver: the meaning is, that all their wisdom, thoughts and counsels are little worth, and therefore accordingly also their tongues, though they may make a great noise, must needs be of no worth nor use at all.

Verf. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many, &c.*] That is, He hath not only whereon to live himself, but also, out of the abundance of his heart, his lips do with holy instructions & admonitions & consolations feed the souls of many unto life eternall, & chear and refresh them when they are ready to faint; & so he is as some great rich man that keeps open house, where all comers may freely eat & refresh themselves: *but fools die for want of wisdom;* that is, because they will not hearken to those that would afford them the instructions of life, they destroy themselves with their folly; or, they are so far from this feeding of others, that they themselves starve and perish for want of wisdom.

Ver. 22. *The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, &c.*] That is, that, & only that doth it: *& he addeth no sorrow with it;* that is, with that blessing whereby men are enriched. Now though this be most true of spirituall riches, (to which some therefore apply it;) yet here questionlesse Solomon speaks of outward riches. And the difference which here he makes between those that are enriched by the favour & blessing of God upon them, & those that are enriched any other way, con-

sists in these things: 1. that such men are not terrified in conscience, as worldly men usually are, for those unjust waies whereby they have scraped their wealth together, but are on the contrary cheared with the discovery of Gods love to them in the blessings he conferres upon them; 2. that such men are free from those anxious cares & troubles about the getting and keeping their riches, with which worldly men are continually perplexed; 3. that such men are not in danger of those griefs wherewith worldlings are surprized, when God in his wrath strips them of their wealth; & 4. that such men, resting upon the providence of God, & rejoycing in Gods favour, are contented with what God bestows upon them, whereas wicked men are never satisfied. It cannot therefore be concluded from hence, that good men have never any troubles with their riches; but only, that if it be so, their cares & troubles proceed then from their own infirmities: so far as God gives, & they depend upon Gods provident care over them, they are free from those vexations which must needs perplex other men.

Verf. 23. *It is a sport to a fool to doe mischief, &c.*] That is, he makes light of it; or, he reioyceth & delights himself in it: *but a man of understanding hath wisdom;* as if he should have said, And so he knoweth that sin is no sporting & laughing matter, but that men ought to flee from it as from a serpent; or, & so he delights therein.

Verf. 24. *The fear of the wicked it shall come upon him, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 26; as namely when he fears the discovery of his sins, or some evil of judgement, &c: *but the desire of the righteous shall be granted;* to wit, when their desires are according to Gods will, (as indeed the desires of the righteous are usually such,) & of such things as may be for their good. And then again, God doth usually stir up in the righteous a desire of those things which he means to bestow upon them, that so they may be the more thankfull for them when they have them. The opposition of these two clauses stands thus: The fear of the wicked shall come upon him, but his desire shall perish; but that which the righteous fear shall not come upon them, and their desires shall be granted them.

Verf. 25. *As the whirl-wind passeth, so is the wicked no more, &c.*] That is, Though the wicked mans rage be violent and terrible as a whirl-wind, yet as a whirl-wind also it soon passeth away, the Lord suddenly cutting him off; or, Though the wicked man may seem unremoveable, yet no sooner doth the whirl-wind of Gods wrath passe upon him, but he is presently gone; see the Notes Job 27. 20, 21, 22. & Psal. 58. 9: *but the righteous is an everlasting foundation;* that is, he stands sure, even in the greatest tempests; he is preserved, through Gods favour in Christ, a long time here, and lives afterward in heaven unto all eternity.

Verf. 26. *As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.*] That is, As they vex and hurt the teeth and eyes, so is the sluggard a cause of much vexation and mischief to those that send him upon any errand, or set him about any businesse, because he is so long ere he brings an answer of that which they earnestly desire to know, and because he so grossly neglects and slubbers over any businesse committed to him.

Verf. 27.

Verf. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth daies, &c.*] To wit, beyond what could be probably expected, considering their constitution, &c; or beyond the time which wicked men do usually live; see the Notes chap. 3. 2, 18, 22. Psal. 91. 16: *but the years of the wicked shall be shortened*; to wit, in that wicked waies are usually the very means of bringing them by sicknesses or otherwise to an untimely end, or at least provoke the Lord to cut them off; see the Note Psal. 55. 23.

Verf. 28. *The hope of the righteous shall be gladnesse, &c.*] That is, it not only yields them a good measure of joy, even in the midst of tribulation, according to that of the Apostle, *rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation*, Rom. 12. 12; but also shall bring them at length to far greater joy; though for a time they may meet with many troubles & sorrows, yet their hope shall not perish, but this their patient expectation shall end in gladnesse, when they shall receive those good things, which upon the warrant of Gods promises they have hoped for: *but the expectation of the wicked shall perish*; that is, though for a time they be in prosperity, and so they may promise themselves great matters, yet their hopes shall come to nothing, and so shall end in sorrow and vexation.

Verf. 29. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright, but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*] Because it is evident that *the way of the Lord* is here opposed to working of iniquity, & so likewise strength is opposed to being destroyed, (& yet withall I have alwaies judged it the safest way to interpret the Scripture in the largest sense,) therefore I conceive this Proverb may best be expounded thus; *The way of the Lord*, that is, mens observing the waies wherein God hath appointed them to walk, so it be done in uprightness of heart, *is strength to the upright*; to wit, in that it strengthens and preserves them from being destroyed, and that because such are also strengthened in other regards; by the spirit of God such are enabled both in prosperity & adversity to overcome all temptations, and are carried on continually from strength to strength, from one degree of grace to another: *but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity*; to wit, because they walk not in Gods waies. So that the drift of this Proverb is to shew, that this plain sincere dealing is a surer means of security, then all sinfull carnall policy, & that the contempt and reproach that is cast upon this way doth not dishearten, but rather encourage and enflame the uprigt in their walking in it.

Verf. 30. *The righteous shall never be removed, &c.*] Though it may be truly said of the righteous, that they shall never be removed, in severall respects; for which see the Notes Psal. 13. 4, & 15. 5, & 16. 8, & 55. 22, & 125. 1; yet here, by the *antithesis* of the following clause, *but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth*, we may probably conceive that these words are at least principally meant of the Lords preserving the righteous, & continuing them and their posterity for a long time together in the place of their habitation, & in the good estate they enjoy here in this world; for which see also the Notes Psal. 37. 3, 9, 18. The opposition therefore between the two clauses of this Proverb may be conceived thus; The righteous shall for ever continue in a blessed estate, in regard that they shall live for ever in heaven, whereas the wicked shall not so much as abide in the earth: or thus; The righteous shall a long time live happily here in this world, both they

and their posterity, but the wicked shall soon be rooted out; for which see the Notes chap. 2. 32. and Psal. 52. 5.

Verf. 31. *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom, &c.*] To wit, as being here- in like a good tree that bringeth forth good fruit plentifully; (whence it is that speech is called *the fruit of the lips*, Isa. 57. 19.) and therefore shall such a man be carefully preserved, even as such trees are: *but the froward tongue shall be cut out*; to wit, because it yields nothing but wickednesse & folly, even as men cut down barren and corrupt trees, that they may be cast into the fire. See the Note Psal. 52. 5.

Verf. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, &c.*] That is, they speak those things which the righteous man knoweth do in truth deserve to be acceptable unto all men, & that will be acceptable to God & good men, and that because such a man will wisely weigh what he speaks before he speaks it: *but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardnesse*; that is, he knoweth not nor regardeth nohow to speak any thing that is good, but his tongue is well acquainted with all kind of evill speaking, & accordingly his talk is continually wicked, and such as is justly distastfull to others.

C H A P. XI.

Verf. 1. **A** *False balance is abomination to the Lord, &c.*] See the Note Deut. 25. 13. It is as if he had said, Though men may slight this sin of deceiving men in this kind, & the offenders may haply boast of it, yet God abhorres it, yea it is to him abomination it self; and that because it is a sin that tends to the overthrow of humane society, because such multitudes are wronged thereby, poor men especially, that are forced to buy all by the penny in little parcells; & all this too under a pretence of exact justice. And observable it is, that the very instruments used in this way of deceit are said to be abhorred of God, which doubtlesse is only to shew how exceeding detestable this sin is unto God, and that such false balances and weights ought to be broken, or some other way destroyed. *But a just weight* (it is in the Hebrew, *a perfect stone*, because in those times they used to weigh with stones) *is his delight*.

Verf. 2. *When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom.*] Some understand this Proverb thus; that proud men, by reason of their folly, will be speaking those things, whereever they come, that tend to the shame & reproach of others; whereas the humble on the other side will be still speaking of wisdom. But the common stream of Expositours runneth another way: *When pride cometh, then cometh shame*; that is, When men through vanity and folly become proud, and are exalted in their spirits, shame usually follows them close at the heels: and that not only because proud men are usually hated of all men; because they are so ready to despise others, therefore others are as ready to despise and speak evil of them, tearing them proud & stately fools, &c. but also especially because God abhorres them, and so by his just judgements doth severall waies bring them to shame: *but with the lowly is wisdom*; and so they avoid that shame which is the portion of the proud, and on the other side are honoured among st men; their humble

humble and prudent carriage makes them to be highly esteemed amongst men; God reveals his will and imparts of his grace more and more to them, and their wisdom maketh their faces to shine.

Verf. 3. *The integrity of the upright shall guide them, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, so that they shall avoid the snares of wicked men: *but the perversnesse of transgressours*, to wit, whereby they seek to insnare others, *shall destroy them*. But I conceive these words must be understood more generally: *The integrity of the upright shall guide them*; that is, it shall be a means to make them goe still in a right and safe way; & that because when mens hearts are upright, 1. that will not suffer them to doe any thing that they know is displeasing to God upon any pretence whatsoever, as hypocrites will, and 2. God will be sure to direct and preserve and prosper such men in all their waies: *but the perversnesse of transgressours shall destroy them*; that is, it shall mislead them to their utter undoing.

Verf. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath, &c.*] See the Note Chap. 10. 2.

Verf. 5. *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 3: *but the wicked shall fall by his own wickednesse*; to wit, from their prosperous estate into many miseries & troubles, & at last into utter destruction; but see the Note Psal. 34. 21. and chap. 10. 8.

Verf. 6. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them; but transgressours shall be taken in their own naughtinesse.*] Some would have the opposition of this Proverb to be this; that the righteous shall be delivered from the snares of the wicked, whereas on the other side the wicked *shall be taken in*, that is, *by their own naughtinesse*, by those wicked practices which they have devised against others. But I rather take it more generally, that though the righteous may fall into sin and troubles, yet they shall be delivered out of them; see the Note chap. 10. 2: *but transgressours shall be taken in their own naughtinesse*; that is, they shall be irrecoverably destroyed; see the Note chap. 5. 22. yea & many times cut off in the very act of their sins.

Verf. 7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish, &c.*] Some understand this particularly of his expectation that he should oppresse Gods righteous servants, or that he should be delivered from death by his riches & greatness. But there is no reason why it should not be understood generally, to wit, that the wicked man is by death irrecoverably cut off from all the good he expected, either for the obtaining or enjoying of any earthly advantages, or especially for finding any mercy with God after this life is ended, & that because after death there is no more place for repentance; see the Notes also chap. 10. 28. Job 8. 11, 14, & 27. As for the following clause, *& the hope of unjust men perisheth*, it seems most probable that it is a mere repetition of the same thing, for the greater confirmation of it. Yet some conceive that one clause is meant of the wicked mans being cut short of the good he expected, and the other of the disappointment of those that had placed their hope in him; or else that the first clause is meant of the affection, the second of earthly things hoped for.

Verf. 8. *The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.*] This change God often worketh in this life, that the righteous being delivered,
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the wicked man falleth into the same, the like, or greater tribulations : yea Solomons aim in these words may be to shew, that the wicked man often falleth into those very mischiefs, which he had plotted to bring upon the righteous, and that God brings troubles upon them because they had troubled the righteous, yea and that by these troubles of the wicked the righteous are often delivered. But now it may be meant also of that great change that is made after this life is ended, to wit, that whereas in this world usually the righteous are in great troubles, & the wicked live in a prosperous estate; when death comes, then the righteous are delivered and taken up into glory, and the wicked that flourished before are cast into endlesse miseries.

Verf. 9. *An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour, &c.*] That is, by his tempting them to embrace errors, or to doe any thing that is evil, (which is farthered much by the shew that he makes of piety;) & so likewise by his dissembling and pretending love to those against whom he hath plotted mischief, he destroyeth many, & as much as in him lyeth he seeks do destroy the righteous servants of God: *but through knowledge shall the just be delivered;* that is, by their knowing the evil of such errors & sins, and the danger of being in such company, and so likewise by their wise discerning the hypocrisy and plots of such men, notwithstanding those fair words and flattering speeches wherewith they deceive the simple, the righteous are delivered from these snares wherein others are taken.

Verf. 10. *When it goeth well with the righteous, &c.*] That is, when they live long, & are enriched, and advanced to places of honour & magistracy, &c: *the city rejoiceth;* to wit, not only because such men will be very instrumentall for the publick good, & will that way imploy all the good that God doeth for them; but also especially because God usually blesteth their endeavours, yea & the people for their sakes: *and when the wicked perish, there is shouting;* which the people durst not have done whilst they were in their prosperity. The reason of this shouting may be understood from that which is said before on the contrary concerning the righteous. And for rejoycing at the ruine of the wicked, see the Note Psal. 58. 10.

Verf. 11. *By the blessing of the upright, &c.*] This may seem to be annexed as one reason of the foregoing Proverb, why men are wont to rejoyce when it goeth well with the righteous, and when the wicked perish, that it is because *by the blessing of the upright the city is exalted,* that is, by their prayers & good counsell, and other their religious, prudent and profitable speech: *but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked;* that is, by their wicked & pernicious commands & counsels, by their false witnesses, perjuries & blasphemies, &c. Some Expositours do otherwise conceive of those words, *by the blessing of the upright,* as that thereby is meant their bounty and good deeds, whereby they become a blessing to the people; or, Gods blessing the upright by encreasing the number of them, or any other way; or, Gods blessing on the people for the sake of the upright. But because *the mouth of the wicked* in the second clause is opposed to *the blessing of the upright* in the first, the first exposition is clearly the best.

Ver. 12. *He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour, &c.* That is, He not only despiseth him in his heart, but also speaks contemptuously of him by reviling & reviling him; not considering (as he would doe if he were not void of wisdom) that he is a man as himself, and as capable of heaven as himself, though ever so poor, mean, deformed, &c. & that it is God that hath made the difference betwixt him and the man he despiseth, and that he himself may become as blameworthy any way as he is: *but a man of understanding holdeth his peace*; to wit, when he is so despised & reviled; or, he doth not despise his neighbour, and dares not therefore speak any thing to his disgrace, but winks at his infirmities. There is another way which some goe in expounding this Proverb, to wit, that *a man void of understanding despiseth his neighbour*, namely, when he hears him speak, or when he is reproved by him; *but a man of understanding holdeth his peace*, that is, hearkeneth to him when he speaks, or takes his reproofs patiently. But this exposition is not so clear.

Ver. 13. *A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, &c.* That is, the secret faults of men; or rather, those secret things that have been privately imparted to him upon condition of secrecy; & so hereby he discovers himself a faithlesse man; (for this the opposite clause implyeth.) It is in the Originall, *He that walketh being a tale-bearer revealeth secrets*: & in this expression, as the Hebrew word manifests, the tale-bearer is compared to some piding pedlar, that having taken up severall wares in severall places, carrieth them up & down from one place to another, and is ready to open his pack in every place where he comes, for some little gain that he gets by the sale of his goods; and that because tale-bearers are usually idle persons, that wandering up and down, do spread abroad in every place where they come whatever they can any where get the knowledge of, in hope thereby to please, & to get some small matter of those to whom they tell their tales, which they neglect to get by their honest labour. *But he that is of a faithful heart keepeth his mouth*; that is, He that is a faithfull-hearted man indeed, and not only a man of many words and promises, will not thus discover secrets.

Ver. 14. *He that is surety for a stranger, &c.* That is, one to whom he is no way obliged to doe any such courtesy for him; or one whose estate or conversion he knoweth not; see the Notes chap. 6. 1, 2, 3: *shall smart for it*; which is in the Hebrew, *shall be sore broken*; to wit, his heart shall be broken with care and grief, and his estate with losses and damages.

Ver. 15. *A gracious woman retaineth honour, &c.* That is, As by the gracious deportment of her self, she gets honour, credit & esteem, not only with her husband and family, but also amongst all that know her, yea and is an honour to her husband & others that have relation to her; so by the same means she doth also preserve both her own honour & theirs: whereas other women are only curious and ambitious to preserve their beauty, or to uphold their wealth & greatness in the world, she propounds nothing to her self more, then that she may, by the use of all holy means, cherish all those saving and sanctifying graces which God hath wrought in her, & so may preserve the good reputation which is gotten by carrying her self as becomes a good woman: these are the chains and jewels and o-

her ornaments, wherewith she seeks to uphold her credit amongst men; and though she be never so many waies tempted to abandon these, that she may be brought under shame & reproach, it will be all in vain, she will persevere in those holy waies; and thereby still preserve her honour untainted: *and strong men*, that is, men able to endure great pains & labour, stout & hardy mighty men, *retain riches*; that is, as by their industry & labour, perhaps too by extortion and oppression, they get great riches, so by the same means they do also preserve them; which agreeth with that Isa. 49. 24. *shall the prey be taken from the mighty?* The meaning of the Proverb is therefore this, that *A gracious woman retaineth honour, as strong men retain riches*; that is, that a gracious woman doth as strenuously hold fast her integrity, & so also doth as surely uphold her credit and good name, as the stoutest of men do preserve their wealth. I know that divers Expositours do otherwise expresse the drift of this Proverb: as that, whereas honour, the woman's treasure, is gotten & maintained by meeknesse and gentlenesse, the chief graces of the female sex, 1 Pet. 3. 4. yea after their beauty may be decayed; men quite contrary do usually get and preserve riches by oppression and violence: or that the work of a wife is only to maintain her honour by her holy behaviour; but husbands must by much labour and industry both get and preserve riches. But the first Exposition is the most genuine.

Verf. 17. *The mercifull man doth good to his own soul, &c.* To wit, not only because his own soul must needs be refreshed by the mercy that he sheweth to others; but also because God will be sure to reward him for it, & cause others also in his distresse to shew mercy to him; *but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh*; that is, he brings troubles upon himself, to wit, vengeance from God, and terrours of conscience in the expectation of it before it comes. Many I know by the cruel manner of troubling his own flesh do understand, his not allowing of himself so much necessary food & raiment; or his being hard hearted to his nearest relations, wherein the Prophet saith Isa. 58. 7. that men do hide themselves from their own flesh. But the first Exposition is farre the clearest.

Verf. 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull work, &c.* To wit, not so much because his work is to deceive others, as because his work will in the conclusion deceive himself: because God doth usually crosse him in his plots & enterprises, though carried on with never so much diligence, power & policy; & because he usually fails of the hope he propounds to himself in this life, whether of the secrecy of his sin, or the blisse & prosperity of his outward estate, either by reason the terrours of his conscience deprive him of all comfort therein, or by reason that God suffers him not long to continue in his supposed happiness, or at least he shall not leave it as he expected to his posterity; & lastly because whatever he doth in a way of religion for the good of his soul shall doe him no good at all, his very prayers & alms &c. shall deceive him: see the Note Job 15. 25. *But as for the way of righteousness*, that is, that doth much good, & walketh diligently in all the ways of righteousness: *shall he see reward*. To wit, either here or hereafter, & a plentiful reward too, as the husbandman receives his seed with great increase. See the Note Plal 112. 2. 126. 1.

Verf. 21. *Though hand joyn in hand, &c.*] It is in the Originall only, *Hand in hand; or, Hand to hand*; & by reason the expression is so concise, every Interpreter almost gives a severall interpretation of the words. But even according to our Translation, *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*, there may be severall expositions given of these words. But yet doubtlesse that Exposition which is the most common is far the clearest, to wit, that though never so many wicked men do joyn together in any wicked work, as haply in conspiring together against the righteous, and though they should enter into leagues with others (which is usually done by joyning of hands, according to that Lam. 5, 6. *We have given the hand to the Egyptians & to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread*) and so agree together to help one another; or, more generally, though wicked men may have never so many and never so mighty friends to defend them; yet they shall not be unpunished, but both he and his children shall be destroyed: which last may seem to be implied, because of the opposite clause that follows, *but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered*; that is, not himself only, but his seed also shall be delivered, both from the conspiracies of the wicked, and from all other dangers they are in. And thus whilst one wicked man cannot be delivered by the help of many, the righteous man on the contrary is the cause of delivering many.

Verf. 22. *As a jewel of gold in a swines snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*] That is, As a jewel of gold is not seemly in a sows snout, it is pittie such a gemme should be disposed of in such a place, because of her deformity, and because it will not restrain her from rooting in the mire, where she will be sure to defile it in the dirt; nor is it indeed any ornament to her, but rather a cause that her deformity is the more viewed: so neither is beauty seemly for a foolish wicked woman, that is as it were brutish and void of reason, because it suits not with her evil qualities, & because she will be sure to abuse & defile it with pride and uncleanness; & it is rather a dishonour then any ornament to her; in that the more famous she is for her beauty; the more her vices are also discovered and talked of.

Verf. 23. *The desire of the righteous is only good, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, The desire of the righteous is constantly and only to doe good to all; though they cannot alwaies doe what they would, yet this only they desire: on the other side, the expectation of the wicked is wrath; that is, they are alwaies in hope, according to their desires, to proceed in a way of wrath against men, by doing them some evil or mischief, and so are desirous alwaies to doe more mischief then they are able. Thus some, I say, expound these words, holding that the drift of this Proverb is, to shew, that the righteousness & wickedness of men is chiefly to be judged of by their desires. But now the most of Expositours do otherwise conceive of the drift of this Proverb, namely, that it is to shew the blisse of the righteous, & the misery of the wicked: only they differ in giving the sense of the severall terms in both clauses. For some understand by *good* in the first clause, that good which the righteous desire to doe, & others the good which they desire to obtain; and so

for the second clause, some by *wrath* understand the wrath of the wicked, others the wrath of God poured forth upon the wicked. But indeed I conceive they may be both joyned together, and so the opposition of both clauses may thus be conceived. The desire of the righteous is only to doe that which is good in Gods sight; that is, the chief current of their desires runneth that way, so far as they are righteous it is so with them, they delight in the law of God after the inward man, willing in all things to live honestly, Heb. 13. 18: & accordingly the good which they desire and expect hereby, as namely the good favour & blessing of God here, and life eternall hereafter, they shall be sure to obtain; & so their desires end in good, or their desires accomplished are good; for when, through ignorance or inordinate affections, their desires are not such as they ought to be, God will not satisfy them. But now on the other side, the desires, & so the expectation also, of the wicked is only evil; as namely in that usually they proceed from wrath, and tend to the pouring forth of their wrath upon the righteous: & accordingly their expectation must needs be of wrath, the guilt of their consciences working in them that which the Apostle calls Heb. 10. 27. *a certain fearfull looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries*: or their expectation must needs end in wrath, not only because their wicked desires and hopes must needs bring the wrath of God upon them, according to that of the Apostle Rom. 2. 8, 9. *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil*; but also because when God executes his judgements on them, both the frustrating of their designs and hopes, and the misery that otherwise they undergoe doth make them vex and fret, and even as mad men to rage against God.

Verf. 24. *There is that scattereth, &c.*] See the Note Psal 112. 9: *and yet encreaseth*; to wit, if he giveth liberally, yet with respect to his estate, & not more then is meet; which is to be added from the opposite clause, *& there is that withholdeth more then is meet, but it tendeth to poverty*; not only because sometimes such covetous fools cannot find in their hearts to part with their money, even when it might have been done in some way for their own worldly advantage; but especially, because God for their hard-heartednesse to the poor curseth and scattereth their estates.

Verf. 25. *The liberall soul, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 17: *shall be made fat*; that is, he shall richly be rewarded, not only with spiritual & eternall blessings, but even with temporal blessings also, both for the health of his body, and the great encrease of his estate: *& he that watereth*; that is, that relieveth the wants of the poor, that they may be able to live, even as a gardener watereth his herbs and plants when in a time of drought they are even ready to die: *shall be watered also himself*; that is, blessed from heaven, both with an encrease of wealth and grace, whereby he may be made both more able, and more chearfully ready still to relieve the poor in their necessities. The similitude may be taken from Springs, that are filled with water as fast as they empty themselves, whereas if they be stopped, they grow empty, the water diverting it self some other way: and we find it used Isa. 58. 11. to the very same purpose; *And the Lord shall satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a*

spring.

spring of water, whose waters fail not. The Proverb may also be meant of their encreasing in knowledge that instruct others, according to that 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollo watered, &c.*

Verf. 26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him, &c.*] And so, though they sin in curling, God will hear and revenge their cries and complaints. Yea observable it is, that this must needs be thus, especially in our land, where corn serves us both for meat and drink, because we have not wines & such pure waters to drink as are in other countries. *But blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it;* see the Note chap. 10. 6.

Verf. 27. *He that diligently seeketh good, &c.*] That is, to doe that constantly which is good in Gods sight, or rather, to benefit those amongst whom he lives: *procureth favour;* to wit, both from God and man: *but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him;* see the Notes chap. 5. 22. and Psal. 10. 2.

Verf. 28. *He that trusteth in his riches, &c.*] That is, that placeth his happinesse & safety in them, & therefore cares not by what means he gets them, nor how close-fisted he is to the poor, nor what evil he doth, because he thinks his wealth will secure him: *shall fall;* that is, shall be brought down & fall into mischief, and that because he resteth upon such transitory things, that will fail him & be gone in an instant; or rather, he *shall fall*, to wit, as withered leaves fall from a tree when the wind blows upon them, according to that Isa. 64. 6. *we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.* For this may seem the more probable, because of that which follows in the opposite clause, *but the righteous, to wit, because he trusteth only in God, shall flourish as a branch;* see the Note Psal. 1. 3. And indeed as a living branch that continueth firmly fixed in the tree, though in the winter it may seem withered, yet in the spring it will flourish again; so the righteous, though they may seem to be forlorn in the hour of adversity, yet in due time shall be sure to flourish again.

Verf. 29. *He that troubleth his own house, &c.*] To wit, by continuall quarrelling, & unquietnesse in his family, & law-suits with others abroad, by idlenesse, or improvident ordering his family or affairs, by profuse wasting his estate, by extreme niggardlinesse, or any other way of wickednesse, that draweth the curse of God upon his estate & family: *shall inherit the wind;* that is, shall bring all to nothing; or, what he hath or gets, he will be no more able to keep, then a man is able to lay hold on and retain the wind: *and the fool shall be servant to the wise in heart;* that is, such a fool as thus troubleth his house, shall not only loose all that he had, but besides he shall not long be master of himself, but shall become a servant, haply a bond slave (for in those times men in great want were wont to sell themselves for servants) to him that hath been wiser to take care of his estate; see the Note chap. 10. 8. There is another exposition given of the first branch, which is not improbable: *He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind:* that is, He that is ever jangling and quarrelling in his family, shall be sure of continuall storms and uproars, others becoming thereby as violent as himself, and so he shall never have any peace in his house. But the former exposition is generally followed by Interpreters.

Verf. 30. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, their righteousness will be a means of life to them; see the Note chap. 3. 18. But rather the meaning seems to be, that the benefit which men may get by the example, the counsell & instruction of the righteous, is no lesse then life; yea life eternall, & that therefore there is litle reason why such men should be despised, as usually they are, in the world. Yea observable it is, that this *fruit of the righteous* doth restore life to dead men; which the tree of life in the garden of Eden could not doe. Now in the following clause there is one speciall instance given of this fruit of the righteous: *and he that winneth souls* (it is in the Hebrew, *he that taketh souls*) that is, that taketh them with the sweetnesse of his speech, and so perswades them to embrace his saving doctrine, or that is a means of saving souls, *is wise*; that is, he approves himself to be a wise man, both because there is much wisdom to be used in this work of winning souls, and because this service above all God will be sure abundantly to reward.

Verf. 31. *Behold, &c.*] As if he should have said, This which I tell you now may be observed to be true by daily experience; or, is a strange and wonderfull thing, & therefore very considerable: *the righteous shall be recompenced in the earth*; that is, God will make them smart for their sins here in this world: *much more the wicked and the sinner*; that is, much more therefore shall they receive the reward of their wickednesse, either here in this world, or however eternally hereafter. Some of our best Expositours would have the Lords rewarding the righteousness of the righteous here in this world to be also at least included in the first clause; but I see not how that can agree with the following clause, much more the wicked & the sinner. The meaning of the words we have cleared by the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 16, 17. where he alludes to this passage of Solomon.

C H A P. XII.

Verf. 2. **A** *Good man obtaineth favour of the Lord, &c.*] That is, though he may be out of favour with the world, yet God of his free grace, whenever he seeks to him, will shew himself favourable to him, & do him good: *but a man of wicked devices will he condemn*; and so also punish him, to wit, though he may flourish for a time, & may justify himself, and may haply by his crafty hiding of his wickednesse deceive many, and though however he shall be surely applauded by the men of the world.

Verf. 3. *A man shall not be established by wickednesse, &c.*] That is, He shall not be established as long as he liveth in any way of wickednesse, & he shall not secure himself from danger by any wicked practises; but, on the contrary, he shall be utterly rooted up: which is implied from the following clause, *but the root of the righteous shall not be moved*; that is, though they may be shaken with many storms of afflictions, yet they shall not be overturned by the roots; or, though they spread not upwards so loftily as the wicked do, yet by their righteousness they shall be unmoveably established: see the Note chap. 10. 25.

Verf. 4. *A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, &c.*] That is, she is an honour to him, his chiefest & choicest ornament, and consequently the continuall
rejoy.

rejoycing of his heart; she is what woman was by creation appointed to be: 1 Cor. 11. 7. *the glory of the man, who is her head: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenesse in his bones:* that is, she is a continuall heart-breaking grief and vexation to him, which pierceth so deep, that it wasteth his strength, & consumeth not his flesh only, but his bones also. And thus the wife that was made of a bone of the husband becomes an incurable disease to him, even as *rottenesse in his bones.*

Verf. 5. *The thoughts of the righteous are right, &c.*] That is, to doe that which is every way just, and to give every man his right; see the Note chap. 12. 23: *but the counsels of the wicked are deceit;* to wit, how they may deceive men, and that many times by cloaking their wickednesse under fair pretences and professions of honesty and good intentions.

Verf. 6. *The words of the wicked are to lye in wait for blood, &c.*] They tend to the destroying of men both in soul & body, see the Note ch. 1. 11, 19; as, by consulting together how to effect it, by bearing false witness against them, by seeking to draw them into their snares by their flatteries, &c: *but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them;* that is, those for whose lives the wicked lye in wait; to wit, by giving them warning of their danger, by dissuading the wicked from such bloody practices, by pleading their cause before the magistrate, by stirring up others to appear in their defence, & many other waies.

Verf. 7. *The wicked are overthrown, & are not, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 37. 36. both they & their families are overthrown; which is implied by the following clause, *but the house of the righteous shall stand;* that is, not they only, but their families also shall be established in an estate of happiness.

Verf. 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom, &c.*] That is, as a man is more or lesse spiritually wise & godly, & manifests it in word & deed: *but he that is of a perverse heart, & manifests it in his speech & behaviour, & therefore is indeed no better then a fool, though otherwise never so carnally wise, shall be despised.* The main drift of the Proverb may be to shew, that though the counsels and enterprises of the godly-wise may be unsuccessfull for a time, and seem to produce very sad effects, yet at last they shall have their due praise; and that though, on the other side the wicked may be successfull and prosper for a while, yet in the conclusion they shall be despised for their folly.

Verf. 9. *He that is despised, &c.*] That is, He that having modest thoughts of himself, aspires not after things too high for him, and so liveth in a plain way without any pomp or state, being willing to live in some honest calling, and if need be, to work with his own hands, and so is slighted and despised in the world; *or such a servant, that is, and yet as meanly as he lives, he hath wherewith to maintain himself & his family;* at least he is able to keep one servant for the easing of himself, the furtherance of his businesse, & the advancement of his estate: *is better then he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread;* that is, is in a better condition then he that boasts of his great parentage, & carrieth himself as some great man, and yet even then perhaps hath not at some times so much as bread to eat; or, that maketh a great flourish in rich attire and the state of his attendance, and so comes to extreme poverty and want.

¶ Vers. 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, &c.*] And therefore much more will such a man shew mercy to poor men, when he sees them in want, and shew pittie to his servants and those of his own family: *but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;* that is, they, in stead of being mercifull, are cruel, even to those that are men as themselves, & much more therefore to their beasts: or, even those actions of theirs which carry the fairest shew of mercy have cruelty mixed therewith; when they deal cruelly with men, & yet pretend great mercy, in that they do not proceed to greater extremities, & so their mercies are but at the best a lesser kind of cruelty; and so likewise, when they give almes to the poor of that which they have gotten with grinding the faces of other men, or with their alms do adde such base reproachfull language, that this wounds the hearts of the receiver more then their alms can refresh them; or, when they pretend to shew mercy to a man, but it is with a purpose to doe him some mischief; and so many other waies that might be added.

¶ Vers. 11. *He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread, &c.*] And so he approves himself to be a wise man: which is implied by the following clause, *but he that followeth vain persons* (see the Note Judg. 9. 4.) *is void of understanding;* and so shall come to beggery, and want bread to eat. And thus the opposition of these two clauses is more fully expressed Prov. 28. 19.

¶ Vers. 12. *The wicked desireth the net of evil men, &c.*] Severall waies is this Proverb expounded by Interpreters. 1. Some take it thus; that when wicked men, that have no root of true piety in them, see how some other evil men prosper and thrive by waies of rapine & fraud, catching men in their net, & gathering them in their drag, as the Prophet speaks Habak. 1. 15. they earnestly covet the wealth which they get, & thereupon are eager to learn their devices, and to goe the same way to work as they do, yea and to joyn in society with them, that they may be sharers with them in their great gains: *but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit;* that is, their piety & uprightnesse of heart, which as a root under ground is not seen by the eyes of men, makes them as a tree that being well rooted doth flourish & bring forth fruit, and so they have what is sufficient for them, without any such injurious vile courses, as wicked men take to enrich themselves, & herewith they are well contented. 2. Others conceive the meaning of the Proverb to be this; that wicked men desire that which none but evil men can desire, namely, to draw men into the waies of perdition, or to insnare them some way or other, that they may spoil them of their lives or estates; yea that this is a sport and delight to them, in the prosecution whereof they can be content to endure any hardnesse or labour, as fishers & fowlers and huntsmen will in following their game: *but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit;* that is, though they be of those whom the wicked seek to ensnare, yet they shall flourish for all this, and will be never a whit the lesse serviceable to God in their places for them; or, they are so far from desiring to spoil others, that they are ready to give of their own for the relief of others. 3. Some understand it thus; that the wicked desire to enrich themselves in their sinfull practices, and that their plots may be successfull, *but their devices are usually blasted, and they seldome enjoy the fruit of their desires.* *but the*

root of the righteous yieldeth fruit; that is, they only enjoy the fruit of their desires, though a while they may seem to be in a withering condition, yet they shall flourish again. And 4. some read the first clause thus, *The wicked desireth the fortress of evil men*; & accordingly they take the meaning of the Proverb to be this, that the hope of wicked men, when they are in trouble, is still in such as themselves: they desire to be protected by them, or, they desire to defend themselves as they do, by their riches, policies, and power; and it may be all in vain: *but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit*; that is, they need no such fortresses, their righteousness doth effectually preserve them.

Verf. 13. *The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips, &c.*] That is, he draweth down the judgements of God & just destruction upon himself by the wickedness of his lips; or, by his own words, wherein unadvisedly he often overshoots himself, he is many times intangled, & brought into great troubles & inconveniences amongst men: *but the just shall come out of trouble*; to wit, by the wisdom & righteousness of his lips; or, the meaning may be this, that though he may come into trouble by the words of wicked men, or by his own words, whether by speaking his conscience and what he ought to speak, or by speaking any thing unadvisedly, yet God will deliver him out of his troubles.

Verf. 14. *A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, &c.*] The drift of this Proverb may be to shew, that not only the good works of the righteous shall be rewarded, of which he speaks in the following clause, *and the recompence of a mans hands shall be rendered unto him*, but even his good words also. But the first clause I conceive implieth more then so, namely, that a good man shall receive abundant blessings from God, as the reward of the good which with his mouth he hath done unto others; as he hath satisfied many with the wisdom & graciousness of his words, so shall himself be satisfied with many blessings from God. And then for the last clause, one of our best Expositours understands it thus: *& the recompence of a mans hands shall be render'd unto him*; that is, by using his mouth well he shall peaceably enjoy what he hath gotten by the labour of his hands, whereas many by the folly of their lips come to be stripped of all their estates.

Verf. 16. *A fools wrath is presently known, &c.*] And so he doth hereby exceedingly shame and dishonour himself: which is implied in the following opposite clause, *but a prudent man covereth shame*; that is, he suppresseth the folly of his passion, which, together with his unseemly behaviour, in his anger, being discovered, would have redounded much to his reproach & shame. Some understand this last clause otherwise, namely, that *a prudent man covereth shame*, by passing by the reproaches that are cast upon him, or the shame & dishonour that is any other way done him, taking no more notice of it then if it had never been; and that not in hope of getting the fairer advantage hereafter to be revenged on them, but because having withstood the first violent boiling up of his passion, he can afterward the more easily keep his spirit in order; or because he can patiently endure reproaches and wrongs, and will rather suffer then revenge. But the former exposition is the best.

Verf. 17. *He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness, &c.*] That is, He

that makes a conscience in his ordinary talk to speak nothing but truth, will speak nothing but what is just, & what becomes a righteous man to speak, when he is called forth in publick to be a witness: for that this is implied, the following clause sheweth, *but a false witness, deceit*; that is, a man that is inured to lying; when he is called to be a witness, will utter deceit; that is, he will deceive the judge & others with his lies; or, though he maketh a shew of truth, and perhaps speaks somewhat of truth, yet it shall be done in such a cunning way, that it shall tend to the overthrow of the righteous mans cause. Or else we may understand it thus; *He that speaketh truth, to wit*, when he is called to be a witness, *sheweth forth righteousness*, that is, sheweth himself thereby to be a righteous man: *but a false witness, deceit*; that is, such a one sheweth himself thereby to be a fraudulent person. Or thus; *He that speaketh truth* in his testimonies doth thereby promote the doing of justice; or, will not be afraid to declare boldly what is just: *but a false witness* furthers deceit.

Verf. 18. *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword, &c.*] It is as if he had said, as appears by the opposite clause, that there are a company of fools, whose words do wound men like sharp swords; see the Note Psal. 57. 4. And many waies this may be done: as by drawing men into any error or wickednesse to the manifest destruction of their souls; by setting men together by the ears; by reviling & slandering, &c. And so likewise that which followeth, that *the tongue of the wise is health*, that is, a means of health to men, may be done severall waies: to wit, by curing men of their errors & sins; by pleading in the defence of the innocent; by pacifying offended minds, & making peace between those that are at variance; by satisfying scrupled consciences, and comforting the heavy-hearted, &c. But because both in the foregoing and following verses Solomon may seem to speak concerning witnesses, therefore some understand this Proverb also particularly of them; to wit, that there are some that, by swearing falsely against the innocent in judgement, do as much as in them lyeth wound them mortally; but that then the wise, by examining their testimonies, and by using other means to clear those that are thus falsely accused, do heal these wounds, and preserve the lives of those that were in so great danger. Yet I conceive it is best to take the words in the more generall sense.

Verf. 19. *The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*] This may be understood severall waies. As 1. that he that speaketh truth will not vary in what he saith, but will alwaies speak the same thing, whereas the liar will be now in one tale, and by and by in another. Or 2. that truth shall at last prevail against error: though truth may be overborn for a time, & error may be then cryed up for truth; yet this shall be but a while thus; the time shall soon come, that maintainers of error shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, 2 Tim. 3. 9. and then the truth shall again prevail. Or 3. that he that speaketh the truth may stoutly stand to what he hath spoken, no man shall be able to convince him of falshood; and though he may be falsely accused, or suspected of falshood, yet his innocency herein shall at last be cleared: whereas the liar, though he may outface men for a while, shall soon be discovered and proved.

to be a liar. Or 4. that the man that constantly makes a conscience of speaking the truth, shall be blessed from heaven here, and live for ever in heaven hereafter; but that on the other side, though men may seem to thrive by lying for a time, yet they shall soon find it otherwise, and without repentance shall be eternally punished. And indeed I see not but that all these may be intended in the words.

Verf. 20. *Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil, &c.*] The meaning of this is, either 1. that those that imagine mischief against the righteous have many plots in their hearts, whereby they hope to deceive them, & bring them into trouble, but that hereby they shall certainly bring upon themselves extreme grief & vexation of spirit; which is implied in the opposite clause, *but to the counsellors of peace is joy*: the one shall have much trouble & sorrow, through the disquiet of their own minds, the terrour of their consciences, & the curse of God upon them; the other much joy, through the blessing of God upon them, and the sweet refreshings of their own consciences. Or 2. that such plotters of deceit & mischief may glory & rejoyce therein for a time; but that true joy shall be only to the counsellors of peace, with whom it shall be well, notwithstanding the plots of the wicked against them. Or 3. which to me seems the clearest Exposition, that the plots of the wicked against the righteous will deceive them, & bring the evil intended against the righteous upon themselves, to their great vexation & torment; whereas those that seek the good and peace of others shall have great joy & comfort thereby: see the Note chap. 11. 18.

Verf. 21. *There shall no evil happen to the just, &c.*] That is, nothing that is truly evil, nothing shall come upon them in a way of vengeance, or shall tend to their destruction, but only to try them, & purge them, & do them good, Rom. 8. 28: *but the wicked shall be filled with mischief*; that is, they shall be overwhelmed, inwardly with terrors, & outwardly with the judgements of God upon them.

Verf. 22. *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, &c.*] To wit, Not only because lying is in it self a sin most hateful to the God of truth; but also because liars do usually deal unfaithfully with men, breaking their promises, & not carrying themselves according to that they have with their lips professed: whence the opposite clause is thus expressed, *but they that deal truly*, to wit, both in word and deed, *are his delight*. Lying alone makes men abominable to God; but God delights only in those that both speak the truth, and deal truly.

Verf. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge, &c.*] See the Note chap. 10. 14: *but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness*; that is, their hearts do set their tongues on work with all eagerness to make known their folly to all men where they come, to wit, by their vain ostentation of themselves, and by their foolish and ignorant and wicked speeches: Such a man, as Solomon saith elsewhere Eccles. 10. 3. *saith to every one, that he is a fool*; he cannot conceal his folly, as the prudent man concealeth his knowledge.

Verf. 24. *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule; but the slothfull shall be under tribute.*] It may be read, *but the deceitfull shall be under tribute*. And well indeed may those two be joyned together, because slothfull persons, to supply their wants

caused by their sloth, or to avoid labour, are wont by any false and fraudulent courses to shift for themselves.

Verf. 25. *Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop; but a good word maketh it glad.*] That is, even one word of commiseration or comfort; especially any word of promise out of Gods word, which is called a *good word*, Jer. 29. 10. *I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place.*

Verf. 26. *The righteous, &c.*] To wit, though he be in never so afflicted a condition, is more excellent, (or, more abundant,) that is, is indeed richer, & hath more true worth in him, is more honoured of God & good men, and is every way in a better condition, *than his neighbour*, to wit, though never so great in the world: and that because such a one is rich in grace, & an heire of heaven, which is farre better then all worldly greatnesse; and because he is well contented with his estate, and consequently his way is answerable to his hopes; which is implied in the following clause, *but the way of the wicked seduceth them.* And this may be understood severall waies: as 1. that they flatter themselves with vain hopes of happinesse in their waies which will deceive them, see the Note chap. 11. 18; or 2. that their way of heaping up wealth, & making themselves great in the world, whereby they seek to excell others, & for which they think themselves more excellent then the righteous, doth indeed deceive them, because for all this they are but contemptible men; or 3. that the reason why the wicked do not seek after the forementioned excellency of the righteous is, because they see that wicked men flourish and prosper in their way; or 4. that the pleasure and content which wicked men, through the corruption of their nature, take in their lewd waies, keeps them from the waies of righteousness, and draws them away still farther and farther into all kind of wickednesse.

Verf. 27. *The slothfull man roasteth not that which he took in hunting, &c.*] The most received exposition of these words is this, That as the hunter doth many times loose the venison which, with much labour & craft, he hath gotten in hunting, his dogs sometimes eating it up, and the keepers of the park at other times taking it away; so the slothfull man usually never enjoyeth what he hath gotten by much fraud and oppression (see the Note Gen. 10. 9.) either because through mere sloth he is not carefull to keep it from perishing; or because the curse of God bereaves him of it, or cuts him off by death, or giveth him over to such unreasonable covetousnesse, that he cannot find in his heart to spend it upon himself. But yet there is another way of expounding these words, which seems very probable; namely, that the slothfull man will not labour, & therefore it cannot be said that he roasts what he took in hunting, that is, that he eats what he hath gotten by his labour: no, either such an one must not have to eat, or else he must live upon other mens labours, perhaps of what he gets by fraud & deceit. In opposition whereto it is said in the next clause, *but the substance of a diligent man is precious*; to wit, either 1. because his substance is great, he hath plenty of gold and silver and other things which men esteem precious; or 2. because men are wont most to esteem that which they have gotten with their own hard labour; or 3. because substance so gotten is like to be continued to men, that so they may

may enjoy it, and use it to their comfort. But see the Note also Psal. 37. 1. & b. 21.

CH. A P. XIII.

Verf. 1. **A** Wise son heareth his fathers instruction; but a scorner heareth not rebuke.] No not the rebuke of his own father; and therein sheweth himself to be a fool. For the word scorner, see the Note Psal. 1. 1.

Verf. 2. *A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth, &c.*] That is, By speaking of good things to others, men shall benefit themselves, in that they shall become the wiser & the holier thereby: *but the soul of the transgressours shall eat violence;* that is, by speaking wickedly such men become more violently wicked. But the words may be better taken in a more generall sense: *A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth,* that is, he shall fare the better for the good he hath done by using his mouth well, he shall enjoy those blessings that shall be very sweet & delightfull to him, see the Note chap. 12. 14. and so it shall be likewise with him for his righteous & religious behaviour, which is implied by the following opposite clause: *but the soul of the transgressours,* to wit, that break Gods laws, & abuse their mouths to evil speaking, *shall eat violence,* that is, shall for their violence & cruelty both in word and deed be requited with violence, namely, with such bitter miseries as they would never endure, but that they should come upon them with unresistable violence. See the Notes chap. 1. 31. and 10. 6.

Verf. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life, &c.*] That is, He that is sparing in his speech, *slow to speak,* as the Apostle calls it, Jam. 1. 19. scarce ever speaking without good deliberation, doth thereby avoid many deadly dangers: *but he that openeth his mouth wide,* that is, the man that is full of talk, & will out with any thing that comes into his mind, shall have *destruction,* that is, his tongue many times cuts his own throat. Because the mouth in man is, as the gates are in a city, with care to be observed both for the opening and shutting of it, especially in dangerous times, hence is this expression of keeping the mouth: see the Note also Psal. 141. 3.

Verf. 4. *The soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*] See the Note chap. 11. 25.

Verf. 5. *A righteous man hateth lying, &c.*] To wit, both in himself and others, and that in it self, as looking upon it as a loathsome abominable thing; & therefore he is revered and honoured by those that know him; his name is sweet amongst men as a precious ointment: for this is implied in the following opposite clause, *but a wicked man is loathsome and cometh to shame;* to wit, for his lying. But that which is intended in these words is this, that though such a man be loathed and reproached by every man when his lying comes to be discovered, and though he be brought to that shame, that scarce any body will believe any thing he saith, yet he will not leave his lying, but loves it still.

Verf. 16. *Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way, &c.*] It secures him from being drawn out of the way by any temptations, and defends him against all slanders and dangers whatsoever: *but wickedness overthroweth the sinner;* that is, it carrieth him violently into sin, so that he hath no power to avoid it, it overturns

his designs, and at last utterly destroyes him. See the Notes Psal. 35. 21. & chap. 10. 29. and 11. 3, 5, 6.

Verf. 7. *There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.* Many severall expositions are given of this Proverb: as, that many a man that hath nothing raiseth himself to great riches, and that others that have great riches bring themselves to poverty; or, that there are some that being poor make themselves rich by being well contented with their condition, and that there are others again that being rich make themselves poor by their covetousnesse, being as greedy as if they had nothing, and scarce willing at any time to spend any thing upon themselves; or, which seems the best, that many a man that is a very beggar makes a vaunting shew of very great riches, (see the Note chap. 12. 9.) and that on the other side many a rich miser pretends himself to be very poor. And this is also most true concerning mens spirituall estates.

Verf. 8. *The ransom of a mans life are his riches; but the poor heareth not rebuke.* The aim of this Proverb seems to be, the setting forth of the commodities & discommodities both of riches & poverty, and to shew that even in this regard the rich are in a worse condition than the poor. The discommodities of riches that seem to be implied in these words are these: 1. that because of their riches they are the bolder to transgresse the law, to gather wealth by unjust means, and to be injurious to others, & so do many times bring themselves into trouble, and not seldom even to the endangering of their lives: & 2. that however their lives are usually in danger, either by reason of thieves & robbers, or of false accusers, tyrants & oppressours. But then this commodity the rich man hath by his riches, that they will help at such a dead life, herewith he can stop the mouths of those he is in danger of, and so ransom his life, and procure his peace, as it was with those Jer. 41. 8. *Stay ye not: say they to Ishmael) for we have treasures in the field, &c. so he forbore, and stood abeyant:* see the Note chap. 10. 15. But then on the other side, the discommodities of the poor are very many: only this commodity there is in poverty, that the poor heareth not rebuke; so far he is from being in danger of his life, that he shall not be so much as rebuked or reviled: to wit, either 1. because the poor man is not in danger to be rebuked for his ill-gotten goods, as the rich man is; or else 2. because his poverty will make him afraid to offend, or to be injurious to others, and so freeth him from trouble; or 3. because there is nothing to be gotten from him, & therefore neither robbers nor false accusers will meddle with him; or 4. because even out of pity, when they have offended, men are ready to passe by the poor, not taking any notice of their offences, yea sometimes out of a slighting of them, not looking upon them as any way considerable.

Verf. 9. *The light of the righteous rejoiceth &c.* That is, The prosperity, the comfort, the knowledge & holy conversation of the righteous shineth brightly & gloriously, increasing still more & more, even as the sun doth (from whence the similitude seems to be taken) thus rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race, Pro. 19. 5. & so shall doe unto eternity: see the Note chap. 4. 18, 19. Because those things that flourish do seem as it were to rejoyce, as the Poet saith concerning the flourishing of all the fruits

in the spring. *Omnia nunc videmus, etiam formosissimus annus*, and withall, because the shining light of the righteous (according to the foregoing Exposition) is matter of much joy both to themselves & others, therefore it is said that *the light of the righteous rejoiceth*; see the Note Psal. 97. 11. But *the lamp of the wicked shall be put out*; that is, the prosperity of the wicked, which compared with the prosperous estate of the righteous, is but as a candle in comparison of the sun-shine, shall either be violently put out on a sodain, or else by degrees consume away to nothing, and so shall end in sorrow; see the Notes Job 18. 5, 6. & 21. 17. Yet so shall it also be with the shew which the wicked sometimes make of knowledge & holiness, it shall come to nothing. This I conceive is the full meaning of the Proverb. Yet some understand the first clause, *the light of the righteous rejoiceth*, of the peoples rejoicing in the exaltation & prosperity of the righteous; for which see the Note chap. 11. 10.

Verf. 10. *Only by pride cometh contention; &c.* That is, pride tends only to contention; or, pride is the chief, & in a manner the only cause of contention; or rather, pride alone is usually the cause of contentions amongst men; though there be no injury done him, nor no cause of quarrelling, yet the proud man, meerly out of pride, will take some occasion or other to quarrell with men, either by being injurious to them, or by taking some offence causelessly; & all this because he is foolish, (see the Note chap. 11. 2.) and yet withall thinks no man so wise as himself, & so will hearken to no counsell & advice of others, either for the preventing of contentions, or the making of peace: which last is implied by the following clause, *but with the well-advised is wisdom*; that is, the humble are wise, and so will do nothing rashly, but upon mature deliberation, & will be ready to hearken to the advice of others, and by that means they are careful to avoid contentions, and are all for peace.

Verf. 11. *Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished.* That is, that which is gotten by deceit & wickedness; (see the Note Job. 31. 5.) as particularly that which is gotten by any vain course of life, which no way tends to the good either of Church or commonwealth, such as that of stage-players, jugglers, wandering fidlers, &c. or by the abusing of any lawfull art in any unlawfull way.

Verf. 12. *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.* That is, it is a singular comfort & restorative to such a grieved fainting soul; even as when a man ready to faint for hunger lights upon some fruit-tree, and eating of the fruit thereof is refreshed and revived. But see the Note also chap. 3. 18.

Verf. 13. *Who so despiseth the word shall be destroyed, &c.* To wit, Not every one that disobeyeth it; (for thus even David was charged with despising the commandment of the Lord, 2 Sam. 12. 9.) but he that doth wholly slight & despise it in his heart: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded; that is, he that feareth, not punishment only, but sin itself.

Verf. 14. *The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.* That is, say some Expositors, The law of God is to wise men a means of life, in that it teacheth them to avoid all sin, which are the snares of death. And some

to understand it of good laws made by wise magistrates. But it is better taken so be the same with that, chap. 10. 1. (for which) see the Note there) namely, that the instruction of the wise is a means of life to others; and that it refresheth men, as spring waters do those that are hot and thirsty.

Vers. 15. *Good understanding giveth favour, &c.*] That is, That which may be truly called *good understanding*, which is, not the wisdom of the world, but the wisdom that is taught in the word of God, procureth men favour both with God and man; & that because it causeth men in all things to behave themselves wisely, to live justly & holily; and to be gentle, and ready to do good unto all men, by instructing them, or any other ways; all which makes their way of life plain and comfortable: for all this is implied in the following clause; *but the way of transgressours*, to wit, by reason of their folly, is hard, that is, it is offensive to men, as a hard rugged way is to them that walk in it; or it is harsh & fierce, and untractable, cruell and hard-hearted, & so it causeth them to be hated of those amongst whom they live; or it is *hard*, that is, it is, through their wickednesse, and their being hated of God and man, full many times of trouble and miseries.

Vers. 16. *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge, &c.*] That is, he doeth all things prudently, with good advisednesse & deliberation, still considering with himself, whether that which he is moved or inclined to doe be, in regard of circumstances of time and place, convenient to be done or no: *but a fool layeth open his folly*; to wit, by the rashnesse and folly of his actions: see the Note chap. 12. 23.

Vers. 17. *A wicked messenger falleth into mischief, &c.*] By a *wicked messenger* may be meant either one that is sent forth and employed in any wicked businesse, or else rather (as appears by the opposite clause) such an one as doth not faithfully manage the message or charge he is sent about. The first of these *falleth*, as it were suddenly & unexpectedly, *into mischief*, through the just vengeance of God upon him; the other also by incurring the displeasure of those that sent him, who accordingly will be sure to punish him for the hurt he hath done by his unfaithfulness. *But a faithfull ambassadour is health*; to wit, by composing of differences, and removing of offences, & otherwise doing good both to those to whom, and also to those by whom and for whose sake he is sent; and so also by procuring good consequently to himself, not only in the peace of conscience he enjoyeth, but also in the reward he shall be sure to receive both from God and man. See the Note chap. 12. 18.

Vers. 18. *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction, &c.*] Shame is joyned with poverty, because poor men do usually lye under shame and contempt, especially when men become poor by their own obstinacy; & withall to shew the folly of such men, that being causelessly ashamed to be instructed, do by despising instruction bring true shame upon themselves: *but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured*; that is, he shall be enriched, and so advanced to places of honour; or, he shall be honoured, though he may be poor.

Vers. 19. *The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.*] That is, they abhorre it both in themselves and others. The words of this proverb are all considered apart by themselves easie enough: but what

what reference the two branches thereof have the one to the other, and so what the drift & aim of the Proverb is, it is hard to say; there being many severall ways wherein it may be understood, & most of them may seem equally probable: As 1. that in the first clause the ground is laid down why it is said in the second clause, *that it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil*; when mens desires are satisfied, it doth much delight the soul; & therefore it is that fools abhorre to depart from evil, because they take such delight in satisfying their carnall lusts & desires: Or 2. that in the first clause we are told what is delightfull to wicked men, and in the second what is hatefull & displeasing to them: though the things they desire be never such vain toys, & foolish & sinfull pleasures, yet they are exceedingly delighted to enjoy what they desire; but on the other side, it is as grievous & irksome to them to be taken off from their sinfull vanities: Or 3. that the first clause must be understood concerning the desires of the wise and righteous, (which is implied by the opposition of the second clause, which is concerning wicked fools) to wit, that wise & holy men take great delight in the satisfying of their just & righteous desires, which are alwaies to doe good & avoid evil; whereas wicked men take delight only in sin, and so *it is an abomination to them to depart from evil*: Or 4. that the difference betwixt the righteous and the wicked is set forth in this, that though the righteous do many times wait long ere their desires be accomplished, yet when they are accomplished, they yield them much refreshing delight, (according to what was said before vers. 12. for which see the Note there;) but that fools, on the other side, are all for their present enjoyments, & therefore they cannot abide to depart from evil, in hope of any good or happinesse they might enjoy hereafter: Or 5. that the first clause is meant of Gods satisfying mens desires, to wit, that when men desire any thing of God, & he doeth it for them, this is most sweet to mens souls; & that the second clause shews that wicked men must needs be strangers to this joy, because they abhor to depart from evil, and God will only *fulfill the desires of them that fear him*, Psal. 145. 19.

Vers. 20. *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* That is, he will be tainted with their wicked waies, and so shall share with them in their punishments.

Vers. 23. *Much food is in the tillage of the poor, &c.* To wit, because they are usually skilfull in husbandry, & laborious, and are wont to till their ground themselves, and so having also but a little tillage it is the better done, and by that means through Gods blessing it yields them the better crop; which accordingly they make use of for the food of themselves and their families. And thus the drift of this clause is to shew, that even the poorest sort of people, if they be diligent, may have enough to live on; see the Note above vers. 11. *But there is that is destroyed for want of judgement*; that is, there are some that have fair estates, and yet perish in a manner, because they have not food to eat, (as is implied in the opposite clause:) to wit, either because they want judgement to till their ground, (the prophet calls it the husbandmans *discretion*, Isa. 28. 26. *His God doth instruct him to discretion*) and so they commit the tilling of their ground to lazy, negli-

gent, unfaithfull servants; or because they want judgement to husband and manage what they have in a right manner, and so many times all is lost by their folly and wickednesse. See the Note Psal. 112. 3. *boon boon od yam i dionle*
 Vers. 25. *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul, &c.* To wit, in that through Gods blessing upon his labours, he shall alwaies have a sufficiency whereon to live; 1. he is still contented with what estate God is pleased to afford him; and 2. he will comfortably live upon that he hath, and not pinch his own belly: *but the belly of the wicked shall want;* which may imply, 1. that such men, because of their wickednesse & unjust gains, shall not have so much as bread to eat; 2. that they are alwaies insatiably greedy to get, & yet can scarce allow themselves necessary food; and 3. that when they do eat, through Gods curse upon them, their food doth neither satisfy their appetites, nor nourish their bodies. Hos. 4. 10. Hag. 1. 6.

CHAP. XIV.

Vers. 1. *A wise woman buildeth her house, &c.* Though this might be understood literally of her provident care to repair her dwelling-house betimes, so soon as any where she espies any decayes in it, (and so the like may be said on the contrary of the foolish woman in the opposite clause) yet I rather conceive that both clauses must be taken figuratively: *A wise woman buildeth her house;* that is, she upholds & enlargeth her family and estate, to wit, by her prudent education & government of her children and family, by her diligence & good huswifery, but especially by her piety, which procureth Gods blessing both on her and hers; see the Notes Exod. 2. 21. 2 Sam. 7. 11. and Psal. 127. 1: *but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands;* as if he had said, *with both hands earnestly,* as it is Mich. 7. 3. that is, she undoeth all, to wit, by her pride, idlenesse, and ill huswifery, by her riotousnesse; and by neglecting her family and household affairs, and in generall by drawing the curse of God upon her and hers by her wickednesse.

Vers. 3. *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride, &c.* To wit, 1. because foolish men out of the pride of their hearts are wont with their insolent, scornful and opprobrious language, to smite in a manner all they come near, laying about them like mad men, yea sometimes by their presumptuous speeches to strike at God himself, according to that Psal. 73. 9. *they set their mouth against the heavens, &c.* for as the almighty word of Christs command, whereby he executes judgments upon wicked men, is called *the rod of his mouth*, Isa. 11. 4. because thereby the men of the earth are smitten to their utter ruine; so the slanderous and insolent language of foolish men is here called *a rod* in their mouths, (as elsewhere it is called *the scourge of the tongue*, Job 5. 2.) because much pain & mischief redounds to men that are smitten thereby. And 2. because such foolish men are usually beaten, as it were, with this rod of their own mouths, in that they provoke God thereby to punish them, & in that those men that are smitten by them are many times thereby provoked to fall foul upon them, and so they doe as it were put a rod or staffe into other mens hands for the beating of themselves. Yea and ob-

servable it is, which one of our best Expositours hath noted in this place, to wit, that this phrase, *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride*, may seem also to imply, 1. the so daign punishment of such men, in that the proud & presumptuous words they utter do presently become a rod for the punishing of themselves; and 2. the reproachfulness of their punishment, in that, notwithstanding the pride and loftinesse of their spirits, they are threatned, not with a sword, but with a rod or a staffe, even as amongst men the baser sort are usually threatned with being caned or cudgelled: whence it was that Goliaths spirit did so well with disdain against David, 1 Sam. 17. 43. *Am I a dog, saith he, that thou comest to me with staves?* As for the following clause, *but the lips of the wise shall preserve them*, the meaning must needs be, either that such men are preserved from the hurt of flanderous and reproachfull speeches, by their discreet answers & defences; or that by avoiding such proud presumptuous speeches, they are secured both from the wrath of God, and from provoking others to smite them; and on the contrary, by their humble and gentle and courteous language, do procure the favour of those amongst whom they live. But see the Note also chap. 12. 6.

Vers. 5. *A faithfull witnessse will not lie, &c.* To wit, in his private speeches at other times: *but a false witnessse will utter lies*; that is, he that hath falsified his faith in a cause of publick judgement, will make no conscience of lying in his private discourse; see the Note chap. 12. 17: and therefore he that would be accounted a faithfull witnessse must alwaies make conscience of lying, because otherwise he will not be believed when he speaks truth. Or, A faithfull witnessse, having witnessed the truth, he will stand to it; whereas a false witnessse will easily be brought to unsay what he hath testified. But I rather conceive the plain meaning of the Proverb to be this; *A faithfull witnessse will not lie*, that is, He that is indeed & out of conscience faithfull in bearing witnessse, will not for fear or favour, for any threatnings or rewards, be drawn to lie, as by concealing any part of the truth he should utter, or dealing deceitfully any way in his testimony; *but a false witnessse will utter lies*, that is, a false man called to bear witnessse will make no conscience at all of lying.

Vers. 6. *A scorner, &c.* See the Notes chap. 1. 22. & Psal. 1. 1: *seeketh wisdom*; that is, that knowledge whereby men become wise unto salvation (for even the worst of men may pretend in their way to be carefull for their souls; & some wicked men in a formal way attend upon the means of grace; especially in the time of any great calamity, or at the hour of death; then they would repent, and get an interest in Christ, & pray earnestly to God for it:) *and findeth it not*; to wit, either because he seeks it in a way of his own carnal wisdom, & not, where only it is to be found, in the word of God & the ministry of the word; or because he seeks it not in a right manner, diligently, seriously & sincerely, not out of love to God or goodnesse, but meerly for his own glory, or some other outward respects, and so the continuing wickednesse of his heart hinders the gaining of true wisdom, & makes him like those 2 Tim. 3. 7. that are *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*; or because having long despised the tenders of wisdom & grace, God regards not his desires & prayers in the time of his ex-

tremities: *but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth;* to wit, that understandeth his own defects and infirmities, & the way wherein wisdom is to be certainly found; and that hath already attained some true knowledge. But see the Note chap. 2. 9.

Verf. 7. *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*] That is, either 1. as soon as he begins to talk wickedly & profanely; that thou maiest not by staying with him receive hurt by him, or at least seem to approve his wickedness: or 2. when thou thereby perceivest his folly; & that because fools are alwaies self-conceited and obstinate, so that no counsell or reproof of thine will doe any good upon him; and for thy self, no good can be expected, but much hurt rather, from the society of such men.

Verf. 8. *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, &c.*] Two particulars are implied in this: as namely that *the wisdom of the prudent is*, 1. to know himself; to endeavour to know, & thereby to come truly to know whether he be in the state of nature or grace, whether the course of life wherein he lives be such as will bring him to heaven or no, and so thereupon to order his whole conversation aright; & 2. to weigh well every particular action of his, not to undertake any thing rashly, but to understand aright how he ought to behave himself, and what he ought to doe, and to make sure that he doeth nothing but what becomes a wise man, & one that fears God. And thus hereby is implied also, that true wisdom doth not consist so much in contemplation & knowledge, as in the practice of what we know; not so much in prying into other mens waies, in reproving & teaching other men, as in looking carefully to our own waies; and especially (for this I conceive is the main drift of the Proverb) that it consists not in that wisdom & policy of worldly men, in being cunning to deceive others, but in taking care that they do not deceive and destroy their own souls: for this is hinted in the following clause, *but the folly of fools is deceit;* that is, that which the world counts a high pitch of wisdom, but is indeed *the folly of fools*, is that they are so cunning & crafty to deceive those they have any dealing with, and understand all the mysteries & depths of Satan herein, not considering what the issue of these courses will be; or thus, *the folly of fools is deceit*, that is, the wickedness of wicked men, that never mind their waies, but give up themselves to live after their own hearts lusts, proceeds merely from their folly & ignorance, however wise they may think themselves, and tends to the deceiving of themselves, beguiling them both in the opinion of what they are, and in the expectation of what they hope for: see the Note chap. 11. 18.

Verf. 9. *Fools make a mock at sin, &c.*] See the Note chap. 10. 23: *but amongst the righteous is favour.* It is very hard to say how this second clause doth answer the first; and hence it is that so many different expositions are given of this Proverb by severall Interpreters. 1. That wicked men make a sport of wronging and abusing their neighbours; but the righteous are so farre from this, that they beare unfeigned good will one towards another, & are still ready to shew any favour they are able to those with whom they converse. Or 2. that wicked men make a mock of sin, as if there were no danger in it, & so never seek to appease Gods displea-

pleasure, & to procure his favour, & that by this means they usually draw Gods wrath upon themselves; whereas the righteous are afraid of sin, & if they sin, are very carefull to seek reconciliation with God, & so they enjoy the love & favour of God. Or 3. that wicked men make a pastime of sin, therein lies all their jollity & delight; whereas the righteous, on the other side, take as great complacency and delight in their assurance of Gods favour, & in their loving fellowship and friendly society one with another. Or 4. that wicked men are wont to make a sport of other mens sins, & to report them abroad in a way of derision and flouting at them, & by this means provoke men to hate them, and to be angry with them; but the righteous, quite contrary, do compassionate their brethren when they sin, and are favourable and gentle towards them, seeking to hide and excuse them as far as lawfully they may; and by this means they themselves find favour also both with God and man. And indeed there is not any one of these expositions but hath much probability in it.

Verf. 10. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*] The meaning of this Proverb seems to be this in generall; that the sorrows & joys that are within the heart of a man no man can know but himself only: and that not only because men may cunningly dissemble both their griefs and joyes, but also because their griefs and joyes are such that they are not able to expresse them; & if they do undertake to relate what they feel inwardly, yet it is not possible that others should conceive of it, as they inwardly feel it.

Verf. 11. *The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*] That is, Though the estate & family & posterity of the righteous be but, in comparison of that of the wicked, as a little weak tottering tabernacle, in comparison of a stately strong-built house; yet shall this estate, a family and posterity of the righteous prosper and encrease, when that of the wicked shall be utterly ruined. See the Note chap. 12. 7.

Verf. 12. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, &c.*] Some understand this thus; that many men think, that to live in plenty, and to enjoy all variety of pleasures and delights, is the only happy & desirable life. But by *right* here I conceive is not meant that which is delightfull & desirable, but that which is blamelesse & just. And though there be no evil way, wherein wicked men are not wont, upon some pretence or other, to flatter themselves, according to that chap. 12. 15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes;* yet because there are some grosse waies of wickednesse, which are so directly against the very light of nature, that the worst of men cannot but judge them to be evil, therefore I rather think that Solomons aim here is, to shew that there are some waies, which though they be contrary to the will of God, & therefore hatefull in his sight; yet men are apt to think that they are just & right, and pleasing to God: and that either because they have some appearance of goodnesse in them; as it is in will-worships, and insurrections against a lawfull magistrate abusing his power, & opposing the true religion, & many such like waies: or because the gain & pleasure they may find in those waies, & haply the great successe which God may give them therein, doth many times bribe their judgements, and makes them call evil good, and dark-

nesse light. *But the end thereof are the waies of death*; that is, in the conclusion, if they persevere therein to the end, they will be found to be waies that do certainly bring men to eternall death and destruction. And besides, in that it is said that *the end of this way, which seemeth right to a man, is*, not the way, but *the waies of death*, this also may be hinted to us, that one such evil way of errour and sin doth usually lead men into many more, till at last it brings them to eternall destruction.

Verf. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heavinesse.*] Because excessive laughter doth naturally cause pain in the body, and maketh the heart to be afterwards the heavier, therefore some Expositours conceive that Solomon doth in these words allude hereto. But that which this Proverb seems to hold forth to us may be, 1. that as in outward prosperity there is usually somewhat of affliction that goeth along with it, and accordingly with all naturall joyes there is still some mixture of sorrow, even as there is still some lees in the sweetest wines; so likewise great prosperity is usually followed with some great affliction, and so great joys do usually end in great sorrows: 2. that when men do counterfeite mirth, & labour to drive sorrow from their hearts, it will not be, there will be still some secret gripings of grief even in their laughter, & at last their sorrow will return upon them again, and so that mirth will end in heavinesse: and 3. that it is thus especially with wicked men, whose mirth is usually mingled with terrours and tortures of conscience, and at last is followed with Gods wrath and vengeance, and then their sorrow is pure sorrow without any allay of hope or comfort. And the drift of noting all this here is, to teach us rather to seek after those joyes that are solid and permanent, and that will cheare up the heart even in outward distresses.

Verf. 14. *The backslider in heart, &c.*] That is, The man that turns away his heart from God & his waies, and groweth dayly worse and worse; or rather, The man that falls away from those waies of holinesse and righteousness wherein he walked for a time, not slipping back only through infirmity in some particular actions, but having his heart wholly estranged from God: *shall be filled with his own waies*; that is, he that hath so soon his fill of goodnesse, shall at last have his fill of wickednesse, to wit, in the punishments of it; see the Note chap. 1. 31: *and a good man shall be satisfied from himself*; that is, from his own comforts that he feels within himself, or from his own works, which God will abundantly reward, especially in heaven, where he shall be able to desire no more then he shall have.

Verf. 15. *The simple, &c.*] See the Note Chap. 1. 4: *believeth every word*; to wit, every false report and flattery, & every fair plea of deceivers, and so is easily deceived and drawn into evil: *but the prudent man looketh well to his going*; that is, he will not take things upon trust, and so will not be drawn to do any thing, but what upon due consideration he finds he may lawfully & safely doe; see the Note above verf. 8. It is indeed said 1 Cor. 13. 7. that *charity believeth all things*; but the meaning of that is only, that charity teacheth men not to be causelessly suspicious, but to interpret all things to the best, unless there be apparent reason to the

the contrary; and there is a great deal of difference betwixt this goodnesse of charity, and the lightnesse of credulity.

Verf. 16. *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil, &c.*] That is, when such a man seeth Gods judgments executed upon men, or foreseeth any evil approaching, whether it be by the warning that is before-hand given him, or otherwise, he will be afraid, and so wisely decline the evil feared; or rather, he will be afraid of Gods displeasure, and the punishment whereof he apprehends himself in danger, & so will forsake his sins, as the cause of those evils: *but the fool rageth, and is confident;* that is, he rageth against those that reprove him, and tell him of the evil that is coming upon him; or, like a mad man, he breaks out into all manner of outrageous wickednesse, & furiously proceeds from sin to sin, and so rusheth upon the pikes of Gods displeasure, being as the Apostle Jude speaks, verf. 13. *as raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame*, and yet is confident that all shall be well with him.

Verf. 17. *He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly, &c.*] That is, he usually speaketh and doeth many absurd things, many things that are hurtfull to himself; and hereby he maketh himself a laughing-stock to men; yea such a man for his folly is rather to be pitied then hated: *and a man of wicked devices is hated;* that is, he that concealeth his anger, carrying all fair outwardly, but inwardly plotting revenge severall waies, is usually hated as a mischievous person. The still malicious man is far worse then the man that is halty of spirit.

Verf. 18. *The simple inherit folly, &c.*] The grounds of this expression may be these: 1. that the folly of simple wicked men is bred and born with them, it descends to them as an inheritance, by naturall generation from the loins of their parents: 2. that it is proper and naturall to them in all things to behave themselves foolishly; there is nothing so foolish & ridiculous but they will embrace it, nor so absurd and wicked but they will doe it; though they pretend to seek after knowledge, yet it will not be, though they be ever learning, yet they will never come to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. 3. 7: 3. that they rejoyce in their folly, as men do in their inheritance, and will by no means part with it; they are as wise as their forefathers, and they are resolved to be no wiser: and 4. that folly in due time will certainly be the fruit & reward of their sillinesse and wickednesse; all their great hopes will deceive them, & folly at last will be their recompence, to wit, when the punishments of God shall fall upon them, & in particular shame and reproach: which seems to be implied by the opposition of the following clause, *but the prudent are crowned with knowledge;* that is, they by diligent searching after true wisdom attain sound knowledge, which is an honour and glory to them; a means many times of their advancement here in this world, but alwaies a means of bringing them to a crown of glory hereafter.

Verf. 19. *The evil bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*] To wit, as suitors are wont to wait at the gates of great men, bowing themselves before them, when they come out unto them; which shews that this is meant here of Gods exalting the righteous in regard of their outward condition, and the wicked crouching before them in that respect: though it be true too, that many times wicked men are forced by their own consciences to reverence and

respect the righteous, even merely for those eminent gifts and graces, that admirable wisdom and piety which they discern in them, and sometimes in an humble submissive manner to seek unto them for their counsell and prayers.

Verf. 21. *He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth, &c.*] That is, He that so slighteth and vilifies his poor neighbour, that he relieves him not in his wants, shall find by his punishments that he did therein greatly offend God; though the world may judge otherwise of it, yet by experience he shall find it so: & therefore he is a wretched unhappy man. For that this is implied is evident by the opposite clause, *but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he*; to wit, because he doeth that which is pleasing to God.

Verf. 22. *Do they not erre that devise evil? &c.*] That is, They do unquestionably erre. And two waies this may be understood: 1. that they who sin not of infirmity, but do advisedly plot mischief against men, are quite out of the way of life eternall; yea, as some adde, though they never bring it to passe, but only devise it: or 2. that they that devise evil against others do usually misse of that which they aim at, and bring evil upon themselves. *But mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good*: see the Note 2 Sam. 15. 20.

Verf. 24. *The crown of the wise is their riches, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, wisdom, which is *the crown of the wise*, is also *their riches*. But doubtlesse Solomon speaks here of outward riches, and saith that these are *the crown of the wise*, that is, they are an ornament & an honour to them: to wit, 1. because their wealth is many times obtained by their wisdom and piety: 2. because men will honour & admire them and their wisdom the more for their riches; whereas the wisdom of poor men is usually disregarded, in rich men it shall be sure to be highly extolled: 3. because the wise being rich have the greater advantage and opportunity to manifest their wisdom & piety: and 4. especially, because the wise having the command of their riches, do to their great glory use them well, for the advancement of Gods glory, for their own spirituall and eternall benefit, and for the good of others. *But the foolishnesse of fools is folly*; that is, be they poor or be they rich, they will shew themselves fools, & their folly is all the ornament they have to honour them. As an ape will be an ape, though men put him into a golden coat; so a wicked Nabal will shew himself a fool, though he have never so great riches, & so will live and die with contempt and dishonour: yea the richer such men are, the more wicked and foolish they will be, and the more they will discover their wickednesse & folly; because they will trust in their riches, and abuse them exceedingly to the dishonour of God, and to the hurt both of themselves and others. This, I conceive, is the full meaning of this Proverb. Yet some make this only to be the meaning of the last clause, that *the foolishnesse of fools*, that is, of wicked men, *is folly*, that is, folly indeed; there is no folly like unto that folly.

Verf. 25. *A true wisnesse delivereth souls, &c.*] That is, by testifying the truth he often delivereth many innocent men from those dangers wherein they were for their estates, or otherwise by some false accusation; or, he *delivereth souls*, that is, the lives of men, when through false accusations they were in danger of death:

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see the Note chap. 12. 6. Yea in delivereth any one man from such dangers, it may be truly said that he *delivereth souls*, because all that have their livelyhood by him are thereby also delivered. To which some adde also, that even by bearing witness against malefactours, a faithfull witnessse may be truly said to deliver souls, because the cutting off such mischievous persons tends to the preservation of many. *But a deceitfull witnessse speaketh lies*, and so destroyeth souls: see the Note above vers. 5. and chap. 12. 17.

Verf. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, &c.*] That is, Whereas the fear of man doth usually work in men much faintnesse of heart & spirit, they that fear the Lord, on the contrary, are, and have just cause to be, very courageous and confident; see the Note chap. 10. 9: *and his children*, that is, say some, the children of God, or rather, the children of the man that feareth God, *shall have a place of refuge*; that is, shall be protected by God in times of danger.

Verf. 27. *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, &c.*] That is, it is a constant never-failing means to make men live holily and comfortably here, & to bring them to life eternall hereafter: see the Notes chap. 10. 11. and 13. 14.

Verf. 28. *In the multitude of the people is the kings honour, &c.*] And consequently his strength & safety also, as is implied in the following clause, *but in the want of people is the destruction of the princes*; that is, it tends to his dishonour & contempt, and so also to his ruine. And the ground of both these is, because a numerous people doth not only yield great revenues to a Prince, & when occasion is, mighty armies for his defence, but is also a very probable signe that such a Prince is wise & just & mercifull in his government, and doth maintain peace and piety amongst them, seeing such a way of government doth of it self tend to the encrease of the people; & besides God doth usually blesse good kings with a great people: But then where there is *want of people*, the contrary may be said in every regard.

Verf. 29. *He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding, &c.*] To wit, because much wisdom is required for the subduing of mens corrupt passions; that are so hardly tamed: *but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly*; that is, he discovereth himself to be a man of great folly; or he maketh his folly conspicuous that all men may see it, as things lift up are the more easily seen by many: but see the Note above vers. 17.

Verf. 30. *A sound heart is the life of the flesh, &c.*] This may be spoken in allusion to the heart in a mans body, & so the full meaning of the words may be this: that as when that principall part of mans body, the heart, is sound & incorrupt, it makes the whole body lively & healthfull; so when the mind is *sound*, that is, free from all sinfull passions, which are the morall sicknesses and distempers of the soul, & particularly from envy, (as the opposite clause implyeth) even this also, through Gods blessing, & the quiet and joy which it works in those that have it, Prov. 17. 22. doth render the whole body vigorous & healthfull, and so to appear outwardly, and consequently it lengthens mens lives; yea it hath this effect in those that are of the weakest & tenderest constitution: for this some think may be implied in the word *flesh*. *But envy the rottenness of the bones*; as if he had said, A rotten heart full of envy doth, on the contrary, waste and consume the

strongest bodies: see the Notes chap. 12. 4. and Job 5. 2.

Verf. 31. *He that oppresseth the poor, &c.*] That is, that any way wrongs him, though it be but by neglecting to relieve him, out of a base esteem that he hath of him, not regarding though he perish in his wanes, (for that this is implied the opposite clause sheweth) *reproacheth his maker*: to wit, 1. because it is a wrong to the Creatour, when his creature is wronged, especially a man that is made after Gods own image, which the poor man is, as well as the rich: 2. because it is God that hath made him poor, and the oppressing of those that God hath put into a poor condition, is a base perverting of the wise providence of God, in making some rich & some poor, which God hath done for many holy ends and purposes; and it imports as much as if one should think, that God made them poor, that the rich might crush and oppress them: 3. because by oppressing the poor he doth as it were set himself at defiance against God, who hath promised to protect them; or at least carrieth himself as if he thought that God could not or would not maintain their cause against him. *But he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor*; that is, he that hath a desire to honour God, will shew mercy to the poor; or, he that sheweth mercy to the poor, doth thereby honour God; to wit, 1. in that he is carefull to obey Gods command herein; 2. in that he relieves those for whom God hath undertaken to provide, and so God is honoured in the accomplishment of his promises; 3. in that he relieves them as Gods creatures, and made after his image, and so God takes it as done to himself; and 4. in that this argues that he reverenceth the wise providence of God in mingling rich and poor together.

Verf. 32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickednesse, &c.*] That is, for his wickednesse, or in the very act of his wickednesse; or, his wickednesse is the very outward means of his ruine. And that Solomon means here the wicked mans being *driven away* in his death is evident by the opposite clause, wherein he mentions the death of the righteous; see the Note also Job. 18. 18. Accordingly therefore the full drift of this expression may be to imply, 1. that the wicked are many times suddenly & unexpectedly and violently hurried away out of this world, where because they live in pleasure, they would by their good will live for ever; and hereto also agree those expressions elsewhere, Luke 12. 20. *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee*, and Job 27. 8. *what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?* 2. that when God begins to raise the storms of his displeasure against wicked men, they are no way able to free themselves, but are driven away, as dust or smoke or chaff is driven away by the wind, & so sent packing to their place; see the Note Psal. 1. 4: if they seem to escape for a time, yet God doth so follow them on with his judgments, that he never leaves till he hath driven them into the pit of destruction: and 3. that wicked men are driven away by death, not only from their present enjoyments, but also from all their hopes either for this life or that which is to come. *But the righteous hath hope in his death*; to wit, because death it self is a great advantage to them, & the spirit of God cheers up their hearts in their greatest agonies with a hopefull expectation of their glory hereafter. I know some Expositours understand the first clause, either of wicked mens being driven away from

from sin to sin by the violence of their corrupt lusts & affections; or of their disappointment in general, that they are usually driven away from the accomplishment of their wicked designs, yea that nothing succeeds well with them. And so likewise some understand the second clause, either of the righteous mans hope in the most desperate dangers, even when he walks, *through the valley of the shadow of death*, as David expresseth it, Psal. 23. 4. (for which see the Note Job 3. 5;) or else, that *the righteous hath hope in his death*, that is, the wicked mans, he hopes that God will in time cut him off, and that then it will be better with the righteous. But the first exposition is, I conceive, that which Solomon intended.

Verf. 33. *Wisdome resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding; &c.*] That is, He that is truly an understanding man will be sure to store up holy & heavenly wisdom in his heart, and when he hath gotten it, he will as carefully preserve it as a precious treasure; see the Note Psal. 119. 11: there wisdom constantly resides as in her own house, and from thence they that desire it may fetch it; for thence she doth upon all just occasions manifest her self: which last is implied by the following opposite clause, *but that which is in the midst of fools is made known*; that is, nothing but folly dwells in such mens hearts, and that themselves do continually proclaim. Or (which is farre the most probable) *Wisdome resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding*, that is, A wise man can and doth usually conceal his wisdom; he will not indiscreetly or vain-gloriously utter what he knows: *but that which is in the midst of fools is made known*; that is, such men will be babbling whatever they know, be it good or bad; in it is, & out it must, according to that Hebrew proverb, *One farthing in an empty pitcher will make a great noise*; and so they will be sure to make known their folly: see the Notes chap. 10. 14, and 12. 13.

Verf. 34. *Righteousnesse exalteth a nation, &c.*] To wit, because when a people is for the generality religious & righteous, this is both in it self a glory & an honour to them, & also a means to bring them into a flourishing condition in every regard, and so thereby they become renowned: *but sin is a reproach to any people*; to wit, both in it self, and by means of the calamities and ruine it brings upon them.

Verf. 35. *The kings favour is toward a wise servant, but his wrath is ag ainst him that causeth shame.*] To wit, that by his foolish carriage of himself in his place, makes his Prince ashamed, that he hath entrusted his businesse with such an one; according to that, Isa. 22. 8. *then the charriots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lords house*: see the Note also chap. 10. 5.

CHAP. XV.

Verf. 1. *Soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger.*] That is, they both kindle anger where there was none before, and make it flame higher and higher where it was before.

Verf. 2. *The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, &c.*] That is, aptly and reasonably, so as may be most for the good and profit of those with whom they converse: *but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishnesse*; see the Note chap. 12. 13.

Verf. 4. *A wholesome tongue, &c.*] That is, A tongue that is in it self sound, and free from those morall sicknesses and distempers that are naturally found in the tongues of men, & that doth accordingly utter those things which may be for the good & health of others, (for which see the Note chap. 12. 18:) *is a tree of life;* that is, a means of life both to the speaker & the hearers; see the Notes chap. 3. 18. and 11. 30. and 13. 12: *but perversnesse therein is a breach in the spirit;* that is, the frowardnesse and wickednesse of the tongue doth rather wound then heal the spirits of men; it makes a breach in the peace, health, & strength of mens spirits, by disturbing them, by grieving and vexing and angring them; yea many times by corrupting them it is a means of destroying their souls: and so likewise this may be extended also to the disturbance that wicked mens tongues do make in their own spirits, both in regard of the anguish which thereby they bring upon their consciences, and the pollution and disposednesse to farther sin which they work in their hearts.

Verf. 6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure, &c.*] To wit, because Gods blessing is upon them, both to encrease ~~that~~ they have already gotten in an honest way, & to preserve it to them & theirs, so that they and their children after them enjoy it with much quiet & comfort; yea besides, when the righteous hath but a little, no more it may be then a little house to hide his head in, yet this is indeed better then the treasures of the wicked, see the Note Psal. 37. 16: *but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble;* that is, by reason of many troubles, many miseries, crosses and calamities which God brings upon them, their revenues do usually waste away & come to nothing; or, if they leave any thing behind them, their children or kindred do usually quarrel & contend about it. To which may be added also, that the wicked, whether they have much or little, are never free from inward perplexity & trouble; partly through the unsatiablenesse of their covetous desires, and their toiling & afflicting themselves to get riches; partly through their continuall vexing fears & cares for the keeping of what they have, and the terrours of conscience they endure for what they have gotten unjustly, and the apprehension they have of Gods displeasure against them for their wickednesse in generall; and partly through their fretting and vexing for every losse that befalls them, they scarce ever enjoy what they have with any quiet or comfort.

Verf. 7. *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, &c.*] To wit, as the seeds-man scatters his seed: they do what they can to impart unto many that knowledge which they have stored up in their own hearts, studying within themselves how they may impart it with most advantage to others: which last is implied in the following opposite clause, *but the heart of the foolish doth not so;* that is, whatever they may pretend, their hearts being void of true knowledge, they neither can disperse knowledge with their lips, nor do they care or ever think to doe it; it is only vanity and wickednesse which their lips can disperse.

Verf. 8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*] Both sacrifices and prayers, & consequently all outward duties of Gods worship & service, are to be understood in both clauses: But yet the

the prayers of the righteous are said to be Gods delight, and the sacrifices of the wicked to be an abomination, to imply, that the services of the godly are accepted of God, though there be not therein that cost bestowed, that solemnity and pomp as is in wicked mens sacrifices, and which therefore are the only thing for which they hope to be accepted of God.

Verf. 9. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, &c.*] To wit, because the waies that he followeth are waies of wickednesse. And so this may be added as a reason of the foregoing Proverb; God therefore hateth the religious services of wicked men, because he abhors the wickednesse of their conversation. Yet by *the way of the wicked* here may be meant all the wicked mans actions, whether naturall, civill or morall, because the wicked man being under Gods wrath, nothing that he doeth can please him. *But he loveth him that followeth after righteousness;* that is, that striveth with all his might, even against the stream of his corrupt nature, to doe only that which is righteous, though he cannot attain to doe it as he desires. And thus as in the foregoing Proverb he compared the wicked and the righteous together in regard of their religious services, so here he compares them together in regard of all other the actions of their lives; shewing that the sincere desires and endeavours of the righteous, though full of weaknesse, are accepted of God, whereas all the actions of the wicked, even those that may seem most splendid and glorious, are an abomination to him.

Verf. 10. *Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way, &c.*] Some would have the meaning of these words to be this; that grievous correction is prepared of God for those, & shall certainly befall those, that forsake the way, that is, the right way, the way prescribed by the word of God. But according to our Translation (whether we read it as it is in our Bibles, *Correction is grievous, &c.* or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Instruction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way*) the meaning of the words is clearly this; that *instruction* or *correction* is irksome and displeasing to him that chuseth the way of sin, rather then the right way of holiness, or, that having gone on a while in the right way, doth afterward forsake it, & turn aside into false wicked waies; & that because reproofs and correction are displeasing in themselves to mans corrupt nature, and because men of an evil life cannot endure those that goe about to take them off from those waies that are so pleasing to flesh and bloud, & do account the strict waies of holinesse a very bondage to them. *And he that hateth reproof shall die;* that is, he shall be cut off here in a way of wrath, & shall die eternally hereafter. And the drift of Solomons joyning these two together seems to be, either 1. to imply the difference between those that are troubled at reproof & correction, and those that hate it; correction may be displeasing to men, and yet afterwards it may doe them good, but they that hate reproof shall certainly perish: or 2. rather to imply the sad effect that follows discontent against instruction or correction; naturally men are displeased with those men that thus seek their good, but they that doe thus are in the ready way to destruction, because he *that hateth reproof shall surely die.*

Verf. 11. *Hell and destruction are before the Lord, &c.*] See the Note Job. 26. 6: *how much more then the hearts of the children of men?* Now this must not be so taken,

as if it were easier for God to know some things, then it is to know other things. Only Solomon here speaks of God after the manner of men, to whom it must needs seem harder to know the state of the dead and hell, then the hearts and thoughts of men; both because hel and destruction are farther off, & though the hearts of men are deep, yet not so deep as hell; and likewise because men may by outward discoveries guesse shrewdly at the thoughts of mens hearts, whereas of hell and the state of the dead men know nothing at all but only by faith, so farre as any thing thereof is revealed in the Word.

Ver. 13. *A merry heart maketh a chearfull countenance, &c.* That is, A chearfull heart, especially when it is so upon spirituall grounds, doth usually make the whole body healthfull & vigorous, refresheth the spirits, & so consequently also it makes the countenance in particular fresh, lightsome & chearfull: *but by sorrow of the heart,* that is, by carnall & immoderate sorrow, *the spirit is broken:* that is, either 1. the mind of a man will be afflicted & dejected, the understanding and memory weakened, &c; or else 2. the vitall spirits will be dulled, which causeth frequent sighs and groans, and often brings men to such extremities that they can hardly draw their breath; and so consequently also the countenance is hereby made cloudy and sad. And thus God speaks here to us, to perswade us to take heed of such sorrow, as tender mothers are wont to speak to their children, telling them they will marre their faces with crying.

Ver. 14. *The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge, &c.* That is, A man that hath understanding seeketh knowledge with all his heart, even as a hungry man seeketh meat: which is implied in the following clause, *but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishnesse;* that is, their hearts delight in and greedily devour all kind of foolishnesse & wickednesse, as it were with open mouth; it is as meat and drink to them to satisfy their lusts, & to doe any thing that is sinfull and wicked; for which see the Notes chap. 4. 17. and Job 15. 16. They love to speak foolishly & vainly; such language and speeches are continually in their mouths, as if they fed and lived upon them: & greedy they are to hear the talk of fools, it is as delightfull to them as their food; and indeed it nourisheth their folly in them.

Ver. 15. *All the daies of the afflicted are evil, &c.* By the *afflicted* here most Expositours understand the man that is not contented with his estate; all whose days must needs be *evil*, that is, grievous, tedious & irksome to him, because he is continually fretting, & so can neither eat, nor sleep, nor follow the labours of his calling with any quiet, nor take any joy in any thing whatsoever: and so likewise in the following clause, *but he that is of a merry heart hath a continuall feast,* by the man of a merry heart they understand the man that is contented with his condition, because contentation, be a man poor or rich, must needs yield continuall delight & refreshing to him. But I see no reason why we should not take it more generally, thus, *All the daies of the afflicted are evil*, that is, as long as men lye under any heavy affliction, whether poverty or sicknesse, &c. or inward anguish and trouble of mind, they scarce enjoy a comfortable houre, which makes their lives bitter to them: *but he that is of a merry heart,* to wit, especially if it proceed from

a good conscience, and assurance of Gods love in Christ, *hath a continuall feast*; that is, he hath that which will chear him up in the midst of his afflictions and sorrows, and that will be as a feast to him, when he perhaps hath not so much as bread to eat.

Verf. 16. *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, &c.*] Which is of it self the greatest of treasures, and causeth men to enjoy that which they have with much peace & comfort: *then great treasure, and trouble therewith*; to wit, as it is usually with those that fear not the Lord, who have commonly the more trouble the greater their wealth is, either by reason of their fear of losing what they have, or their continuall toll & vexing cares about the preserving & ordering and encreasing their estates, or by reason of their terrous of conscience for their wickedness, & particularly for the unjust waies whereby they have raised their estates, and the clamours & outcries of those that have been oppressed by them, or because of the strife and contention and suits at law, which do usually attend great estates.

Verf. 17. *Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, then a stalled ox, and hatred therewith.*] This may be meant of the love or hatred, either of him that invites men to his table, or of those that sit at table together either at home or abroad, especially when mens hatred breaks forth in strife, brawling & fighting together. Yea it may be meant also of the love and hatred of God, to wit, that the courtship with Gods love, is better then the greatest dainties given by God in hatred.

Verf. 18. *A wrathfull man stirreth up strife, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 1: *but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strifes*; to wit, not only by his readinesse to reconcile others that are at variance, but also by his own backwardnesse to take exceptions causelessly, and by his patience, and wise and gentle answers and carriage, when he is really injured.

Verf. 19. *The way of the slothfull man, &c.*] That is, The way wherein the slothfull man is to go, is as an hedge of thorns, that is, as a way that is hedged up with a hedge of thorns; he apprehends it impossible that he should ever get through it: or, as a path overgrown like a hedge with thorns & briars; that is, he conceits it to be full of difficulties and dangers. Now this may be meant either 1. of any commendable work which such an one is to undertake, to wit, that he is still ready to fancy so many dangers & difficulties in it, that either he concludes that he shall never effect it, and so gives it over; or else through mere sloth it is so tedious & troublesome to him, that he goes on but creepingly, & makes no riddance of his work: or else 2. of the way of holinesse & righteousness prescribed in Gods word, to wit, that every slothfull wicked man doth either apprehend this way not only hard, but impossible to be gone, and so altogether declines it; or else judgeth it a rough and dangerous & troublesome way, wherein a man must goe as it were amongst thorns, and so it is alwaies tedious and irksome to him to do any thing that God requires him. And so likewise for the following clause, *but the way of the righteous, that is, the upright man, who is alwaies conscionably diligent in every good work he undertakes, is made plain*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, is raised

raised up as a eassey; that is, it is to him as a plain, easie, commodious way; he goes lustily and chearfully on in any work he undertakes, there being nothing hard to a willing mind. And so for the way of piety & righteousness, he finds no rub therein, nothing that is so hard and uneasy, nothing that doth offend and beat him off from it; through faith in Gods assistance and the encouragement of his hope of eternall glory, he sticks not at any difficulties or troubles therein, he proceeds therein vigorously, and with much content and delight.

Verf. 20. *A wise son maketh a glad father, &c.]* To wit, as by other things, so also particularly by his obedience & dutifull behaviour towards him: *but a foolish son despiseth his mother,* and so is a cause of much sorrow to her. But see the Note chap. 10. 1.

Verf. 21. *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom; but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.]* That is, As fools rejoycing in evil do live wickedly, see the Note chap. 10. 23; so wise men rejoycing in goodnesse do live uprightly.

Verf. 22. *Without counsell purposes are disappointed, &c.]* That is, When men in difficult and doubtfull cases will trust to their own wisdom, and will not take counsell of others, how to bring their purposes to effect, they usually come to nothing; either because apprehending some danger, and being unable to satisfy themselves therein, they give over their purposes, or because not taking a right course, they fail of effecting what they intended: *but in the multitude of counsellors,* that is, of good counsellors, (for they only deserve the name of counsellors) *they are established,* that is, both the men are encouraged to hold on in their good purposes, and their purposes are executed with good successe.

Verf. 23. *A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth, &c.]* This may be added with reference to that which was said in the foregoing Proverb concerning the benefit of asking counsell of others; and so the meaning of it seems to be this: that it is a great comfort to any man, when he hath been able to give any one good counsell, and to expresse himself in good tearms; or rather, when he perceives that the answer that he hath given to those that have asked his counsell hath proved well, when it hath been for the glory of God, and the good of his brethren, and that thereupon it hath been to them very acceptable. And the drift of this may be to shew, for the encouragement of those that are to ask advice, that giving counsell to men is a thing that most men do naturally delight in. Or else we may take this Proverb in a more generall sense; to wit, that gracious speech doth alwaies yield joy and comfort sooner or later to him that uttereth it. And accordingly we must understand the following clause, *& a word spoken in due season how good is it?* that is, counsell and instruction, & comfort given in a time of need, all circumstances, both of person, place and time, being duly observed, is very profitable and delightfull both to them to whom it is given, and to him that gives it.

Verf. 24. *The way of life is above to the wise, &c.]* That is, The way which he takes here in this world, that he may attain life eternall, is to be ever minding and seeking after those things that are above, the favour of God, and heavenly glory; and accordingly he hath his conversation in heaven, even whilst he lives here below,

below, see Phil. 3. 20. Col. 3. 1. he minds not earthly things comparatively: yea even in his worldly businesse he goeth a higher way then others, because even those things he doth in faith and obedience to God, and so he is alwaies passing on heavenward: and though his way, being thus above, is hard & difficult, as when men are climbing up hill, yet he holds on, and is still ascending higher & higher in it: the reason whereof is shewn in the following clause, *that he may depart from hell beneath*; that is, that he may escape destruction, and avoid the pit of hell, to which a sensuall course of life will certainly bring men, and whereto earthly-mindednesse doth as in a way downhill carry men headlong continually. That which I conceive therefore is chiefly implied in this proverb is this, that though earthly-minded men think the intending of earthly things the only wisdom, because thereby men become great & glorious here; yet they that are truly wise do rather look after those things that are above, because thereby they know they shall escape hell, and attain life eternall hereafter.

Verf. 25. *The Lord will destroy the house of the proud, &c.*] As namely all proud oppressors of the poor, though they be never so mighty, and highly conceited of their own security; see the Notes also chap. 12. 7. and 11: *but he will establish the border of the widow*; that is, he will secure the estates of those that are poor and helplesse, and withall humble, and not suffer any man in the least to encroach upon any thing that is theirs.

Verf. 26. *The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, &c.*] And consequently also his wicked words that flow from thence: *but the words of the pure are pleasant words*; that is, delightfull & pleasing to God, as are likewise his thoughts from whence they proceed.

Verf. 27. *He that is greedy of gain, &c.*] And thereupon sticks not at taking bribes, mentioned in the following opposite clause, or any other sinfull way of enriching himself; see the Note chap. 1. 19; Or he that is covetously greedy after gain, though he gains nothing thereby, nor seeks it by any unjust waies: *troubleth his own house*; that is, he shall not only die himself, (which is intimated in the following clause) to wit, by destruction from God, or by wasting his own life with vexing cares, pinching himself in things necessary, and immoderate grief when he looseth any thing, if not by laying violent hands in such cases upon himself; but also troubleth his own estate, house and family: to wit, either 1. by his oppressing them with too much labour, and withholding things necessary from them, & by continuall quarrelling with them about these things; or 2. by exposing himself & his to many miseries, whether by the punishments that men inflict on him, which tend to the ruine of his estate and family, and to the confusion of those of his household, or the judgements that God brings upon them: see the Notes chap. 11. 17, 29. & Job 15. 34. And thus whilst such a man aims at enriching himself greatly, or at least that he himself may have wherewith to live in the world, it proves quite contrary to what he intended. *But he that hateth gifts shall live*; that is, he that is not greedy of gain, & therefore not only taketh no bribes, but abhors the taking of them, though he will not use any such unlawfull means to get a livelihood for himself, but is content to rest upon God in an honest way;

yet shall his family be in a peaceable and quiet condition, and he himself shall live long and comfortably here, and eternally hereafter.

Verf. 28. *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer, &c.*] That is, A righteous man will not speak any thing rashly out of any corrupt passion, but weighs beforehand what he means to speak, and so doth usually speak nothing but what is good & profitable, and seasonable to be spoken: *but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things*; that is, wicked and hurtfull things, without ever thinking beforehand of what he means to speak; even as a man that speweth poureth out his vomit, or as the sea casts forth mire and dirt. See the Note above chap. 12. 23.

Verf. 30. *The light of the eyes rejoyceth the heart, and a good report maketh the bones fat.*] That is, As the light which men behold with their eyes, or those pleasant things which they behold by the light of their eyes, revive their spirits, and rejoyce their hearts; so *a good report*, that is, the having a good report amongst men, or the hearing good news & glad tidings (which is most true of the glad tidings of the Gospel) *maketh the bones fat*, that is, it rejoyceth the heart, & so maketh the body of a man healthfull and strong; see the Note chap. 14. 30. Solomon doth here compare the two chief senses of seeing & hearing together: and his drift is to shew, either that both of them do affect the mind with joy, and so the body with health; or else, that though both work powerfully upon men, yet the efficacy of what we hear is greater then of that we see: the joy which the light of the eyes worketh in the heart soon passeth away; but that which a good report worketh in men, because it is grounded upon things most profitable, doth so affect the inward parts, that it mightily refresheth and strengtheneth the very bodies of men.

Verf. 31. *The ear that beareth the reproof of life, &c.*] That is, The man that willingly hearkneth to and obeyeth wholesome life-giving reproofs, that tend to the reforming of mens lives, & to bring men to life eternall hereafter, *abideth among the wise*: that is, either 1. he sheweth himself hereby to be a wise man; or 2. he shall hereby attain wisdom, so that he shall in time come to be numbred amongst the wisest of men, & shall be honoured and esteemed amongst them, & enjoy their society; or 3. he shall by degrees come to be of the number of those that for their eminent wisdom are advanced to places of honour in Church & commonwealth, it may be to be Teachers & instructors of others; or 4. he shall in Gods kingdome of glory live for ever amongst those concerning whom it is said Dan. 12. 3. *they that be wise shall shine as the brightnesse of the firmament*; or 5. he will chuse to abide amongst them that he may be reprov'd; he will familiarly converse with them, and by his good will would dwell alwaies amongst them. And this last indeed I like the best.

Verf. 32. *He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul, &c.*] As if he should have said, whilst he seems to despise his instructor, and to count it an honour not to be under a teacher, the truth is, he *despiseth his own soul*, and doth wilfully, as it were, cast it away and destroy it: *but he that beareth (or, obeyeth) reproof, getteth understanding*. It is in the Hebrew, *possesseth an heart*, that is, he hath power over his own heart, and can over-rule his affections, in that he can submit himself

to be guided by others, which is a great evidence of wisdom; or rather, he hath an heart, he is not a man that is *excors*, a heartlesse man, void of reason & judgement, but he is an understanding man.

Vers. 33. *The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, &c.*] That is, That which the instruction of wisdom doth chiefly teach, is the fear of the Lords; or, To be taught to fear God is that instruction or doctrine that doth indeed teach men true wisdom; see the Notes chap. 1. 7. and Job 28. 28: *and before honour is humility*; that is, before that glory which is attained by wisdom goeth that humility which makes men submit to reproof or correction; or rather, *before honour*, whether that of earthly preferments, or that of heavenly glory, is *humility*, to wit, that which in men proceedeth from the sense of their corruptions and the apprehension of their own unworthinesse. And then the joyning of these two clauses thus together may seem to imply, that the fear of the Lord goeth before true wisdom, even as humility goeth before honour. See the Note Job 22. 29.

C H A P. XVI.

Vers. 1. **T**he preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.] That is, both the one and the other are from God; according to that of the Apostle, Phil. 2. 13. *It is God which worketh in you, both to will & to doe, of his good pleasure.* Man can neither prepare his heart to speak, nor speak what he hath prepared, without Gods assistance: and therefore observable it is, that Solomon saith not, that the preparations of the heart are *from man*, but *in man*, and *from the Lord*. Yea, if we should conceive that in the first clause the word (*are*) was to be understood, as some translate it, *The preparations of the heart are in man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord*, the meaning can be no more but this, that when men have meditated in their hearts both what they will speak, & how and in what order they will speak it, (and so there are in their minds whole armies, as it were, of thoughts, marshalled in order, as in battel-array; which the Hebrew word, that we translate *preparations* or *disposings*, doth clearly signify) yet shall they for all this be no farther able to expresse themselves, then as God shall enable them, & give them utterance; nor shall they alwaies speak what they purposed, but what God shall cause them to speak; a multitude of thoughts they may have in their minds, but without God they shall not be able to utter a word.

Vers. 2. *All the waies of a man are clean in his own eyes, &c.*] See the Note chap. 14. 12: *but the Lord weigheth the spirits*; that is, he doth exactly know & observe the souls & hearts of men, what their intentions, the affections and dispositions of their minds are, whether their hearts be purged by faith or no, whether they be pure and sincere, or profane and hypocriticall; and so he discovers how vainly they deceive themselves, and so condemns that which to them seems right.

Vers. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, &c.*] To wit, by taking direction from his word, & aiming in all things at his glory; but see the Notes Psal. 37. 5. and

55. 22 : *and thy thoughts shall be established*; that is, thou shalt enjoy a sweet settlement & tranquillity in thy thoughts and spirit; or, thy purposes & desires shall be accomplished, thy heart being confirmed with chearfulnesse to proceed on, in those waies which shall be most effectuell for the accomplishment of them.

Verf. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself, &c.*] That is, for his own glory: and there are some that under these words comprehend not only Gods work of Creation, but also the works of his continuall Providence, to wit, that he doeth all things for his own glory: *yea even the wicked for the day of evil*; that is, say some Expositours, that he might use them as his instruments for the punishment of others; or rather, that he might glorify himself by the manifestation of his justice in their deserved destruction. The wicked, both angels & men, were not created wicked by God, but were made so by themselves; yet God foreseeing what they would be, made them, that his glory might be advanced by their ruine, whilest they continually doe what they can to dishonour him, and to oppose his glory.

Verf. 5. *Every one that is proud in heart, &c.*] Not every one that hath pride in his heart, but every one in whose heart pride rules & reigns; yea though he shew it not outwardly as many do: *is an abomination to the Lord*; to wit, though outwardly he lives in never so gallant a condition, and so God seems to give him all things according to his own hearts desire: *though hand joyn in hand, he shall not be unpunished*: see the Note chap. 11. 21.

Verf. 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged, &c.*] First, Most of our best Expositours understand this of Gods mercy & truth; to wit, that by Gods free grace in Christ, and by his faithfull performance of the promises that he hath made to his people in him, namely, when they doe what he hath required of them in those his promises, all the sins they have committed are perfectly expiated & pardoned. And indeed these words *mercy & truth* are frequently thus taken in the Scripture, as before chap. 14. 22. & 2 Sam. 15. 20. and in divers other places. Again 2. many others understand it of *mercy and truth* in the people of God, meaning by *mercy and truth*, true mercifulnesse, or mercifulnesse & all justice and truth in mens dealing; or mercy & the profession and belief of Gods saving truth: and that hereby *iniquity* is said to be *purged*, not because these are the meritorious cause of purging men from their sins, but either 1. because these are tokens and evidences of those whose sins are pardoned; or 2. because these things do many times procure from God a remitting of temporall punishments, as Ahabs humiliation did for him, 1 Kings 21. 19; & 3. because *mercy and truth*, that is, true faith, working by love & charity, are the means of giving us an interest in that blood of the Mediator, whereby our sins are purged. So that the drift of these words, they say, is to shew, that in all the sacrifices, which were in those times offered for the purging away of sins, God did not so much regard the pomp of their sacrifices and outward ceremoniall worship, whereon the most of men did wholly rely, as the spirituall graces of *mercy and truth* in those that offered them. Both these Expositions, I conceive, are safe, though the first seems to me the clearest. And then accordingly for the second clause, *and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil*, that

is, they avoid it, or abandon it for the time to come, the drift of that must be to shew, either that when God of his mercy and truth doth acquit men from their sins, it is upon condition that they return not to those sins again, but that thenceforth they should fear God and serve him in holiness and righteousness all the daies of their lives; or else that, as mercy and truth do clear us from sins already committed, so the fear of the Lord preserveth us from sin for the time to come.

Verf. 7. *When a mans waies please the Lord, he maketh his very enemies to be at peace with him.*] To wit, by over ruling their hearts so, that though they hate him, yet they shall not seek to hurt him; or by inclining their hearts to love him, and to doe him good; or else by bringing things on either side to that passe, that his enemies shall be in policy glad to seek to be at peace with him. So that if by endeavouring to do that which may please God, we provoke men to displeasure against us, it matters not, God can easily help this.

Verf. 8. *Better is little with righteousness, &c.*] To wit, when the man that enjoyeth it is righteous, and his little estate hath been gotten righteously: then great revenues without right; see the Notes chap. 15. 16. and Psal. 37. 16.

Verf. 9. *A mans heart deviseth his way, &c.*] That is, whether he will goe, or what he will doe: but the Lord directeth his steps; that is, he cannot take a step without Gods assistance; he shall neither do nor effect any thing, but according to the will and providence of God. But see the Note above verf. 1.

Verf. 10. *A divine sentence is in the lips of the King, &c.*] That is, a sentence agreeable to the word of God; or, as true & certain as if it came from God himself. It is indeed in the Original, *Divination is in the lips of the King*, that is, as it were divination; as if he should have said, There is in the lips of kings a sagacity like that of diviners; or, the sentence which they pronounce, and the words which they speak, are as sure and certain, as those of diviners are usually pretended & esteemed to be: And indeed, though in the Scripture by divination is usually meant that divination of sooth-saiers, which is condemned as an abomination, Deut. 18. 10; yet sometimes the word is used in a good sense, as in Isa. 3. 2. where that which we translate *the prudent*, is in the Original *the diviner*, and yet thereby is only meant men of such a piercing judgement and deep reach, that they are able shrewdly to ghesse at the future events and consequences of things, as if they had a spirit of divination: see also Mich. 3. 6. Now accordingly Expositours do understand this Proverb four severall waies: as 1. that because kings (and so all other supream magistrates) are Gods vice-gerents, their sentences are to be esteemed as the oracles of God: or 2. that kings are usually endued by God, in whose place they sit, with such singular wisdom and sagacity, that they are able to bolt out the truth of things difficult & abstruse, and so when they come to hear or decide controversies, or to give judgement in doubtfull cases, they are wont quickly to discover any evil that is, or hath been practised by the parties contending, or by their witnesses; and so they seldome or never mistake in pronouncing judgement, as it is in the last clause, *his mouth transgresseth not in judgement*; implying, that therefore it is a weaknesse & folly in men, either to attempt to deceive the supreme magistrate, or any way to carp at his decrees:

or 3. that thus it is with wise & pious kings, who only indeed deserve the name of kings, see 2 Sam. 14. 20. and 1 Kings 3. 27, 28; because they are conscientiously carefull to search out the truth, & to speak the truth, making the word of God their rule in all things, and are not wont to pronounce sentence at any time without mature deliberation, grave advice, & begging direction from God, and because God doth in a speciall manner assist and direct their minds and tongues in searching out the most secret wickednesses, and in giving judgement, therefore their sentence is usually divine & just, and their mouth doth feldome erre in judgement: or 4. that thus it should be with kings, that they should wisely consider of all things, & search into the most secret causes so, that they may still speak that which is right, and may not at any time erre in judgement. And indeed these two last expositions are clearly the best, because there are two other Proverbs that follow vers. 12, & 13. that must necessarily be expounded after the same manner. I know the words may be also capable of some other expositions: as that kings will have their decrees stand, & be accounted just, whatever they be; or, that Princes & other great mens words are usually esteemed as oracles, and all their decrees are counted just, whereas with poor men it is no way so. But the former expositions are clearly the best.

Verf. 11. *A just weight and balance are the Lords; all the weights of the bag are his work.*] That is, they were devised by his speciall providence & direction, and are ordained & appointed by him; they have, as it were, his seal upon them, so that none may use any other; if they do, they must give an account of it to God, and he will punish them for it: see the Note also chap. 11. 1.

Verf. 12. *It is an abomination to kings to commit wickednesse, &c.*] To wit, either to commit it themselves, or that others should commit it; they abhorre it in themselves, and dare not doe it, neither will they endure it in others. And the meaning is only, that thus it should be with kings, or that thus it is with good kings: see the Note above verf. 10. *For the throne is established by righteousness;* that is, by executing justice in punishing the wicked; or, more generally, by a constant care to obey Gods laws, whether in prince or people.

Verf. 13. *Righteous lips are the delight of kings.*] As namely, men that will not lye nor slander, judges that will give righteous judgement, and wise & faithfull counsellors, that will not dissemble nor flatter, but will speak that which is just and true, though it be by way of shewing them any evil they have done, or any thing else that may be extremely harsh and distastfull to their corrupt nature. But see also the foregoing Notes vers. 10. and 12.

Verf. 14. *The wrath of a king is as messengers of death, &c.*] That is, It is as terrible, & as sure a forerunner and token of unavoidable death, presently to be expected, as if many messengers should be sent to a man, which shews the thing is certain, to give a man notice that he shall be put to death, or as if many should be sent to him to take away his life, against whom there can be no hope to defend himself. And the reason of this is, because kings have such absolute power, many severall waies, to cut off any man with whom they are offended. Indeed if their servants do but see them angry with any man, they will be ready of their own accord

cord to make him away. *But a wise man will pacify it;* to wit, by his prayers to God, by the mediation of friends, or by his own wise & calm and gracious speeches. I know it may also be meant of a wise mans stepping in to pacify the kings wrath on the behalf of others. But however the main drift of this clause is, to set forth the excellency of wisdom, in that hereby men can pacify the wrath of kings, which no gifts nor tender of service can doe, because they have no need of those things.

Verf. 15. *In the light of the kings countenance is life, &c.*] That is, his lightsome and chearfull countenance is, as the light of the sun is, a means of chearing and reviving the hearts of men, yea though they were before as dead men by reason of some bitter affliction & sorrow: *and his favour is as a cloud of the later rain;* that is, a great refreshing, & that which usually brings men to a flourishing and prosperous condition. The Proverb may also be understood more particularly; to wit, that when a man was in danger of death by reason of a kings anger, if he be pleased to look chearfully again upon him, that will again re-assure life to him, & his favour in pardoning him, when it is at last procured, will be *as a cloud of the later rain;* for which see the Notes Deut. 11. 14. Job 29. 23.

Verf. 16. *How much better is it to get wisdom then gold? &c.*] To wit, because wisdom is the riches of the soul, that can never be lost, that never brings those vexations with it that do alwaies accompany outward riches, that is many waies advantageous to men in this life, and will surely bring them to life eternall hereafter: see the Notes also chap. 3. 14. and 8. 11.

Verf. 17. *The high way of the upright is to depart from evil, &c.*] That is, this is their ordinary course; their constant purpose, desire & endeavour is, to shun every evil way, though through mistake or violence of temptation they may sometimes step into the by-waies of sin. To which some adde also, that *to depart from evil* is said to be *the high way of the upright*, because it is, as rode-waies are wont to be, an easie and a safe way: an easie way, because it is plainly made known in the word of God, and because his affection to it, & inuring himself to walk in it, makes it no way so hard to him as it is to others; and a safe way, because there is no danger of any evil or mischief in it. Which is farther set forth in the following clause, *he that keepeth his way,* that is, that keepeth close to the way that God hath prescribed him, *preserveth his soul;* to wit, because he shall be surely under Gods protection here, and shall as certainly escape eternall destruction hereafter.

Verf. 18. *Pride goeth before destruction, &c.*] See the Note chap. 11. 2.

Verf. 19. *Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, then to divide the spoil with the proud.*] This seems to be inferred from the foregoing Proverb. And if by *the lowly* here we understand those that are in an afflicted and low condition, then the meaning of the Proverb is clearly this; that it is much better to be a poor man and humble, (which are joyned together, because such a condition doth many times bring men to be of an humble spirit) then to be rich and proud, as usually rich men are: or, that it is better to be in the state of poor captives, and to be humble, then to be in the state of conquerors, and proud; which is
said

said because nothing doth more puff up the spirits of men, then victories in the war usually doe. But if by *the lowly* we understand men of a lowly & humble spirit, then the meaning must be, that it is better to be one of those that are of an humble & lowly spirit, to wit, though thereby a man be the more wronged, as the humble that will bear injuries usually are, then to be one of those proud ones that are usually oppressors of others, and so to have a share among them, when they divide the spoil.

Verf. 20. *He that handleth a matter wisely, &c.*] Or, *He that understandeth a matter*, that is, that will undertake nothing rashly, but by due pondering & advising beforehand of what he intends to doe, maketh sure that he thoroughly understandeth what he is to doe, and how it is to be done, and then doth accordingly manage his work in a prudent manner: *shall find good*; that is, shall prosper in what he undertakes, & shall have much refreshing comfort in the prudent & successfull carrying on his enterprises: *and who so trusteth in the Lord, happy is he*; to wit, because the Lord will not fail those that trust in him, but will blesse their endeavours, yea though they should some way fail in managing their affairs. Now the joyning of these two thus discovers that the drift of this Proverb is, to shew that both these must be joyned together: we must not, under a pretence of trusting in God, neglect any due care of ordering our affairs as becomes wise men; neither must we trust in our care and wisdom for the managing of our undertaking; but for our successe therein must rest wholly upon God, without whose blessings the endeavours of the wisest men are nothing worth.

Verf. 21. *The wise in heart shall be called prudent, &c.*] By *the wise in heart* may be meant the godly man, or the man that is truly wise, see the Note chap. 10. 8. the man that hath some good measure of knowledge & understanding; and by this, that *he shall be called prudent*, may be meant, that he is, and is deservedly to be accounted, a wise and prudent man; (as Isa. 4. 3. *he that remaineth in Ierusalem shall be called holy*, that is, shall be holy) or, that he shall shew himself to be, and shall be acknowledged and commended to be an intelligent prudent man, yea though he never seeks to set forth himself as such in any way of ostentation. And so in the following clause, *and the sweetnesse of the lips encrease learning*, by *the sweetnesse of the lips* may be meant, any manner of speaking in a way of instruction, whereby mens words are pleasing & delightfull to the hearers, as when men speak fitly & meekly & affectionately & prudently, which will indeed allay the sharpnesse of reproofs; or else more particularly the gift of speaking eloquently and elegantly: and then of this it is said, that it *encreaseth learning*; which though it may be truly said of the teachers improving his own knowledge by instructing others, yet here it is meant of the edifying & profiting of his hearers. Because men will usually flock after such a teacher, and because such a gift of utterance and elegancy in speaking doth work powerfully upon the hearts of the hearers, therefore it must needs encrease learning very much. And so the drift of the Proverb may accordingly be, either 1. to set forth the excellency of wisdom; the first clause shewing the good it doth to the wise man himself, to wit, that thereby he attains to the vertue and praise of prudence; and the second, what good

it doth to others, by causing in them an encrease of learning : or 2. to discover what an accession to wisdom eloquence is : a wise man shall be esteemed for his knowledge and learning, though he be not able elegantly to expresse himself; but it is the gift of eloquence that makes men instrumentall for the encreasing of knowledge and learning in others.

Verf. 22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life to him that hath it, &c.*] That is, it yieldeth life constantly & abundantly to those that have it; or rather, it is in those that have it a constant means of conveying life to those that are instructed by them; see the Notes chap. 10. 11. & 13, 14 : *but the instruction of fools is folly*; that is, say some, it is a folly to instruct fools; or, fools will be instructed no way but by their own folly, that is, by the miseries which their folly brings upon them. But the meaning is rather this, that when fools undertake to advise any body, they can utter nothing but that which is foolish and wicked; or, that when false teachers instruct men, their instruction is mere folly. And so that which may seem to be intended by the opposition of these two clauses is, either 1. that the understanding of the wise is in their instructing of others as a well-spring of life to them; but the folly of fools (to wit, wicked foolish men, or seducers and false teachers) is in their instructing of others as a well-spring of poysonous waters, tending to the death of those that are instructed by them: or 2. that wise men at all times, even in their ordinary discourse, will be speaking to the benefit of others; whereas fools on the other side, where they would shew most gravity, when they undertake to advise and teach others, utter nothing but folly, and that which tends to the destruction of those that hear it.

Verf. 23. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, &c.*] That is, A man by his wisdom knoweth when, & what, and how to speak: and hence it is that the better a man understands any thing, the better able he will still be to speak of it; and that wise men are wont to speak the more discreetly & well in every regard, because they are not wont to speak rashly, but to meditate beforehand what they shall speak; see the Note chap. 15. 28. Yea & needs must they speak wisely, whose hearts are endued with true wisdom & grace, because alwaies *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*, Matth. 12. 34. *And addeth learning to his lips*; that is, the wisdom that is in the wise mans heart enableth him to speak learnedly, and to teach others; or, by teaching others he himself learns to be more and more able to speak, both wisely and elegantly.

Verf. 24. *Pleasant words, &c.*] To wit, such as are the words of the holy servants of God, see the Note chap. 15. 26, as namely, when they are full of wisdom, learning, eloquence, comfort, gentleness, compassion and love, (whether uttered by way of instruction or reproof, or any other way;) *are as an hony-comb*, see the Note Psal. 19. 7. that is, sweet & wholesome, as is expressed in the following words, *sweet to the soul, and health to the bones*: which may be referred to the hony-comb, as being sweet to a mans tast, and healthfull severall ways, or to those *pleasant words*, which, as an hony-comb, are delightfull to the minds of men, and a means of health to the body. See the Notes chap. 14. 30. and 15. 30.

Verf. 25. *There is a way that seemeth right, &c.*] See the Note chap. 14. 12. The

very same Proverb is again repeated here, because this self-delusion is so exceedingly dangerous, and men are naturally so exceedingly inclined to it. Or it may be here again inserted with reference to the foregoing Proverb, that men might consider, that all words that may seem pleasant to carnal reason, are not those pleasant words which are there intended.

Verf. 26. *He that laboureth, laboureth for himself, for his mouth craveth it of him.*] It is in the Hebrew, *his mouth borroweth unto him*? that is, it humbly beggeth it of him, to wit, because a man cannot live except he gets meat to eat. The drift therefore of this Proverb may be to shew, both how willingly men should submit to any honest labour, and how unnaturall a sin idleness is, even such that it is pity such persons should eat, 2 Thess. 3. 10; and likewise that they should not wear out themselves with toiling for superfluities, because if a man by his moderate labour can but get things absolutely necessary, as food and raiment, it is fit that herewith he should be content.

Verf. 27. *An ungodly man, &c.*] It is in the Hebrew, *A man of Belial*; see the Note Deut. 13. 13. As before verf. 21, 22, &c. Solomon shewed how much good is done by the lips of the righteous, so here, in the four next verses, he tells us how mischievous wicked mens tongues are. *An ungodly man diggeth up evil*; that is, either 1. he wittingly & continually endeavours in a secret way to undermine men & to insnare them, even as men dig pitfalls for others to fall into, see the Note Job 6. 27; or 2. that night & day he is still plotting to commit sin, or rather to doe mischief unto others, being still searching in his mind how to effect it, even as men by digging search for minerals in the earth, & then afterwards with great pains he endeavoureth to accomplish it. And to these some adde too, that he is said to dig up evil, because he rips up things long since done & forgotten, that he may bring some evil upon men. *And in his lips there is a burning fire*; to wit, 1. because therewith he vents his fiery passions and distempered heats, by railing, threatening, lyes & slanders, &c; 2. because by the tongue, which hath in a manner the shape & colour of a flame of fire, they kindle strife & divisions amongst men, & are as very fire-brands both in Church & commonwealth, whereby they are usually burnt up & brought into utter desolations; & 3. because by the slanders and other evils of the tongue men vex and torture others, even as men are pained and tortured with the scorching & burning of fire.

Verf. 28. *A froward man, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 3. 32. and 6. 12. It seems to be meant here of those that out of crossness & peevishness are still prone to misinterpret & pervert other mens waies & words: *soweth strife*; that is, spreadeth contentions in every place where he cometh: *and a whisperer separates chief friends*; that is, say some, princes, men in high places, that are united in a strict bond of friendship one to another; or rather, friends that are most intimate, and do most intirely love one another.

Ver. 29. *A violent man, &c.*] That is, A man head-strong in wickedness, that cannot sleep except he doe evil, and is regardlesse of all laws ordained to restrain men from evil; or, a man violently bent to doe mischief: *envenometh his neighbour, & looketh him into the way that is not good*; that is, into courses sinfull or hurtfull. The mean-

meaning may be, that such men are wont with their flattering speeches either to draw others to joyn with them in their wickednesse, see the Notes chap. 1. 10, 11; or else to allure them into some snare or other, that they may bring upon them the mischief they have plotted against them.

Verf. 30. *He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things, &c.*] That is, He shutteth his eyes that he may the more intently plot and contrive some mischief in his mind; but see also the Notes chap. 6. 13, & 10. 10: *moving his lips he bringeth evil to passe;* that is, by his wicked speaking, or, as soon as he begins to speak, he presently effects the mischief he hath so contrived in his mind. Yet by *moving his lips* may also be meant such a kind of mumbling and muttering to himself, as is usuall with men when they are plotting some mischief against men, or when their hearts are swoln with rage, & a full resolution to do them some evil; or, his whispering & speaking softly to his companions, lest he should be overheard by some body, and so prevented in what he hath designed to doe. In a word, the meaning is, that wicked men by their cunning plots, and hypocrisy in the close carrying on their designs, do work much villany.

Verf. 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*] To such a one the gray hairs wherewith his head is compassed round about is a glorious ornament, even as a silver crown which God himself hath put upon his head; to wit, because such an one doth in a speciall manner bear in himself the image of God, who is the Ancient of daies, Dan. 7. 9. as likewise because old men by long experience do often attain the greater wisdom, and the very gray hairs of such men do render their countenance the more comely & grave, and do naturally procure the more authority and respect amongst men.

Verf. 32. *He that is slow to anger is better then the mighty, &c.*] That is, he is a man of greater excellency, and more to be commended for his strength and fortitude, then he that is of mighty bodily strength; to wit, because the strength of the soul is better then bodily strength; it enables men to bear reproaches and injuries, which are of all burdens the heaviest & hardest to be born, & to resist and overcome a mans own unruly passions and sinfull lusts, together with those principalities & powers Eph. 6. 12. which of all enemies are most hardly resisted and subdued. And by mens subduing these much benefit redounds to others; whereas the mighty man cannot obtain victories nor subdue cities, without much bloodshed and hurt to others. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *and he that ruleth his spirit*, that is, that overruleth his affections & passions, *then he that taketh a city;* who may the while be a slave to his own lust. But see the Note also chap. 14. 29.

C H A P. XVII.

Verf. 1. **B**etter is a dry morsell & quietnesse therewith, then a house full of sacrifices with strife.] We had a Proverb before much like this, chap. 15. 17. for which see the Note there. But the meaning of this is briefly thus; that the smallest & coarsest pittance, with quiet, is more comfortable, safe and wholesome, then a house full of good chear (for that is meant by a house

full of sacrifices, see the Note chap. 7. 14.) with strife and contention. Which may be said, because at feasts wine & good chear do usually cause many quarrels; or else to imply, that it is better to be in a low then in a high condition, because these are usually exposed to more envy and hatred and strife then meaner men are. Others also understand this Proverb of the happinesse of those that enjoy a little with quiet of conscience, above those that have plenty with a conscience that continually chideth them for what they have gotten unjustly, or for some other wickednesse.

Verf. 2. *A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 5. and 14. 35: *and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.* Thus it is usually in both particulars mentioned. The first, when a servant for his wisdom is advanced to some place of honour & magistracy, and so the foolish son having wasted his estate, & being become poor, liveth under his command; or else, when the master of such a servant shall give him the rule over his whole family, or shall make him at his death one of his Executors, & a guardian over his foolish son, perhaps over all his children. And so the second also, either when such a servant, growing rich and great, buyes the estate of his masters prodigal child; or rather, when a master shall give one of his daughters in marriage to such a servant, or shall adopt him for his son, and thereupon shall at his death allot him a share in his inheritance. But the drift of the Proverb is, to shew, that wisdom doth often prefer men above those that otherwise, had it not been for their folly, might have been their betters.

Verf. 3. *The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the Lord tryeth the hearts.*] Either we must understand these words thus; that as the fining pot and the furnace do try silver and gold, so the Lord, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, Rev. 1. 14. tryeth the hearts of men: or thus; whereas the gold-smith can by his art try of what goodnesse his silver & gold are, & can purify them from the dross that was in them, none but the Lord only can try, that is, exactly know, or purify and purge by affliction or otherwise, the hearts of men. See the Notes Psal. 7. 9. and 26. 2. and 66. 10. and Job 23. 10.

Verf. 4. *A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips, &c.*] That is, to lies, slanders, flatteries, or generally to all manner of evil speeches whatsoever: *and a liar giveth eare to a naughty tongue;* that is, a mischievous tongue, or a lying slanderous tongue. The drift of this Proverb therefore may be to shew, 1. that not only to speak evil, but also willingly to hearken to evil speakers, & to be prone to believe lies, is the property of a wicked man; or 2. that wicked men are still ready to yield to the evil suggestions, enticements & commands of others; or 3. that because men are delighted with such talk as is sutable to their disposition, therefore liars and slanderers love to hear the lies and slanders of others, and generally all wicked men delight to hear those that talk wickedly.

Verf. 5. *Who mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker.*] That is, he that derideth a man distressed with poverty, or any other sad affliction. It is a sin to deride any body; but the poor man is mentioned, because men do usually take most liberty to scoffe at such men; and yet the deriding of them is worst, because

cause thereby men adde affliction to the afflicted. But see the Note chap. 14. 3 1.

Verf. 6. *Childrens children are the crown of old men, &c.*] To wit, because this makes known that they are very aged, and because children are a glorious blessing of God, and do render their parents to be the more revered & respected, and to be of the more authority amongst men: *and the glory of children are their fathers*; to wit, whether living or dead: for living with them, their wisdom and authority do supply many defects in their children; and whether living or dying they are an honour to them. But now both these clauses must be understood both of parents & children that are vertuous & pious; for otherwise they will both be but a crown of thorns to their nearest relations.

Verf. 7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool, &c.*] Some by *excellent speech* understand copious fluency of speech, which, they say, *becometh not a fool*, because the more he speaks, the more he will discover his folly. Again, others by *excellent speech* understand a stately & eloquent way of speaking, which, they say, *becometh not a fool*, because when he speaketh so, he speaketh not like himself, no more then a prince doth (as it followeth in the next clause) when he tells lies. But the most and best of Expositours do by *excellent speech* understand any grave speech, discourse or counsell, concerning high and weighty & excellent things: as namely, concerning matters of great importance, tending to the welfare of commonwealths, which becometh not a fool, because the vanity and weaknesse of such a mans mind, & the great importance of such affairs, do not suit well together; it becomes grave & learned men to give their judgement in such things, whose worth and renown will adde weight to their words; or else concerning the holy things of God, & Christ and his Church, as faith and repentance, &c. the reproving of vice, and commending of any thing that is good, which becomes not an ignorant wicked sot, that understands not nor practiseth what he saith.

Verf. 8. *A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it, &c.*] That is, it is most acceptable to him to whom it is given; even as precious stones, which men are wont earnestly to desire & highly to esteem; or rather, it is so in the eyes of him that hath it to give: Rich men, that have gifts to give, look upon them as effectually alluring baits, like a precious stone that draweth the eyes of beholders to it; they think to doe what they please with their gifts: *whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth*; that is, it prevails for the most part with any man to whom it is given, it will make him that receives it to understand the mind of the giver, and to doe whatever he desires of him.

Verf. 9. *He that covereth a transgression, &c.*] That is, any fault which a man hath committed, or any injury done, whether by word or deed, against himself or others; see the Note chap. 10. 12: *seeketh* (or, *procureth*) *love*; that is, he gaineth or preserveth the love of the man whose transgression he so covereth; and by so doing he takes also the best way to make peace, and to preserve friendship amongst others: *but he that repeateth a matter*; that is, that reports abroad the faults men have committed, or upbraids them with former injuries, or being to make peace between party and party rips up old offences: *separateth very friends*; that is, he makes his best friends weary of him, yea to become his enemies; or,

he makes divisions betwixt the most intimate friends: see the Note chap. 16. 28.

Verf. 11. *An evil man seeketh only rebellion, &c.*] That is, A carnall man in all that he doeth sins against God, so that his whole life is one continued course of rebellion against him; yea he delights in nothing so much as that: even when he doeth any thing that is evil, it is not so much any outward temptation of pleasure or profit that draweth him thereto, as his own perverse inclination to rebell against Gods commands, which therefore he many times doth, when there is no outward bait of any advantage to himself, that may tempt him to it. Or it may be understood with reference to men, to wit, that a wicked man minds nothing so much as that he may carry himself stubbornly & rebelliously against those that, either by words or stripes, seek to reclaim him from his evil waies. *Therefore a cruell messenger shall be sent against him;* to wit, either from God or man; see the Note chap. 16. 14. And by this *cruell messenger* may be meant an accusing torturing conscience, or death, or the devil, to whom God gives over wicked men, as the just executioner of his wrath. But I conceive it best to understand it generally of all punishments sent from God, and all executioners of vengeance imployed by the civill magistrate.

Verf. 12. *Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather then a fool in his folly.*] That is, in the extremity of his wickednesse & rage. And the reason is, because a bear may be resisted and shunned, but there will be no withstanding or avoiding the rage of such a fool; and because by such an one men may be not only bereaved of their lives, but also of their good name & their estate, which should be the livelyhood of their children after them.

Verf. 14. *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, &c.*] That is; strife is easily begun; as it is an easie matter to make some little passage through a bank to let out waters: but contention being once begun will soon grow more and more violent, so that it will be within a while almost impossible to make up the breach, but it will proceed haply to the utter ruine of families & kingdomes; even as waters so let out through a bank, are wont quickly to make such a breach greater and greater, and so to carry away all that stands in their way with unresistable violence, nor can the breach be made up again almost by any means. *Therefore leave off contention before it be medled with;* that is, doe not any thing that is likely to be an occasion of strife; or, though another man gives occasion of strife, yet forbear.

Verf. 16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*] That is, say some Expositours, seeing he is not capable of being taught wisdom; or rather, seeing he hath no mind or desire to be wise or good? It is therefore all one in effect as if he had said, that he is unworthy of riches, that will not make use of them to get wisdom; or, that such a mans riches are to no purpose, because he knoweth not how to imploy them for his own good, but rather is usually the worse for them.

Verf. 17. *A friend, &c.*] That is, A true friend, whose friendship is grounded upon unchangeable things, the vertue and piety of those whom he makes his friends; *loveth at all times,* to wit, in adversity as well as in prosperity: for that
this

this is chiefly meant the following clause sheweth, and a brother is born for adversity: that is, a brother or near kinsman is by the bond of nature engaged to help his brother in adversity. So that the meaning of the Proverb is clearly this; that they only shew themselves true friends & brothers, that manifest themselves to be such in the hour of distresse & trouble. Yet some conceive that the second clause concerning brothers is added to shew, that therefore the man that sheweth himself loving to his friend in adversity, doth herein carry himself as a brother, & ought so to be esteemed.

Verf. 18. *A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.* That is, rashly, at the very first sight & presence of his friend, in a manner before he desires him to doe it, without ever looking into the business, or considering the danger that is in it: or, in the presence of his friend, viz. the Creditor, to whom he obligeth himself for some third person. But see the Notes chap. 6. 1, 2, 3.

Verf. 19. *He loveth transgression that loveth strife, &c.* That is, that loveth to strive with other men, or that loveth to see or make strife between man & man. And of such a one it is said that *he loveth transgression*, either because his loving strife sheweth him to be a wicked man, as being one that taketh pleasure in sin: & consequently one that will not stick at any other wickedness; or rather, because strife doth usually bring men into all manner of transgressions, according to that Jam. 3. 16. *where everying & strife is, there is confusion & every evil work.* As for the following clause, *he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction*, some by the word *gate* understand the door of a mans mouth, as it is taken Mic. 7. 5. *keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lyeth in thy bosom*; and so they take the meaning of this clause to be, that he that is wont to speak proudly & loftily, in any way of boasting, or despising others, partly by stirring up men thereby against him, & partly by provoking God to displeasure, seeketh his own ruine. But I rather think that the words are to be understood literally, of a mans exalting *his gate*, that is, his house, (a part being put for the whole) and that the meaning therefore is, 1. that as a man that builds his house higher then the foundation will bear, may justly expect the downfall thereof, so the man that, out of the pride of his heart, buildeth his house more sumptuously and stately then is fitting for his condition, is in the high-way to beggery; or that he that buildeth lofty houses to the prejudice and with the oppression of others, exposeth himself thereby to the hatred & envy of men, and to Gods high displeasure, and so doth in a manner seek his own destruction: and 2. that accordingly he that any way exalts himself proudly above others, despising them, and seeking to bring them into subjection under him, doth hereby draw destruction upon himself; see the Note chap. 11. 2. For this is that, I conceive, which Solomon chiefly intended in these words.

Verf. 20. *He that hath a froward heart, &c.* That is, He that is of a peevish quarrelsome spirit, that will be still taking offence at every thing that is spoken and done, & wishing and plotting the hurt of others, see the Note chap. 3. 32. *findeth no good*; that is, findeth no favour any where neither from God nor man. Or, by the man of a *froward heart* may be meant a man that is stubbornly wicked,

see the Notes 2 Sam. 22. 27. and Job 5. 13; or else an hypocrite, that carrieth a fair shew outwardly, when there is nothing but frowardnesse, wickednesse & mischief in his heart; whence it is that the upright man is opposed to the froward in heart, chap. 11. 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord, but such as are upright in their way are his delight*: & then by this that is said of such an one, that he *findeth no good*, may be meant, that he shall never obtain any favour or blessing, either for his everlasting estate, or his condition in this world, though for the present he may seem to enjoy many earthly commodities; he that seeks to avoid any evil or obtain any good by deceit or hypocrisie, will be frustrate of his hopes: or else, that on the contrary, such a one shall surely fall into evil. *And he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief*; that is, he that abuseth his tongue in any way of wickednesse, or more particularly, he that hath a false deceitfull tongue, shall bring thereby mischief upon himself, perhaps the mischief he intended to others. The drift of this Proverb may be to shew, that God will punish not only the wickednesse of mens works, but also of their hearts and tongues; or, that if God abhor all wickednesse in the heart, much more will he punish it when men expresse it with their tongues.

Verf. 21. *He that begetteth a fool, doth it to his sorrow, &c.*] As if he had said, Whereas naturally men are glad to have children, and do expect much joy from them, if a child proveth foolish & wicked, he is an occasion of much sorrow to his parents; not to the mother only, that is more prone to grieve, but even to the father also; see the Note chap. 10. 1: *and the father of a fool hath no joy*; to wit, in that his foolish child; or, he will not be able to take comfort in any thing in the world. Yet some Expositours understand the first clause of the childs sorrow, *He that begetteth a fool, doth it to his sorrow*, that is, the sorrow of that his foolish son, to wit, because his folly & wickednesse will bring much misery & sorrow upon him: and then the next clause they understand of the fathers sorrow, *and the father of a fool hath no joy*.

Ver. 22. *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, &c.*] That is, it doth as much good for the curing of the distempers of the soul, as a medicine doth for the curing of bodily diseases; or rather, it doth a man as much good for his bodily health, see the Note chap. 15. 13. Yea, the words may be also translated thus, *A merry heart doth good to a medicine*; that is, it helps the operation of physick for the recovery of health. *But a broken spirit drieth the bones*; that is, a heart broken with grief wasteth all the strength of the body; see the Notes chap. 3. 8. and 12. 4.

Verf. 23. *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosome, &c.*] That is, secretly; for so Solomon himself explaineth this expression chap. 21. 14. *A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosome strong wrath*: and it may be meant both of the man that hath an ill cause, who taketh it, and giveth it closely, either to the judge, or to his adversaries advocate, or to any one that is to be a witness in the cause; and likewise of the judge, or any other that taketh it from him that gives it: *to pervert the waies of judgement*; that is, any way to obstruct the course of law, or to pervert the proceedings of justice, and so to procure that any thing be done that is unjust.

Verf. 24. *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding, &c.*] Some give such an exposition of the first clause as can hardly suit with our translation: *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding*; that is, it is with him, it is conspicuous, & easily to be discerned in his countenance, to wit, in the sobriety, gravity and staydness of his countenance & outward behaviour. And if this be owned, then the meaning of the next clause, *but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth*, must needs be this, that the inconstancy, the unsettledness & lightness of a fools countenance, the rolling & roving of his eyes, prying into every corner, & wandring after every vanity, doth manifestly discover his weakness and folly. But now according to our Translation, the expositions that are commonly given of it are these. 1. Thus: *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding, &c.* that is, An understanding man will be still learning some point of wisdom or other, at all times, & in every place, where for the present he is; whereas the fool, despising what is before him, hath frequently a roving conceit of travelling to the ends of the earth, the remote parts of the world, for the seeking of wisdom. 2. Thus: *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding*; that is, it is obvious & easy to him, he finds and gains it easily; or, it is easy to him to do well, & in all streights to chuse the wisest way; see the Notes chap. 8: 9. & 14. 6. & Deut. 30. 11, &c: *but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth*; that is, wisdom is to him as a thing that is far off, and beyond his reach, which he is no way able to attain; or, he is like a man that hath lost his way, or that is besides himself, not knowing which way to turn himself, nor where to find that which he looks after. Or 3. thus, which to me seems the best: *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding*; that is, it is continually in his eye, and he so minds wisdom, that he overlooks every thing beside; he is still in his thoughts meditating of the beauty & perfection of it; the will and law of God is his constant rule & guide; he still considers what that requires of him, and endeavours to conform him self thereto in all things whatsoever: *but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth*; that is, as one that never discerned the glory and excellency of wisdom, he minds any thing more then that; earthly things, the severall pleasures & profits and vanities that are in the world, are the things that his eyes are still roving after. Yea some conceive that this phrase, of the fools eyes being in the ends of the earth, implies such a greediness after earthly things, as if they could in a manner reach after the dominion of the whole world, or at least that any thing that were for their profit they would fetch from the farthest parts of the earth.

Verf. 25. *A foolish son is a grief to his father, &c.*] See the Note chap. 10. 1.

Verf. 26. *Also to punish the just is not good, &c.*] That is, it is exceeding evil: *nor to strike princes for equity*; that is, either with hand or tongue to smite magistrates, for doing that in their places, which in justice & equity they were bound to do: which may be meant either of the sin of the supreme magistrate, when he shall fall foul upon any inferiour judge or magistrate, for any act of justice which they have done; or else of the sin of private persons, when they shall offer any violence to any magistrate, for any just act of theirs, either towards themselves or others. Yea & some by *princes* here do understand well-disposed men, the faith-

full servants of God, who in regard of their union with Christ, & that free spirit whereby they are preserved from the bondage & power of Satan & sin, are sometimes in Scripture called *princes*; see the Note Psal. 45. 16. The greatest difficulty in this verse is, whereto this word *also* should referre, *Also to punish the just is not good*, &c. And this is indeed so hard to be resolved, that some Interpreters do therefore translate the word in the Original *surely*. But to keep to our Translation. Some conceive that this word *also* is here added with reference to what was said before vers. 23, concerning the wickednesse of giving & taking bribes; and so would have these words to imply, that it is a great fault to punish the just, though there be no bribe taken; and that therefore the sin is double, when men are hired by bribes to pervert justice. But this is a very forced exposition. Either therefore we must understand this Proverb without any reference to any thing that went before; or else rather we may take this word *also* to be added in relation to the foregoing Proverb, and so that which is intended thereby to be this: that as it is a very evil thing in children, so to repay evil for good to their parents, as thereby to be a matter of grief & vexation to them; so also it is not good, on the other side, either for parents in their household government, or for the supreme magistrate in his place, who ought to be as a father to his people, to grieve or punish the just causelessly, and particularly the inferiour magistrates, when they would deal justly with those that are under their charge.

Verf. 27. *He that hath knowledge, spareth his words, &c.*] That is, he will be silent, unlesse he sees it requisite that he should speak; and when it is so, he will not multiply words more then needs, but will be sparing in his speech; even when he is provoked by injuries, he will forbear all provoking language; see also the Notes chap. 10. 14. and 12. 23. and 15. 28: *and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit*; to wit, in regard of that which was expressed in the foregoing clause, because it argues much wisdom, when men are not rash in speaking, but circumspect, and able to refrain speaking when they see cause. But this last clause may be render'd, *and a man of understanding is of a cool spirit*, that is, of a patient, and so of a quiet still spirit; for such a spirit is here compared to cold water, in opposition to an angry spirit, that, like hot water, is continually boiling up with passion, and breaking out into passionate speeches.

Verf. 28. *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise, &c.*] To wit, both because by his silence his folly is concealed, which should he speak would soon be discovered; and likewise because to be sparing of speech is a point of great wisdom, and to be full of talk is the property of a fool; and thereupon a fool by his silence may gain to himself the repute of a wise man, especially if he be silent when any injury is offered him. See also the Note Job 13. 5.

C H A P. XVIII.

Verf. 1. **T***Hrough desire a man having separated himself, &c.*] That is, A man that out of an earnest desire after wisdom or any good literature, hath withdrawn and sequestred himself from his former habitation, at least from the company he otherwise would converse with, and from all worldly bu-

businessse, or whatever else may be any let or hinderance to him in his study, *seeketh and intermedleth with all wisdom*; that is, he will earnestly labour to obtain that which he so earnestly desires, & will be accordingly busying himself about all kind of wisdom, and all the means whereby it may be obtained, there is no wisdom which he will not seek to attain: if he hears of any that are eminent for any kind of wisdom, he will endeavour to gain what he can from them; and, as long as there is any thing to be learned, he will never give over. But now if we read this Proverb, as it is render'd in the margin of our Bibles, *He that separateth himself seeketh according to his desire, and intermedleth in every businessse*, there are divers other expositions that may be given of it. As 1. thus: *He that separateth himself*, to wit, from his friend, as desiring to break off friendship with him; *seeketh according to his desire*, that is, he seeketh some occasion or other to effect what he desireth: *and intermedleth in every businessse*; that is, he will be catching at every word that is spoken, at every thing that is done, though it be in businessses that no way concern himself, that he may find some pretence to make a breach, or to justify the breach he hath made, between him and his friend. Or 2. thus: *He that separateth himself*, to wit, in the avoiding of all lets & impediments that may crosse his desire; *seeketh according to his desire*, that is, seeketh after that which he desireth: *and intermedleth in every businessse*; that is, he will leave no stone unrolled, no course unattempted, whereby he may hope to effect his desire. Or 3. thus: *He that separateth himself*, that is, He that out of self-conceit, & peevish stubbornnesse, withdraws himself from the company and conversation of others, as loving to goe in a way by himself, though it be crosse to all the world, relying with confidence upon his own judgement, and despising the judgement of others; *seeketh according to his desire*, that is, he pursueth his own desires, and whatever it is wherein he pleaseth himself: *and intermedleth in every businessse*; that is, he will be meddling where he lists, whatever the businessse be, though it no way concerns him. Or 4. thus: *He that separateth himself*, *seeketh according to his desire*; that is, He that upon causelesse pretences doth separate himself from the communion of the Church, and the assemblies where God is worshipped, doth quickly shake off all fear of God and man, and with an unbridled desire seeks to satisfie his own lusts, in doing whatever seems good in his own eyes.

Verf. 2. *A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover it self.* That is, say some Expositours, he delights in knowledge for no other reason, but that he may in a vain-glorious manner vaunt himself of it. But I rather take it thus: either 1. that A fool hath no delight in knowledge or piety, or any thing that is good, (though he may doe that which simply in it self is good, yet he never doeth it with any delight) but that all his delight is in wicked speeches and actions, whereby he discovers the wickednesse that is in his heart; or 2. that he delights not to hear the wisdom and understanding of others, as namely their wise instructions & counsels, but that all his desire is, that he may be heard himself, that he may vent what he hath conceived in his heart, or any thing that comes into his mind, though it be never so foolish, or that he may follow his own humour against all that can be said to the contrary, whereby the wickednesse of his heart is notably discovered.

Verf. 3. *When the wicked cometh, then cometh contempt, &c.*] See the Note chap. 11. 2. where the same thing is said of the proud man in particular. Yet some extend this farther, as namely, that the wicked are wont to contemn both God and man, all laws & admonitions, all dangers and punishments, so that nothing can restrain them from their wicked waies: *and with ignominy, reproach*; to wit, because where the wicked man cometh, he is not only wont to contemn men, but also to cast upon them all the ignominy and disgrace he can, and therewith also to load them with reproaches. Yet the meaning of this last clause may be, as well as the former, that both contempt and ignominy and reproach do, by the just judgement of God, follow the wicked man wherever he goeth.

Verf. 4. *The words of a mans mouth are as deep waters, &c.*] That is, The words of a wise mans mouth are as deep waters: to wit, 1. because they are full of profound wisdom, which every shallow capacity cannot comprehend; at least there is more wisdom in his words, then one would at first think there is; the force & weight of his words is not easily discerned: and 2. because such a man utters such words both continually & plenteously, nor can ever be drawn dry; see the Note chap. 10. 11. And indeed that this is meant peculiarly of the words of a wise man, is evident by the following clause, *and the wel-spring of wisdom is as a flowing brook*; wherein either the same thing is again expressed in other terms, to wit, that the wise mans mouth, which is here termed *the wel-spring of wisdom*, is as an ever-flowing brook; or else, a reason is given of the former clause, to wit, that because the wisdom of the wise is as a fountain or spring within him, therefore wise speech doth stream forth from him *as a flowing brook*.

Verf. 5. *It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgement.*] As if he should have said, Though it may seem a point of wisdom and policy, for gain & favour to do so; yet it will be found to be in truth a thing both sinfull & perillous: see the Note chap. 17. 26. And by *the wicked & the righteous* here may be meant, only such whose cause is wicked or righteous. Yet it may be understood generally of men that are wicked or righteous, because usually such as the man is such is the cause which he maintains.

Verf. 6. *A fools lips enter into contention, &c.*] That is, Witleffe men, void of naturall wisdom, or wicked gracelesse fools, by the rashnesse & folly, or by the wickednesse of their speeches, by their slanders & scoffs, and other injurious insolent speeches, do not only stir up contention, brabbling, & wrangling between themselves and others, but also fighting, as is implied in the following clause, *and his mouth calleth for strokes*; that is, it provokes men to strike him, or sets others together by the eares. But yet that expression in the first clause, of entering into contention, may be meant of such as will be meddling with the quarrells of others; and then by their folly, though haply interposing themselves under a pretence of making peace, do encrease the quarrell, and it may be become parties in it, and get some mischief amongst them.

Verf. 7. *A fools mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*] To wit, in that they speak those things that bring their very lives in danger, yea their souls too without repentance. But see the Notes chap. 10. 14. and 12. 13. and 13. 3.

Verf. 8.

Verf. 8. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, &c.*] Reading this clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *The words of a tale-bearer are like as when men are wounded*, the meaning seems to be this: that tale-bearers are wont to whisper softly when they tell tales of their brethren; and withall, that they use to speak as if they were wounded at the very heart for that which they report, & were full loath to speak what they do speak, but that they see there is a necessity that it must be spoken of. And then also the following words, *and they goe down into the innermost parts of the belly*, must accordingly be understood thus: that by his speaking so hypocritically, as one that is grieved, the tale-bearer is the sooner believed, his words goe glib down into the heart of him that heareth them, being entertained without any questioning the truth of them, and so they wound the more deeply him that is slandered. But now according to our translation the meaning of the words is clear: *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds*; namely, in that they wound (see the Note chap. 12. 18.) both 1. him to whom he speaks, in that he is brought to think ill of his brother, & haply to hate and prosecute him, that hath deserved no ill at his hands; and 2. him especially of whom he speaks, in regard of the infamy & trouble they bring upon him, and that they alienate the hearts of his dearest friends from him; & hence also that is added, *& they goe down into the innermost parts of the belly*; whereby is meant, that they wound the very heart of him that is slandered, yea that the wounds wherewith he is wounded in his credit, or otherwise, are incurable wounds, as when a man is wounded in his very entrails.

Verf. 9. *He also that is slothfull in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.*] That is, The prodigall & the slothfull man are cousin germans, they are like to one another, and the one shall come to poverty as certainly as the other, because as the one squanders all away through excess & riot, so the other gets nothing through sloth and idlenesse. But why is that word *also* added? *He also that is slothfull, &c.* With reference to what was said in the foregoing verse concerning the tale-bearer, & that to intimate, that as the talebearer is to be disliked, so also is the slothfull person: or, only to set forth the better the intended comparison between the prodigall and the sluggard; that as the one, so also the other must needs come to want and misery.

Verf. 10. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 20. 1, 7: *the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* In the Hebrew it is, *and is set aloft*; that is, he is above the reach of any danger, according to that Psal. 91. 7. *but it shall not come nigh thee.*

Verf. 11. *The rich mans strength is his strong city, &c.*] See the Note chap. 10. 15. Some observe that *the Name of the Lord* in the foregoing verse is compared only to *a strong tower*, but the riches of the worldling here to *a strong city*; and conceive it is, because there are more that trust in their riches, then that trust in the Name of the Lord; or because worldlings conceit that their riches are a far stronger defence to them, then the Name of the Lord is to the righteous.

Verf. 12. *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, &c.*] See the Note chap. 10. 2: *and before honour is humility*; see the Note chap. 15. 33.

Verf. 13. *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, &c.*] That is, before a man hath fully spoken what he hath to say, (which many will doe, that they may seem to be of a nimble and quick apprehension) or, before he well understands what it is that a man saith to him: *it is folly and shame to him*; that is, every one will count it an act of great folly in him to doe so, and thus it will be a great disgrace to him; or by his unfit & ridiculous answers he discovers his folly; and so whilst he would be thought to be very wise, he proclaims his own folly, & whilst he seeks to be praised, he gets nothing but shame and dishonour. But yet the Proverb may be meant also of those that will give sentence in any controversy before they have fully heard both parties; & likewise of those that, being transported with passion, will not hear a mans just defence. And observable it is, that this which we translate, *He that answereth a matter, &c.* is in the Original, *He that returneth a word, &c.* whereby may be implied, that to interpose so much as a word before a man understands a businesse, is an act of folly, and much more to frame a long and serious discourse about it.

Verf. 14. *The spirit of a man, &c.*] That is, say some, A manly courageous spirit; or rather, The spirit of a man, to wit, that is sound & chearfull, (for this is set against a *wounded spirit* in the following clause) through the assurance of Gods favour, and the testimony of a good conscience, *will sustain his infirmity*; that is, will inable him to bear with patience and chearfulness any sickness or distresse wherewith the outward man is afflicted: *but a wounded spirit who can bear*; that is, no man can bear that, without the speciall grace & supporting comforts of God. Be a man of never so great strength of body, & in never so comfortable a condition for outward things, that will not ease the distresse of the spirit, as the chearfulness of the spirit will refresh a man in his bodily infirmities.

Verf. 15. *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge, &c.*] To wit, by meditation, & by its earnest desire after knowledge: & *the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge*; to wit, by attending upon instruction. See the Note chap. 1. 5.

Verf. 16. *A mans gift maketh room for him, &c.*] To wit, in that it is usually the means to free men out of prison, or any other great streights they are in; and especially in that it procures free access into the presence of great men, & a gracious audience before them, yea many times acquaintance and favour with them, and places of preferment about them: all which may be comprehended in the following words, *and bringeth him before great men.*

Verf. 17. *He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just, &c.*] That is, He that first pleadeth his cause before a magistrate or others, seemeth a while, both to the judge, and others that hear him, to have a very righteous cause; not only because men are inclinable to think that no man would begin to complain except he had a just cause, but also because by the fair glosse which such a man will set upon his cause, men are usually so prepossessed, that they are over-ready to prejudge a cause before they have heard the other party: *but his neighbour cometh*; that is, he that hath the controversy with him cometh in the second place to reply upon him; *and searcheth him*; that is, he examines what he hath said, and inquires farther into the cause, haply by questioning him in divers particulars, and so dis-

discovers his falshood, and the injustice of his cause. Which is just that which we say in our English Proverb, that One mans tale or cause is good till another be heard.

Verf. 18. *The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.*] That is, it quietly makes a division of any thing about which there is strife, and that not only amongst the meaner sort of people, but also amongst princes and great men; who are particularly mentioned, (to shew the benefit of this way of deciding controversies) because such men, by reason of their power & stoutnesse, are most hardly brought to yield to that which is just in an ordinary way, & when they are at variance, are hardliest pacified, & most able to doe much mischief, & to hold out long in their suits and quarrells; and because their contentions do usually spread from them to many others that have dependance upon them.

Verf. 19. *A brother offended is harder to be wonne then a strong city, &c.*] Which, because of its strength, cannot be taken by force, and because of the inhabitants confidence in its strength, is scarce ever like to be yielded up: *and their contentions are like the barres of a castle*; that is, they are strong & vehement; they are no more like to be decided & broken off, then such barres are to be broken or cut asunder.

Verf. 20. *A mans belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, &c.*] The fruit here meant is the good or evil that redounds to men by their speaking, according as they use their tongues either well or ill. And because he calls this the fruit of the mouth, therefore the plentiful reward that shall be given him is accordingly set forth in that figurative expression, that his belly shall be therewith satisfied.

Verf. 21. *Death & life are in the power of the tongue, &c.*] That is, By the ill or well using of their tongues, men may be the means of death or life, both temporall & eternall, to themselves or others: *and they that love it*, to wit, their tongue, say some Expositours, and thereupon do carefully keep it and watch over it, as men are wont to doe over some precious fruit-tree, *shall eat the fruit thereof*; or rather, *and they that love it, shall eat the fruit thereof*, that is, according as men delight to speak either evil or good, so they shall eat the fruit of death or life. And indeed the smooth speeches of hypocrites tend not to life, because they delight not in them; nor shall they be destroyed that may speak evil, but delight not in it.

Verf. 22. *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, &c.*] This may be said, either 1. because it is in it self a good thing to have a wife, according to that Gen. 2. 18. *It is not good for man to be alone*; or else 2. rather, because by a wife Solomon meaneth a good wife, (as Eccles. 7. 1. in the Original *a name* is put for a good name, and Isa. 1. 18. *wool* is put for *white wool*) such an one as God created a wife to be, a help to her husband; for such an one is only a wife indeed; and therefore *whoso findeth a wife*, that is, whosoever upon diligent enquiry findeth what he sought after, (and which is indeed hardly to be found) to wit, a good wife, findeth a good thing, that is, a very great blessing: *and obtaineth favour of the Lord*; to wit, in that the Lord bestoweth one of his own daughters in marriage upon him.

Verf. 23.

Verf. 23. *The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly.*] To wit, to the poor mans entreaties: or, it may be meant in generall, that his language is usually boisterous and rugged.

C H A P. XIX.

Verf. 1. **B**etter is the poor that walketh in his integrity, &c.] That is, that endeavoureth to carry himself uprightly both in word and deed, and thereby manifesteth himself to be a wise man: *then he that is perverse in his lips*; that is, then the rich man, that makes no conscience of speaking wickedly, (see the Note chap. 17. 20.) nor consequently of doing wickedly, and that haply enricheth himself by his wicked tongue: *and is a fool*; that is, and so sheweth himself to be a simple gracelesse wretch. Solomon himself doth thus explain this, chap. 28. 6. *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, then he that is perverse in his waies, though he be rich.*

Verf. 2. *Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good, &c.*] See the Note chap. 17. 26: *and he that hasteth with his feet, sinneth*; that is, he that runneth rashly upon the prosecuting of any business. Now this is added as an effect of the want of knowledge, whereof he had spoken in the foregoing clause, to wit, that a man that is heady & rash in doing any thing for want of knowledge, and a wise and prudent considering of things before-hand, must needs be subject to sin, even as a man when he runneth is subject to stumble. As for that word *also* in the beginning of this Proverb, some refer it to the foregoing verse, where having said that *he that is perverse in his lips is a fool*, he thereupon addeth here, that indeed to be a fool, to be without knowledge, it is not good. But others conceive that it is added only to imply, how alike mischievous ignorance and rashness are; as if he had said, As rashness maketh men miscarry in their businesses, so also doth want of knowledge.

Verf. 3. *The foolishness of man perverteth his waies, &c.*] That is, his ignorance or wickedness causeth him to sin; or, it makes all his enterprises and affairs successlesse, and brings many miseries and judgements upon him: *and his heart fretteth against the Lord*; that is, though with his tongue he doth not openly blaspheme, yet secretly in his heart he murmureth against God, as if God, and not his own folly, was to be blamed, both for his sin and misery.

Verf. 7. *All the brethren of the poor do hate him; how much more do his friends, goe far from him? &c.*] That is, his companions that formerly made a shew of friendship to him: *he pursueth them with words*; that is, with many entreaties, & challenges of former promises, &c: *yet they are wanting to him*; that is, they fail him, and will shew no friendship to him.

Verf. 8. *He that keepeth understanding, &c.*] That is, that not only heareth the instructions of Gods word, but also pondereth them in his mind, and retaineth them in his memory, and practiseth them with diligence and perseverance: *shall find good*; to wit, both in this life, and that which is to come.

Verf. 9. *A false witness shall not be unpunished; & he that speaketh lyes shall perish.*] The reason why this Proverb, which is the very same with that before verf. 5. almost

most word for word, is so presently repeated again, may be with reference to the foregoing Proverbs: for having spoken vers. 7. how men in their poverty are forsaken of their friends, because it is usuall with men to professe much love, and to make great promises to men in their prosperous estate, which if they fall afterwards into poverty they never make good, therefore this may be again here repeated concerning Gods usuall severity in punishing such perfidious lyars; and that because such men might have perished in their poverty for want of relief from their friend, though it may be from God, by reason of their piety, they may find good, as was implied in the foregoing verse.

Vers. 10. *Delight is not seemly for a fool; much lesse for a servant to have rule over princes.*] Under that expression, *Delight is not seemly for a fool*, some conceive that the contrary is implied, to wit, that not delight, but a rod rather is fit for a fool, correction rather then recreation, as was said before chap. 10. 13. And those that by *delight* here do particularly understand pastime & recreation, to wit, that this is fit only for those that have wearied themselves in good employments, and is not seemly for fools that never busie themselves in any such way, they conceive of the comparison that Solomon here frames thus; that if delight or pleasure, which is but meer vanity, be not seemly for a fool, much lesse can authority, & that over princes, which is a matter of so great consequence, be seemly for a servant, who is usuall foolish, and knoweth not how to manage so great a preferment. Yea and some, because of the opposition of a servant in the second clause, do understand both clauses of servants; that it becomes not a foolish servant to be brought up in delight & pleasure, much lesse is it seemly for such an one to have rule over princes. But commonly by *delight* Expositours understand a joyfull & pleasant life, together with all things wherein worldly men are wont to delight, as delicious fare, gorgeous apparell, stately houses, health and wealth, &c. and this they say *is not seemly*, to wit, in the eyes of God & good men, *for a fool*, that is, a wicked man; & that because such a man will be hardened hereby in his wickednesse, and flatter himself from hence that God delights in him, and will abuse all that he enjoyeth to his own & other mens undoing. And accordingly they understand the last clause also, *much lesse for a servant*, that is, a wicked man, who is alwaies of a servile disposition, *to rule over princes*, that is, over good men. And they give the sense of the Proverb thus; that if all outward contentments are too good for wicked men, much more authority over Gods righteous servants. But though this exposition is very right in other regards, yet because I conceive the last clause must be literally understood of servants & princes, I rather take the drift of this Proverb to be this; that if delight and prosperity in outward things be not seemly for a wicked fool, because through his folly he will abuse them to his own and others hurt, much lesse can it be seemly for a servant to rule over princes, because such when they are exalted know not how to carry themselves in their places, and so are wont to be proud and insolent, and to tyrannize over them that are under their power.

Vers. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, &c.*] That is, it makes him slow to anger; though the world counts those men fools, that will patiently suffer

fer injuries, yet it is indeed a high part of wisdom to doe so: *and it is his glory to passe over a transgression*; that is, to take no notice of it, or to forgive it, though most men also look upon this as a base and disgracefull thing: see the Note chap. 16. 32.

Verf. 12. *The kings wrath is as the roaring of a lion, &c.*] To wit, which is the king of beastes: *but his favour is as dew upon the grasse*; see the Notes chap. 16. 14, 15.

Verf. 13. *A foolish son is the calamity of his father, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 1. and 17. 21: *and the contentions of a wife are a continuall dropping*; to wit, either 1. because even as a stone will be worn away with continuall dropping of water upon it, so the continuall quarrels and brawlings of a wife will wear out the patience, yea the health & strength and life, of the most stout-hearted men: or 2. because as when rain drops through the roof of a house upon the walls, timber, boards and household-stuffe, yea & upon those that dwell in the house, as they are at their work, or at their meat, or sleeping in their beds, this must needs soil & marre and rot both house and household-stuffe, & be tedious to the inhabitants, and make them at last to leave their dwelling; so the contentions & brawling of an unquiet wife do not only disturb the whole family, and make them weary of their dwelling, but also in particular is such a continuall vexation to her poor husband, who cannot turn her out of doors, as he may an ungracious son, that he cannot with any peace or content abide in the house with her, but is many times forced to goe abroad and leave his house and calling, (whereby their estate also is ruined) and sometimes utterly to forsake her.

Verf. 14. *House and riches are the inheritance of fathers, and a prudent wife is from the Lord.*] That is, say some, Though a father leaves his son never so great an estate, yet that cannot procure him a prudent wife; that God only can bestow upon him: or, A good wife is to be esteemed a more divine gift then any inheritance that can be left a man by his fathers. But rather the ground of this expression is this, that there is a more especiall providence of God in procuring a man a prudent wife, then a great estate; and that humane wisdom & industry doth usually strike a greater stroke in providing houses and riches for men, then in providing good wives for them: and that because 1. Parents are usually more solicitous to get rich wives for their sons then prudent wives; 2. a good wife is hardly to be found, and hardly to be known, it is God only that knows exactly what a wife will prove; and so it is an easier matter to purchase house and lands, then to procure a good wife; and 3. it is God only that gives wisdom & knits hearts together; Parents may contrive marriages for their children, but God disposeth of their affections as he pleaseth.

Verf. 15. *Slothfullnesse casteth into a deep sleep, &c.*] The meaning may be either 1. that it maketh a man to give up himself to immoderate sleeping, whereby time is lost & his calling neglected, or 2. that it makes men stupid, and blockish, and lumpish, even as if they were asleep, yea as if they were dead men: it makes men carelesse and negligent in their affairs, and senselesse of the misery they are like to bring upon themselves, which yet will come upon them, as the next clause sheweth, *and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

Verf. 16.

Verf. 16. *He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul, &c.*] That is, He that sincerely desireth & endeavoureth to keep Gods commandments, doth thereby preserve himself from death temporall and eternall: for that this is the meaning of these words appears by the opposite clause, *but he that despiseth his wayes shall die*; that is, that lives carelessly, and walks at randome, not minding what he doth; or that taketh no care to order his life according to Gods commandments; see the Note chap. 13. 13. But this Proverb may be understood also of observing or despising the command of the civil Magistrate.

Verf. 18. *Chasten thy son while there is hope; and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*] Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *to his destruction*; or, *to cause him to die*. And the meaning may be, either that the fathers sparing of his child would tend to his destruction, and, as we use to say, bring him to the gallows: or, that a father should not forbear, when his sons wickednesse so required, to cause him to be put to death, according to that law made for a rebellious son Deut. 21. 18, 21.

Verf. 19. *A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment; for if thou deliver him, &c.*] To wit, whether it be by appeasing his wrath, or by freeing him from the danger whereinto by his passion he had brought himself: *thou must do it again*; and that because he will upon some other occasion be passionate again, and so by his passion will bring himself again and again into danger.

Verf. 20. *Hear counsell and receive instruction, &c.*] That is, the counsell and instruction that is here given in this Book; or rather, the counsell and instruction of God and all good men in generall: *that thou mayest be wise in thy later end*; that is, that though thou hast spent the former part of thy time in vanity and wickednesse, yet thou mayest be wise at last; or, that thou mayest be wise when thou comest to be old, or when thou comest to die, to wit, that then it may appear that thou art wise, & that then thou mayest reap the fruit thereof: for the meaning is not that we should not seek to be wise in our youth; but therefore it is said *that thou mayest be wise in thy later end*, because then wisdom stands men in most stead, and all their felicity depends upon their being wise then.

Verf. 21. *There are many devices in mans heart, neverthelesse the counsell of the Lord that shall stand.*] Some by the counsell of the Lord here do understand the counsell that he gives unto men in his word, and accordingly they understand this place thus; that when men are in a demurre what to doe, they have usually many devices in their heads, never regarding the directions of Gods word, whether or no that which they contrive be agreeable to what is there enjoyned: but it is they only that follow the counsell of Gods word that shall prosper in what they undertake. But I rather conceive that it is the eternall purpose and decree of God that is here called the counsell of the Lord: & so the meaning of the words seems to be this; that men have usually many various devices in their thoughts for the effecting of what they desire, which in the conclusion come to nothing; but that Gods counsell is alwaies unchangeably the same, and sure to be accomplished. See the Notes chap. 16. 1, 9.

Verf. 22. *The desire of a man is his kindnesse, &c.*] That is, That which a man doth naturally desire, or which he ought to desire, is that he may be able to shew kind-

kindnesse to others, that he may be open-handed and bountifull to those that stand in need of it: *and a poor man is better then a liar*; that is, a poor man that hath not to give, and yet haply desires to give if he had it, is better (see the Note 2 Cor. 12. 8.) then a rich man that pretends himself not able to give, when he hath abundance, or that promiseth to give, & doth not, and that maketh a shew of kindnesse, when there is no such thing in his heart, and so is a liar; or, a poor man is better then a false-dealing rich man. Thus, I conceive, this Proverb may be best understood. Yet there are many other expositions given of it that are not altogether improbable: as 1. that men are usually kind to others with an aim to procure from them the accomplishment of their desire in some greater matter, and that a poor man that hath nothing to give is better then such an one that makes merchandise of his kindnesse: or 2. that there is nothing makes a man more to be desired amongst men then his kindnesse, &c: or 3. that it is usuall with men to pretend that their desire of riches is merely that they may be kind and bountifull to others; but that a poor man, who is contented with his mean estate, is better then a rich man that falsly seeks to hide his covetousnesse, under a pretence of intending to doe good unto others: or 4. that men are ambitious to shew kindnesse, and not to stand in need of the relief of others; but that a poor man, not ashamed of his poverty, is better then one that will make a shew of giving, though he be fitter to receive alms from others.

Verf. 23. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 27, and 14. 27: *and he that hath it shall abide satisfied*; to wit, with abundance of all desireable blessings; or with his interest in God, and his assurance of Gods provident care over him: *he shall not be visited with evil*; that is, with any thing that shall be truly hurtfull to him.

Verf. 24. *A slothfull man hideth his hand in his bosome, &c.*] To wit, that in cold weather he may there keep it warm: *and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again*; to wit, to feed himself; which is an hyperbolicall expression, shewing that hunger cannot prevail against such mens sloth, and that they will not doe, nor not those things that are most easie and most necessary to be done: see chap. 26. 12.

Verf. 25. *Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware, &c.*] That is, though it will doe no good to the scorner, yet another man that errs out of weaknesse and ignorance will take warning by it: *and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge*; that is, he will understand his errour, & mend what is amiss; there will be no need to smite him, a gentle reproof will serve the turn. Yet this last clause, *and he will understand knowledge*, may be referred to the simple man before mentioned: and then the meaning of the words is, that as the simple man will reap good by the punishment of the scorner, so also by the wise mans being reprov'd; for (thinks he) if such a prudent good man be reprov'd, and takes it well, much more were it fit that I should doe so.

Verf. 26. *He that wasteth his father, &c.*] To wit, his estate, by his prodigality, or by purloining his goods from him, or his body, by grief for his lewd courses: *& chaseth away his mother*; that is, that barbarously driveth her out of doors; or that causeth her to withdraw her self into a corner to hide her self, or to get abroad

abroad out of her house, as not being able to endure his insolency, or to be where he is, because of his ungracious carriage of himself; or, that by his wasting her estate when her husband is dead causeth her to sell her house, & to forsake her habitation where for many years she had lived: *is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach*; see the Note chap. 10. 5.

Verf. 27. *Cease, my son, &c.*] See the Note Psal. 34. 11: *to hear the instruction that causeth to erre from the words of knowledge*; as if he should have said, Though thou hast done it formerly, yet for the time to come hearken no longer to the instruction of those false teachers, that would draw thee into errors, or to those evil counsellors, that would draw thee from the waies of true wisdom into the waies of wickednesse.

Verf. 28. *An ungodly witnesse scorneth judgement, &c.*] That is, he maketh a mock of justice and equity, of the law of God, and of all juridicall proceedings, which are for the detecting & punishment of offenders; yea he derides and slights all the punishments which by the laws of God and man are denounced against false witnesses. And indeed that this last is principally meant here by judgement seems the more probable, because of that which is added in the following verse, *Judgements are prepared for scorers, &c.* As for the next clause, *and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity*, the chief thing intended thereby is, that wicked mens mouths are full of lies and all evil language whatsoever, and that they make no bones of it, they speak all manner of evil without fear or shame, or any remorse whatsoever. But see also the Notes Job 15. 16. and 34. 7.

Verf. 29. *Judgements are prepared for scorers, &c.*] That is, Though judgement is not alwaies presently executed upon them, yet many heavy punishments are appointed for them, & are in a readinesse to be executed on them, either by God or man. And the same thing is meant in the following clause, *and stripes for the back of fools*; namely, that shamefull and inevitable judgements are stored up for them: see the Note chap. 10. 13.

C H A P. XX.

Verf. 1. **W***ine is a mocker, &c.*] The meaning of this may be, that wine doth delude and mock those that drink it, and as it were make fools of them: both in that it doth allure and draw them on by its colour and delicious tast to drink much of it, as if there were no danger, nothing but delight and pleasure in it, till on a suddain they are insnared and overcome by it, and then it brings many inconveniencies and miseries upon them; and likewise in that when they are so overtaken by it, it makes them ridiculous to others, so that men doe usually deride, mock, and make themselves sport with them. And this exposition may seem the more probable, because it agreeth so well with the last words in this verse, *and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise*. But yet because this suits not so well with the next following words, *strong drink is raging*, I rather, as do the most Expositours, understand this Proverb thus: *Wine is a mocker*; that is, it maketh men mockers & profane scorers, and hence it is that the Prophet joineth drunkennesse and scorning together, Hos. 7. 5. *In the day of*

our king the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine, he stretched out his hand with scorn. [And thus Solomon, having in the end of the foregoing chapter spoken of the judgements that are prepared for scorers, doth here make known one particular, which doth usually make men scorers: *Strong drink is raging*; that is, it maketh men outrageous: *and whosoever is deceived thereby*; to wit, by being wonne thereby to take it immoderately, or by being caught and overcome thereby to his hurt, or by being brought thereby to doe any thing foolishly and unadvisedly, which not being in drink he would not have done, which is called erring through wine Isa. 28. 7: *is not wise*; that is, he makes himself thereby a very fool, as we use to say, when the wine is in, the wit is out; or rather, he thereby sheweth himself a fool, and reapeth the fruit of his folly.

Verf. 2. *The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion, &c.*] See the Note, chap. 19. 12: *whoso provoketh him to anger*; to wit, by any unwarrantable disobedience or misdemeanour: *sinneeth against his own soul*; that is, doth by his sin expose his life to manifest danger. See the Note chap. 16. 14.

Verf. 3. *It is an honour for a man to cease from strife, &c.*] That is, to avoid all strife by all possible means; or, to give it over, even after he is engaged in it, which is indeed the hardest task, because men are wont to esteem this of all other the greatest dishonour to them; but therefore it is also the greater proof of a mans wisdom to doe so: see the Notes chap. 16. 32. and 19. 11: *but every fool will be meddling*; that is, intermeddling with strife, or with other mens matters, which is usually the occasion of strife. And this being an act of great folly, is therefore much to his shame and reproach.

Verf. 4. *The sluggard will not plow, by reason of the cold, &c.*] Or, the winter: *therefore shall he beg in harvest*; to wit, when others have great plenty, which must needs be an eye-sore and hearts-grief unto him: *and have nothing*; that is, nothing to reap; or, nothing shall be given him, no not at that time, when because their store comes in then abundantly, men are most forward to give, yea even to the brute beasts.

Verf. 5. *Counsell in the heart of a man is like deep waters, &c.*] That is, ability to teach and advise men; or, which is all one in effect, wisdom & prudence, which are the springs of all good counsell, do abound in the heart of a wise man, even as deep waters or a spring of water, that can never be drawn dry: *but a man of understanding will draw it out*; that is, he will use means to get it out of him; there is nothing that the other knows, but some way or other he will learn it of him: see the Note chap. 18. 4. The thoughts, & intentions, & designs of mens hearts are like waters that are of a great depth, to the bottome whereof men cannot easily dive to find what is there, or like waters that are in a deep pit or well, or far somewhere under ground, which cannot easily be gotten up; and that because it is in a manner impossible to know what is in the heart of a man, (*for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, which is in him?* saith the Apostle 1 Cor. 2. 11.) especially when he shall set himself to dissemble & conceal his purposes. And some think too that *man* is here mentioned in opposition to women, who are usually more inclinable to blab forth all that is in their thoughts: but.

but a man of understanding will draw it out: that is, a wise man will many times by the prudent observation of mens gestures and actions, the words that fall from them, and the company that they keep, by propounding questions to them, and entering discourse with them, as if they minded something else, guesse very right concerning that which is in their hearts.

Verf. 6. *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodnesse; but a faithfull man who can find?*] The meaning of this is very easy. But if we read the first clause as it is in the margin of our Bible, *most men will proclaim every one his own bounty*, &c. then the meaning may be, either 1. that it is usuall with men to boast of the great good they have done, or which they intend to doe for others, but that it is rare to find a man that really hath done what he saith he hath done, or that doth faithfullly make good his great promises; or 2. that it is easier to find men that are bountifull to others, then to find faithfull men, that injure no man, or then it is to find one that is a faithfull good man in every regard; or 3. that amongst the many that will boast of their bounty, there are but few to be found that are faithfull therein, that is, that do good to others sincerely for Gods sake, with a good conscience, and out of unfeigned love to those to whom it is done.

Verf. 7. *The just man walketh in his integrity, his children are blessed after him.*] To wit, the rather because he will be sure to leave nothing to his children but what was well gotten; & because many times such children, by reason of the good example and education of their parents, are also righteous themselves. But see the Note also Psal. 37. 26.

Verf. 8. *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgement, scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*] Either the meaning is, in generall, that where the magistrate doth look to see judgement carefully and constantly executed upon offenders, wickednesse will not there dare to appear: or else it may be meant particularly of the supreme magistrate, to wit, that when he keeps a watchfull eye over the whole kingdom, this will suppress all vice amongst the people; or rather, that when he doth use to sit in the judgement-seat in his own person, and doth not leave all to be done by inferiour judges; this his care to see things, with his own eyes, and accordingly to judge of them, will be a singular means to restrain the people from much evil, & that because he is not in such danger to be corrupted, and is wont to punish with greatest severity, & by reason of the majesty of his person, is most terrible to offenders. Yet the meaning of this expression may be also, that such a king may with a frown awe his people from doing evil.

Verf. 10. *Divers weights and divers measures both of them are alike abomination to the Lord.*] As namely, when men keep a lesser wherewith to sell to those that are simple and may be easily gulled, and a greater for the wiser sort. But see the Notes chap. 11. 1. and 16. 11. and Deut. 25. 13.

Verf. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, &c.*] That is, By that which is commonly and generally done by a young child in his gestures, speeches and actions, a very probable discovery may be made concerning him: *whether his work be pure, or whether his work be right*; that is, whether that which he doeth for the present be pure and right as it ought to be, whether there be a work of saving grace

grace wrought in him, and so whether that which he doeth proceeds from an honest upright heart, and consequently whether he be like to take a good course when he comes to mans estate.

Verf. 12. *The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.*] Solomons drift in mentioning this may be to imply, either 1. that therefore God must needs hear and see whatever is spoken or done by men, for which see the Note Psal. 94. 9: or, 2. that therefore God can give or withhold the use of these senses to men as seemeth good to himself, and consequently that it is fit that men should be thankfull to God for them, & not abuse them in any sinfull way, but use them to his glory, and for those ends for which they were especially given them of God; as namely their ears to hear the instruction of wisdom, and their eyes to view Gods works both of creation and providence, & to look into those holy writings, which God hath given men for the well-ordering of their lives: yea and that when men do thus use them in a right manner, it is fit that they should acknowledge that this also is the gift of God, and that it is not of themselves. But then again this may be understood of a spirituall ability to see and to hear. And indeed severall of our best Expositours do understand it particularly thus: that the seeing eye of the teacher, or of the magistrate, whereby he looks to the well-ordering of the people, & the hearing ear of the people, whereby they hearken to the instruction of their teachers, and the command of their superiours, are both from God; so that neither are therefore to insult over the other, but that the welfare of kingdoms and commonwealths procured hereby is wholly to be ascribed to God.

Verf. 15. *There is gold and a multitude of rubies, &c.*] As if he should have said, Many such precious things there are in the world, which worldly men do highly esteem: *but the lips of knowledge*, that is, wise & gracious speech, *are a precious jewel*, that is, far more precious, then those precious things before-mentioned: see the Note chap. 3. 14. And hereby may be meant, both what a treasure it is for a man to be able to speak wisely and learnedly, and likewise what a precious privilege it is to be instructed in the word and wisdom of God by such a man.

Verf. 16. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 6. 1. and 11. 15. The meaning may be only this, that if a man be so foolish, as to be surety for strangers whom he knoweth not, we may be assured that such a man will in time be brought to such poverty, that sooner or later his very garments will be taken from him, to satisfy some debt for which he hath engaged himself. Yet some take it as an advice given to the friends of such a man, that they shall doe well to get what they can from him, and reserve it for his use in a time of need, because otherwise all that he hath will be seized on by the Creditor, to whom he hath engaged himself, and then he will not have a coat to put upon his back. And the most of Expositours take it as spoken to those that should engage themselves, or lend any thing to a man that is so ready to be surety for others, even for mere strangers: to wit, either that they should not doe this without taking a sure pawn from him for their indemnity, and that because such a man will surely come to poverty, and being so carelesse of himself, he will much
lesse

lesse mind them to whom he is engaged; or, that if he forfeits his pawn, though it were his garment, they should not spare to keep it; or, if he paid not the debt, that they should seise upon what he had, even to his very garments; & that not only thereby to secure themselves, that they may not be put to look after the stranger they know not where, but also because it is fit that such a man should smart for his folly, that he may thereby learn more wit for the time to come. Nor is this, say they, against the Law Exod. 22. 26. *If thou at all take thy neighbours raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that time the sun goeth down, &c.* because that law was made only in favour of the poor, that in extreme need pawned their garments, (as may be seen in the Note there) and not of those that would pretend to be able to passe their word for others. But the first exposition I like the best. As for the following clause, *and take a pledge of him*, that is, of him that will be surety for a strange woman, that is, a woman that he knoweth not, or rather a whorish woman; the drift of this is to shew, that he that will undertake for such a ones debts, or run in debt to gratifie her, is not fit to be trusted without a pledge; both because no faithfulness can be expected from such, and likewise because men may be assured hat such a man will come to beggery.

Verf. 17. *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, &c.*] That is, men are wont to take great delight in that which they get by deceitfull and unjust waies; see the Note chap. 9. 17: *but afterward his mouth shall be filled with gravell;* to wit, by reason of the terrours of conscience, or the heavy judgements of God that shall afterwards seise upon him. In the expression that Solomon here useth there seemeth to be an allusion to gritty bread, made of the grist of corn that hath been thrashed on a gravel-floor, or ground in a mill, immediately after the stones thereof have been picked, or into which in the making of it some gravell hath accidentally fallen; which may well be called *bread of deceit*, because outwardly it seems good bread, but being eaten doth exceedingly pain and hurt a mans teeth. With the like expression the misery of Gods people is set forth in the Babylonian captivity, Lam. 3. 16. *He hath also broken my teeth with gravel-stones.*

Verf. 18. *Every purpose is established by counsell, &c.*] See the Note chap. 15. 22: and much more therefore ought we to take counsell in our weightiest affairs, such as warre is; whence the following words are added, *and with good advice make war.*

Verf. 19. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, revealeth secrets, &c.*] See the Note chap. 11. 13. As if he had said, And therefore though it be good to ask counsell, as was said in the foregoing verse, yet impart not thy secrets to such men. And this indeed is implied in the following words, *therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips;* that is, with him that is a known flatterer; or whom thou maist discern only to pretend friendship, when his heart is not with thee: & that because such men are wont to cogge and flatter, merely that they may fish out mens secrets, and then reveal them to others; or because flatterers, if their counsell be asked, will be sure to say as they say, be it right or wrong, whom through self-love men are very prone to believe. It may be also read, *meddle not with him that enticeth with his lips;* and then it may be meant of those

that by their flatteries entice men to doe any thing that is evil.

Verf. 20. *Whoſo curſeth his father or his mother, &c.*] See the Note Exod. 21. 17: *his lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſſe*; that is, firſt, he ſhall be cut off and die in extreme diſhonour & miſery, and then afterwards alſo ſhall be caſt into the utter darkneſſe of hell; (and that this is principally intended, we may the rather think, becauſe on the contrary long life is promiſed to thoſe that honour their father and mother Exod. 20. 12.) or 2. he ſhall die childleſſe, ſee the Note Pſal. 132. 17. and ſo his name & memory ſhall be utterly taken away; as indeed he that honoureth not his father, deſerves not the honour of being a father; or 3. his proſperity & joy ſhall be turned into extreme miſery, grief and horreur, ſee the Note Job 29. 3. or 4. he ſhall not find any favour, counſell or help, either from God or man, in his greateſt calamities, which makes a mans condition juſt like his, whoſe candle is put out when he is in extreme darkneſſe. But ſee the Notes chap. 13. 9. and Job 18. 5, 6. and 21. 17.

Verf. 21. *An inheritance may be gotten haſtily at the beginning, &c.*] That is, Men may get a fair eſtate on a ſudden, to wit, when they regard not how they get it, ſo they may be ſpeedily rich, and leave their eſtate as an inheritance to their children: *but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed*; that is, it ſhall not proſper in the concluſion, nor prove a bleſſing to him that gets it: to wit, becauſe either it may prove a ſnare to his ſoul, in making him profane & wicked, or it may bring ſome vengeance upon him from God, or fill his ſoul with diſmall terrours of conſcience; or elſe rather, becauſe being thus gotten, haſt uſually makes waſte, in that it was not more ſuddenly gathered then it is ſquandered away, even as meat that is ſwallowed down ſuddenly doth ſeldome nourish the body, but either is vomited up again, or elſe is turned into corrupt humours. This, I conceive, is the plain meaning of this Proverb. Yet, I know, others do underſtand this of thoſe to whom ſome great eſtate falls ſuddenly, & perhaps unexpectedly; who not knowing the labour of getting it, and not having been inured by little & little to bear ſo great proſperity, are wont to be profuſe in their ſpending.

Verf. 22. *Say not thou, I will recompence evil, &c.*] That is, Do not ſo much as threaten it with thy lips, or purpoſe it in thy heart; to wit, not only becauſe it is not lawfull ſo much as to think evil, but alſo becauſe when men have once ſaid they will doe a thing, they are apt to think that then in point of honour or conſcience they are bound to doe it: *but wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee*; he doth not ſay, *and he ſhall revenge thee*, but, *and he ſhall ſave thee*, intimating, that men ſhould not deſire God to take vengeance on their enemies, but only that he would defend them from their enemies. Men are apt to think, that if they do not revenge injuries, every one will trample over them, and ſo they ſhall be utterly undone. But the Holy Ghoſt here aſſures them that there ſhall be no anger here-in, becauſe God ſhall preſerve them. And how much better is it that God ſhould ſave them, then that they by any wicked means ſhould ſave themſelves?

Verf. 23. *Divers weights are an abomination to the Lord, &c.*] See the Note above verf. 10. and chap. 11. 1. and 16. 11. and Deut. 25. 13: *and a false balance is not good*; ſee the Notes chap. 17. 26. and 18. 5.

Verf. 24. *Mans goings are of the Lord, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 16. 1. 9. & Psal. 37. 23 : *how can a man then understand his own way?* that is, since all our actions and the successe thereof depend wholly upon Gods providence, therefore it is not possible that man should know his own way, to wit, what is most expedient to be done by him, or what the event shall be of what he doeth.

Verf. 25. *It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, &c.*] That is, It is a sin that bringeth destruction upon men; see the Note Deut. 7. 16. As birds are destroyed by eating the meat which is laid for them within the snare, & fishes by swallowing the bait upon the hook; so is it with such sacrilegious persons. And by devouring that which is holy is meant, not their eating of Gods holy sacrifices in those times in a heedlesse, rash and profane manner, without any devotion, as some conceive; but mens alienating to their own private ends any thing that was consecrated to holy uses, or which they themselves had vowed to holy uses. And if this last be included, then are the following words added for the farther illustration thereof: *and after vows to make enquiry;* to wit, whether he can doe what he hath vowed or no; or whether he be so indispensably obliged by his vow, that there is no way to be disengaged from it; or if he do break his vow, what satisfaction he may some other way make unto God. And observable it is, that even this enquiring about not fulfilling a vow, because it manifests a desire men have to doe it, is made a grievous sin, yea though the vow be never broken.

Verf. 26. *A wise king scattereth the wicked, &c.*] That is, when they are combined together in any way of wickednesse he disperseth them; or, he cuts them off from amongst the people, see the Note above verf. 8. even as the husbandman with his fan driveth away the chaff from the wheat: for that he alludeth in these words to the husbandmans fanning or winnowing, is the more probable, because in the following clause, *and bringeth the wheel over them*, he seems also to allude to the cart-wheels wherewith in those times they were wont to beat out their corn, whence is that Isa. 28. 27, 28. *The fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin, &c.* But yet this may be meant of some kind of engine, called *the wheel*, used for the torturing and executing of malefactors, even as it is stil in many countries at this day. Or there may be an allusion in the words to the chariot-wheels which they used in the wars, wherewith they ran over the bodies of those that were beaten down before them.

Verf. 27. *The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, &c.*] That is, the soul of man, because of the reason and understanding wherewith God hath endued it, is as a bright shining lamp which God hath set up within man, by the light whereof men see their waies, and are enabled to order their waies as they ought to doe. And some conceive too, that Solomon doth the rather use this expression, 1. because the soul is in the body of man as a candle in a lanthorn; 2. because in regard of its remaining light, even since the fall of man, it is as a lamp shining in the dark night of corrupt nature; & 3. because the light of it is as easily by death extinguished as a candle is blown out. And then by those following words, *searching all the inward parts of the belly*, is meant either particularly that reflect act of mens under-

standing, which we call conscience, whereby men do discern and judge of the most secret thoughts and affections, and desires of their own hearts, according to that of the Apostle 1 Cor. 2. 11. *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* and that especially when the soul is enlightened with grace, and so doth thereby the better discover both his corruptions and graces, and discern in what state he stands with God; (yea some understand it of mens discovering that which is in other mens hearts, for which see the Note above vers. 5.) or rather more generally, that by the light of reason men are able to search out those deep and hidden things, that are as much hidden from the outward view of man, as are the entrails in a mans body, and that there is scarce any thing so secret, either in nature or religion, which men by their knowledge and wisdom will not discover. And very probably we may think, that this here is added with reference to the foregoing verse; because it might be questioned, how a king can scatter the wicked, seeing wicked men are usually so cunning to hide their wickednesse? Solomon answers here, by a mans wisdom and understanding the secretest things may be discovered.

Vers. 28. *Mercy and truth preserve the king, &c.*] As if he should have said, Kings endued with these graces need in a manner no other guard about them; both because hereby they procure the favour of God and man towards them, and likewise because they cut off the wicked that are perillous to them and to their thrones. But see the Notes chap. 3. 3. and 16. 6. and Psal. 61. 67. As for the next clause, *and his throne is upholden by mercy*, that is added to shew, either that however mercy and truth do both tend to a kings preservation, yet mercy hath the chief stroke therein; or else, that as these graces are a great means of safety to a kings person, so they are also a great support to his kingdome: for though mercy be only here again exprest, yet together with that the other may be also implied.

Vers. 29. *The glory of young men is their strength, and the beauty of old men is the gray head.*] See the Note chap. 16. 31. The drift of this Proverb is to shew, that both young and old have their severall ornaments, and so have need of one another, and ought to respect one another.

Vers. 30. *The blewnesse of a wound cleanseth away evil; so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.*] Some take this to be spoken by way of similitude, thus: As by cutting and launcing the body, which doth usually leave blew scars behind it, as in letting blood, or making issues, &c. a great deal of corruption is usually let out of mens bodies, and by that means they are cured of very dangerous diseases; so sharp corrections, which pierce, as it were, even to the very entrails, do purge men from sin; or, so do stripes cleanse men, even from their inward and secret sins. But I see not but that both clauses may be understood of the benefit of correction. *The blewnesse of a wound cleanseth away evil*: sharp reproofs or corrections, whether from God or man, (which are as blows that make men black and blew, or wounds that leave a blew-scar behind them) do make men abandon their evil waies. And then the following clause, *so do stripes the inward parts of the belly*, is added to shew, either that such sharp corrections do purge away even the secret evils

vils of the mind (which are as *the inward parts of the belly*) as well as the wickedness of the outward man; or else that then corrections are in this way profitable to men, when they affect men inwardly, and wound their very hearts and souls with pain and sorrow: wicked men will not be reformed but by exceeding sharp corrections.

C H A P. XXI.

Verf. 1. **T**He kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whethersoever he will.] That is, As husbandmen and others do carry the water of rivers by trenches, water-courses and pipes, into their grounds, or elsewhere which way they please; or rather, As God by his Providence turneth the rivers, sometimes one way and sometimes another, and sometimes causeth them to turn backward a quite contrary way to that wherein they were before going, as seemeth good in his own eyes; so doth he also turn about the thoughts, affections and desires, even of kings themselves, to will and nill what he will have them, sometimes for the benefit, sometimes to the hurt of their subjects, and often contrary to what they had determined. And this is noted as most remarkable in kings, because by reason of their great power and pride, they seem able to doe almost what they please, and are usually so violent and head-strong in their resolutions, that there is no diverting them from what they have purposed or said they will doe; being herein indeed like the heady and violent streams of some great rivers, that carry all before them with unresistable fury; whereas yet notwithstanding they have not so much as their own wills at their own disposing, but God over-rules them as he pleaseth.

Verf. 2. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, &c.] See the Notes chap. 14. 12. and 16. 2.

Verf. 3. To doe justice and judgement, &c.] To doe unto all men that which is every way equall and just; and that not out of any carnall affections, but out of true judgement and approbation of justice: *is more acceptable to the Lord then sacrifice*; that is, then any of the services enjoyned by the ceremoniall law, and consequently then any outward act of Gods worship enjoyned by the moral law, such as prayer and hearing the word, &c. and that because God doth more delight in the solid and substantiall services enjoyned by the law, then in those that are merely externall and ceremoniall, and because he is better pleased with those duties that are profitable to men, then with those that seem more immediately to have respect unto himself.

Verf. 4. An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin.] The difficulty of this Proverb lyes chiefly in the last clause. Some of our best Expositours do literally understand by *the plowing of the wicked*, their labouring in their particular callings; which they say *is sin* in them, because *unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure*, Tit. 1. 15. And thus they make the drift of this

Proverb to be, the setting forth of the misery of wicked men, by shewing that in all things they doe they sin against God; not only in those things which are simply evil in themselves, such as are their proud thoughts and high looks, their ambitious aspiring after things that are too high for them, but also in all their naturall and civill actions, which not being evil in themselves, yet become sin to them; and that because the men being evil, nothing can be good that proceeds from them, as a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, Matth 7. 18. By the wickednesse, the pride & other filthy corruptions that are in their hearts, all their actions must needs be defiled. But then by *the plowing of the wicked* some do understand figuratively the plots and projects and busy endeavours of wicked men; for which see the Note Job 4. 8: & that these are said to be sin, because they are all for some sinfull practise or other, yea for many and manifold sins and mischiefs: and indeed it may be rather understood of the mischief they endeavour to doe, because men in their pride care not what mischief they doe; yea and this is elsewhere called plowing, Psal. 129. 3. *The plowers plowed upon my back, they made long their furrows.* As for that translation of this clause, which is set in the margin of our Bibles, *and the light of the wicked is sin*, if that be received, then the meaning must be, either 1. that wicked men are wont to glory in their sin; so far are they from hiding and bewailing their sins, that they exalt themselves therein, as counting it their only splendour and glory: or 2. that their wisdom and quick-sightednesse in all affairs, wherein they are wont proudly to vaunt themselves, tends to sin, and carries them into many sinfull courses: or 3. that their good works, though they make a splendid shew before men, are an abomination to the Lord: or 4. that their endeavouring to exalt themselves, and to be eminently conspicuous above others, is sin: or 5. that their great prosperity & pomp and glory in the world, wherein they much pride themselves, is an occasion of much sin to them.

Verf. 5. *The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousnesse, &c.*] That is, when a man doth wisely before-hand think and contrive how to manage his affairs, if he do afterwards diligently prosecute what he hath contrived, he must needs grow rich: *but of every one that is hasty only to want*; that is, the thoughts of those that are hasty to be rich, see the Note chap. 20. 21. or of those that rashly doe what ever comes into their minds, without any counsell or deliberation about it, must needs bring them to poverty.

Verf. 6. *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro, &c.*] That is, Treasures gotten by a lying tongue are a vain thing, they no way do good either to them or theirs, nor ever continue with them, but are like dust, or chaff, or smoke, that is scattered by the wind this way and that, till it be brought to nothing; see the Notes chap. 10. 2. and 13. 11: *of them that seek death*; to wit, both temporall and eternall.

Verf. 7. *The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them, &c.*] It is in the Hebrew, *shall saw them*, or *dwell with them*, whereby is meant, that their punishments should be both terrible, and continuall: terrible, not only because of the severity of Gods judgements, but also because terrours of conscience should, as it

were, saw and rear and grate their spirits; and continuall, because, though their wealth gotten by robbery continued not with them, yet the guilt & punishment of their sin should keep fast hold of them and abide with them: *because they refuse to doe judgement*; to wit, in the seat of justice (and if this be taken so, then the robbery of the wicked in the foregoing clause is the oppression of unjust judges, who are indeed the great robbers) or, because they will not doe that which is just and right; they sin not therein through ignorance and infirmity, but wittingly and willingly, and being reprov'd they will not give it over.

Verf. 8. *The way of man is froward, &c.*] That is, The way of man in his naturall estate, being left unto himself, is crooked & sinfull; see the Notes chap. 3. 32. 2 Sam. 22. 27. and Job 5. 13: *and strange*; that is, contrary to all right reason, and no way agreeable to the word of God; strange from what it was, in the state of innocency, or what it should be. Or it may be said to be *strange*, because inclusing such waies, men chuse darknesse rather than light, and death rather than life eternall.

Verf. 9. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, &c.*] That is, It is better to sit moping all alone upon the top of an house (see the Note Deut. 22. 8.) where a man must needs be exposed to all injuries of the weather, heat and cold, wind and rain, thunder and lightening, yea upon the battlements there, or to be penned up in some narrow corner there, so that he can no way stir to avoid the inconveniencies above-said: *then with a brawling woman in a wide house*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *a house of society*; that is, in a fair goodly house, and where there is a great deal of company, to wit, because though that be comfortable in it self, yet it is to such a woman an occasion of the more brawling. So that Solomons aim herein might be to shew, that a brawling wife doth so overturn the end of marriage, that whereas God said at first, *It is not good for man to be alone*, Gen. 2. 18. yet indeed it is better for a man to live alone, then to have such a wife. Yea and some conceive, that hereby also is implied, that though a man gets a wife that brings him a stately house and land for her portion, or such an estate, as that thereby he is enabled to live in a fair and spacious house, yet he had better be without it, if she proves a brawling and contentious woman.

Verf. 10. *The soul of the wicked desireth evil, &c.*] That is, he sinneth not ignorantly and through infirmity, but wittingly and advisedly; all his delight & desire is to doe evil. Now if we thus understand this clause, then the meaning of the next clause may be this, *his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes*; that is, though his acquaintance and friends dissuade him from his wicked courses, he will not mind or regard them, but will rather mischief them, then be hindered by them. But I rather conceive that the first clause is to be understood of the wicked mans desiring to doe mischief. And so I take the drift of the whole Proverb to be this: that the wicked man is out of envy or malice wholly and only bent to desire the hurt of men, or to endeavour to doe mischief to men, insomuch that he will not shew any mercy or kindnesse to his nearest friends and acquaintances, when they stand in need of it; or, that he is so set upon mischief, that he will not spare his nearest relations; or, that his neighbour, though he carrieth himself
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never so kindly or friendly to him, shall yet find no favour in his eyes.

Verf. 11. *When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise, &c.*] See the Note chap. 19. 25.

Verf. 12. *The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked, &c.*] This may be understood many severall waies. As 1. that he considereth in what danger the wicked man is, together with his family and posterity, & how he may reclaim them from their evil waies: and then the next clause, *but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickednesse*, implyeth that all the endeavours of the righteous man to reclaim them doe no good, and that therefore God at last doth utterly destroy them. Or 2. that he marks and observes their horrible wickednesse, and how many are corrupted thereby, and so is carefull to keep himself from being defiled by them, or having any communion with them: but then the wicked, that mind no such thing, but run on desperately in their wicked waies, God doth overthrow. Or 3. that observing how exceedingly they prosper, he considers why this should be, and concluding that hereby God hardens them in their sins, that they have their portion in this life, and that surely God will destroy them, &c. this keeps him from being offended; and the wicked indeed are at length destroyed according to his expectation. Or 4. that he observes and seriously layes to heart the fearfull judgements that God at last brings upon the families of the wicked, and thereby becomes very carefull to avoid their wicked waies: and thus the judgements upon wicked men doe much good to the righteous, whilst the wicked themselves reap no good by them, and so are at last utterly destroyed.

Verf. 14. *A gift in secret pacifyeth anger, &c.*] That is, say some, it cools the zeal of a judge, when he is severely bent to cut off an offender; or generally it appeaseth the anger of those that were before highly offended: and that because as gifts are very pleasing to men, so they also testify the submission of the party that gives them; and being closely given, that takes away the shame of open receiving. Some apply this also to alms given secretly, so that a mans left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth, Matth. 6. 3. that they tend to the appeasing of Gods wrath against men. *And a reward in the bosome great wrath;* as if he should have said, a reward in the bosome driveth away wrath out of the bosome. But see the Note chap. 17. 23.

Verf. 15. *It is joy to the just to doe judgement, &c.*] To wit, because he delights in doing that which is just and equall, and withall knoweth that God is well-pleased with him, and will reward him for it, and so is herein comforted; and therefore indeed accordingly he shall obtain salvation: which is implied by the following opposite clause, *but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity;* to wit, because they rejoyce only in working iniquity.

Verf. 16. *The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, out of the way of true doctrine, into the crooked waies of error and heresy; or, out of the way of Gods commandements, yea though it be through blindness and ignorance: *shall remain in the congregation of the dead;* that is, say some, they are spiritually no better then dead men; or rather, they shall abide unto all eternity amongst the multitude of the damned, who only indeed

deed are truly dead men; for the righteous by death have an entrance into life eternall. As they walked in their waies, and delighted in the company of such men whilst they lived, so they shall abide amongst them being dead, without any possibility of being removed into a better condition. And this is the only rest they shall have; they shall not have the least share in the rest of the faithful, but their wandring shall end at last in the restless rest of the damned unto all eternity.

Verf. 17. *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man, &c.*] This may be meant of all kind of sensuall pleasure, or particularly of that of feasting, because of the following words, *he that loveth wine and oil*, that is, dainty and costly feeding; or, by *oil* may be meant those exceeding costly ointments, which they used much in those ealern countries, especially at their feasts.

Verf. 18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, &c.*] As namely, when by the punishing of some hainous offenders Gods wrath is appeased, publick judgements are removed, & so the righteous are preserved, as we see in the case of Achan, & Sauls sons, 2 Sa. 21. But see the fuller exposition of this in the Note ch. 11. 8.

Verf. 19. *It is better to dwell in the wilderness, &c.*] To wit, in a vast and horrid place, banished as it were from all society with mankind, destitute of all necessary accommodations, where a man must live amongst venemous creatures, & wild beasts, and haply be slain and torn in pieces by them: *then with a contentious and an angry woman*; which is a misery worse then death; see the Note above verf. 9.

Verf. 20. *There is treasure to be desired, & oil in the dwelling of the wife, &c.*] That is, store of all things requisite both for necessity and delight, see also the Note verf. 17: *but a foolish man spendeth it up*; to wit, when such treasures and plenty of provisions are left him by his father or others.

Verf. 21. *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy, &c.*] To wit, with earnestnesse and perseverance, see the Note chap. 15. 8: *findeth life*; that is, long life here, & eternall life hereafter; *righteousnesse*, that is, a just reward from God, and as faithfull dealing from men as he hath observed towards others; & *honour*, to wit, both here amongst men, and eternall in the heavens.

Ver. 22. *A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, &c.*] That is, So much is wisdom better then strength, that sometimes by the wisdom of one man a city may be taken, that is kept by many men of great might. Now though by the wise man may be meant the godly man, yet I rather think that Solomon speaks here of naturall wisdom and policy.

Verf. 23. *Who so keepeth his mouth and his tongue, &c.*] To wit, from speaking any thing which in wisdom and justice he ought not to speak; see the Notes also chap. 12. 13. & 13. 3: *keepeth his soul from troubles*; that is, he keeps himself or his life from many streights & miseries, which otherwise he might have brought upon himself.

Ver. 24. *Proud & haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*] That is, such he sheweth himself thereby to be, so he deserveth to be called, & wil usually be called: & so whilst he thinks his so dealing to be an honour to him it wil be his reproach.

Verf. 25. *The desire of the slothfull killeth him, &c.*] That is, his very desires, not being satisfied, because he will not work, do vex and torment him, and are even as death to him; or rather thus, his contenting himself with his vain slothfull desires, whilst in the mean season, as it followeth, *his hands*

refuse to labour, brings him to perish in penury and want.

Verf. 26. *He coveteth greedily all the day long, &c.*] As if he should have said, But because like a wicked wretch he will doe nothing else, he will not work, therefore he hath nothing for himself, much lesse to give to others: *but the righteous giveth, and spareth not*; that is, because out of conscience he is laborious in his calling, he not only hath sufficient for himself and his family, but he is ready also to give to others for their relief, and that bountifully and for ever: for because he holds on in his labours, therefore he hath still to give to those that are in want.

Verf. 27. *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination, &c.*] See the Note chap. 15. 8: *how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* as namely 1. when he thinks any thing good enough for God, and when his sacrifice is not exactly such as Gods law requireth it should be; or 2. when he offers it, that God may prosper him in any way of wickednesse, or that by making such a shew of piety, he may the better effect some cursed design; or 3. when his aim is only to cheat and deceive men, by making them believe that he is a very pious man, when his conscience tells him, that for his wickednesse God must needs abhor both him and his service; or 4. when he seems desirous by his sacrifices to make his peace with God, and yet at the same time hath a full purpose and desire to run on in his sins; or 5. when he hopes by such services, as it were to bribe God, to give him liberty still to hold on in his lewd waies.

Verf. 28. *A false witnesse shall perish, &c.*] To clear the opposition which is implied betwixt this and the following clause, we must take it thus: He that in bearing witnesse doth testify what he hath neither heard nor seen, but what himself hath devised, (yea though it should be truth that he speaketh) shall certainly perish; that is, either he shall be cut off by the hand of the magistrate, or by some judgement of God, and that unto eternity; or else he shall be utterly ruined & undone, to wit, by some other severe sentence pronounced against him, whereby his mouth shall be judicially stopped, that he shall never bear witnesse more, or at least he shall be so discredited, that no man will hear or regard his testimony; and all this shall be, because his own tongue will discover him, by reason that such an one scarce ever speaks constantly the same thing, but will be ever and anon contradicting himself: *but the man that heareth*, that is, that speaketh nothing but that whereof he hath been an ear-witnesse (or an eye-witnesse) nothing but what he knoweth to be certainly truth; *speaketh constantly*; that is, he is always in the same tale, and affirmeth still constantly the same thing, and that with confidence & boldnesse: and therefore he shall not by death, or by any judicial sentence, or by his own shame be taken off from bearing witnesse; yea men will be desirous to hear his testimony in any cause whatsoever. I know this Proverb is otherwise expounded by some: as 1. thus; *A false witnesse shall perish*; *but the man that heareth*, that is, that hearkeneth to the law of God, which doth expressly forbid all bearing of false witnesse against our neighbour; *speaketh constantly*, to wit, because he shall not perish or be cut off: or 2. thus; He that heareth others, chusing rather to hear, then to speak rashly and falsely, shall likewise be heard

heard by others; he shall alwaies in time and place have opportunity enough to speak, and men shall readily hearken to him. But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Vers. 29. *A wicked man hardeneth his face, &c.*] Some understand this Proverb particularly, with reference to the foregoing verse, of the impudency of wicked men, and the advisednesse and warinesse of the upright, in bearing witness in any cause. But it is better to understand it generally: *A wicked man hardeneth his face;* that is, he will impudently, without any blushing, yea though it be against the checks of his own conscience, set his countenance to out-face any man, either in denying and opposing clear truths, or in excusing or defending manifest evils; and let him be admonished or reprov'd, he will with a brazen face maintain his waies, not yielding to, but rather insulting over those that oppose him, and without the least remorse on he will goe, like a traveller that sets his face against wind & weather, being resolved upon his journey, whatever he endures in it: *But as for the upright, he directeth (or considereth) his way;* that is, he is watchfull over his waies, that he may not goe awry; and when he hath done amisse, being reprov'd, he will acknowledge his fault, repent, and amend what is amisse. The opposition betwixt the two branches of this Proverb may be conceived thus: The wicked man is impudent, and therefore carelesse how he walks; but the upright is sober and modest, and therefore carefull rightly to order all his waies.

C H A P. XXII.

Vers. 1. **A** *Good name is rather to be chosen then great riches, &c.*] That is, a good repute and report amongst men gotten by well-doing: *and loving favour rather then silver and gold;* that is, the love and respect of those amongst whom a man lives, especially of those that are for wisdom and piety and dignity eminent above others, when it is procured by that which is truly amiable and commendable in him. Now both these are preferred before great riches. 1. Because both these spring from vertue and piety, and so are the peculiar blessings of the faithfull, whereas the worst of men do many times most abound in wealth. 2. Because by these much good may be obtained, which by riches cannot be gotten. Riches do often bring men into great danger; when men of good report and well-beloved shall either be free from the malice and envy and violence of men, or at least they shall find many that will be ready to aid and secure them. Again, such men usually enjoy much quiet and peace, and are free from those vexations and troubles and suits at law, wherewith rich men are continually perplexed: yea and riches and advancement in the world are many times procured by a mans good report, and the favour that he enjoyeth amongst men; whereas, on the other side, no riches can buy off infamy, nor redeem a mans reputation when it is once lost. 3. Because riches are fading transitory blessings; whereas a good name continueth, and makes a man live as it were after he is dead, and is a great honour to his children after him. And 4. because a good name and good esteem amongst men do render a mans speeches and actions the more acceptable unto men, they enable him to doe much the more good in the

places where he lives, & are an encouragement to others in well-doings; which riches are not.

Verf. 2. *The rich & poor meet together, &c.*] That is, say some, when the rich declining in their estate, & the poor by degrees growing in wealth, come at length to be of equal estates: Or thus; Though in regard of their outward condition there is a vast difference between the rich & the poor, the rich being honoured, as if they were more than men, the poor despised & abused, as if they were beasts and not men; yet in many things they meet together, & are every way alike: they are both of the same nature, made after Gods image, they have the same Lord & Creatour, & in their birth & death are both alike, &c. And indeed the words will bear both these expositions. But yet the more obvious & ordinary exposition I take to be the best, to wit, that *the rich & poor*, because there are both of the one & the other in all places, according to that Mat. 26. 11. *ye have the poor alwaies with you*, do often occasionally meet together, & converse one with another, yea they do usually seek out one another, as having mutually need one of another: *the Lord is the maker of them all*; that is, they are all his creatures, & it is God that makes the one rich and the other poor; and that in great wisdom, because without this difference in mens outward condition, humane societies could not subsist: see the Note chap. 14. 31. And this is added to imply, that as the poor ought not to envy or maligne the rich, so neither should the rich grow proud, despise or oppress the poor.

Verf. 3. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, &c.*] To wit, the mischief that is like to befall him in any way he is going, or action he is undertaking; or the evil which his enemies have plotted to bring upon him, (as indeed wicked men are usually seeking the ruine of the righteous;) or rather the judgements of God approaching, whether private or publick, which he discovers before-hand by observing the wickednesse committed, & meditating on the judgements threatned, or by taking notice of some present signs & discoveries of Gods indignation: & *hideth himself*; to wit, by abandoning such wicked waies and company, by putting himself through faith & prayer under the shelter of Gods protection, & by using all lawfull means to avoid the evil feared: *but the simple pass on, & are punished*; to wit, as not foreseeing or not regarding the evil they are in danger of; see the Note chap. 14. 16. But to all this some adde, that Solomon speaks of a prudent man foreseeing danger, in the singular number, but of simple ones that only mind present things, in the plurall, to imply, that there are multitudes of these, but few of those that foresee dangers and hide themselves.

Verf. 5. *Thorns & snares, &c.*] In the foregoing verse it is said, that *By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches & honour & life*: & now in opposition thereto this is added, *Thorns & snares are in the way of the froward*; that is, wicked men do usually meet with many inextricable plagues & miseries in their waies; see the Notes upon Job 18. 8, 9, 10. Or, by *the thorns* in the way of the wicked may be particularly meant, the stinging terrors of conscience they many times undergoe; and by *the snares* in their way may be meant, that they are continually intangled in the snares.

shares & temptations of the devil & the wicked world, yea that all things, good as well as bad, prosperity as well as adversity, are as snares and stumbling-blocks unto them; or that they are so entangled in their wickedness, that they cannot leave it, being herein, as the Apostle speaks, *as naturall brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. *He that doth keep his soul*, that is, he that doth carefully watch over the safety of his soul; *shall be farre from them*, that is, will avoid their wicked waies, not so much as coming near the occasions thereof. Or, *He that doth keep his soul*, to wit, from their wicked waies, *shall be farre from them*, that is, from the fore-mentioned thorns and snares. Yet the words of Solomon here are capable of another exposition: as that *thorns and snares are in the way of the froward*, because wicked men are prone both to injure and hurt others, and likewise to lay snares for them, to cheat and deceive them, and to seduce them into erroneous and sinfull waies; which is the same in effect with that Rom. 3. 16, 17. *Destruction and misery are in their waies, and the way of peace have they not known*: and that therefore *he that doth keep his soul shall be farre from them*; that is, he that is wary for his own safety will keep out of the reach of such mischievous persons, and will carefully avoid their plots, flatteries and seducements. And see also the Note chap. 15. 19.

Verf. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should goe; &c.*] In the Hebrew it is *in his way*; whereby may be meant also, that he must be instructed in such a manner as is suitable to his years, and according to his capacity, as by giving him the shortest and the easiest instructions, and seeking to instill knowledge into him by little and little.

Verf. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*] Though it be true, that the rich are commonly chosen into places of office and magistracy, and that amongst the Jews those that were in debt were wont to be sold for servants to their Creditors; (see the Note Exod. 21. 2.) yet here Solomon speaks of rich mens insulting and domineering over the poor, and the bondage they are kept in that are forced to borrow of them. And the drift of this Proverb is, to warn men to be so wise, as by honest diligence in their callings to endeavour to be able to live of themselves, that they may never come to live in such slavery.

Verf. 8. *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity, &c.*] That is, though he may propose divers ends of advantage to himself by his insolent tyrannizing over the poor, his expectation therein shall be vain and fruitlesse, he shall reap nothing by it, but affliction and misery; see the Note Job 4. 8: *and the rod of his anger shall fail*; that is, though he may chafe and rage, when he sees that his iniquity hath no successe, yet he shall not be able to help himself, the wasting of his power in vain shall be all his harvest; or, his persecution and oppression shall cease; or, his authority and power, which in his wrath he used for the scourging and oppression of others, shall be broken, even as a rod when one strikes hard with it doth break and snap asunder; see the Note Psal. 125. 3. But now if we read this last clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and with the rod of his anger he shall*

shall be consumed, then the meaning must be either 1. that the tyrannicall abuse of his power should prove his own ruine; or 2. that he should undergoe the same fury, violence and oppression from others, which he had shewn to others: as if he had said, that others should take the rod out of his hand, and beat him with it, or that he should be threshed with the same rod wherewith he had threshed others. For there may be an allusion in this expression to the rod wherewith they were wont to thresh out their grain, Isa. 28. 27. *the fitches are beaten out with a flasse, and the cummin with a rod*; and that with respect to the similitude used in the foregoing clause, *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity*.

Verf. 9. *He that hath a bountifull eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.*] That is, he will give of that which is justly his own for the relief of the poor; yea, if need be, he will spare the very meat out of his own belly to feed them.

Verf. 10. *Cast out the scorner, &c.*] That is, let him be cast out of mens company & families, out of the Churches, & common-wealths, and places where he lives: *and contention shall goe out*; as if he should have said, this, & this only, will put an end to contention amongst men, because one scorner will set all on a light flame, besides the danger of his infecting others. *Yea strife and reproach shall cease*; where by *reproach* may be meant all railing & reviling and reproachfull language, which usually follows strife & contention, & wherewith the scorner is wont to requite those that reprove & admonish him; or else, the infamy and shame which quarrelling & strife brings upon those that are given to it, yea and upon those amongst whom they live.

Verf. 11. *He that loveth purenesse of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.*] This may be read, as in the margin, *He that loveth purenesse of heart, and hath grace in his lips, &c.* & then accordingly the meaning must be, either first, (as taking the words in the most generall sense) that *he that loveth purenesse of heart*, that is, he that is of a pure & undefiled heart and conscience, that abhorreth all hypocrisy, & loveth truth and holinesse, uprightnesse and sincerity in the inward man, *and hath grace in his lips*, that is, whose speech is holy & gracious, wise & profitable to others (see the Note Psal. 45. 3.) *the king*, when he is such an one as a king ought to be, *shall be his friend*: or else, in a more particular sense, that he that is of a loyall faithfull heart, void of all dissimulation, & so never goeth about for fear, or hope of reward, to frame his speech so as he thinks will please princes and great men, but will speak the truth from his heart, & that discreetly and prudently, which may be principally intended to be the grace of his lips, shall find that God will encline the hearts of princes to favour him. But now reading it as it is in our Bibles, *He that loveth purenesse of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend*, then the drift of the words is to shew, why a man of a gracious, sincere, faithfull heart, shall be sure to find favour with Princes: namely 1. because there will be grace also in such a mans lips, he will speak graciously and wisely, and with much content to those that hear him; purenesse of heart causing grace in the lips, as necessarily, as the purenesse of silver causeth it to yield a sweet and delightfull sound: & 2. because wise men do alwaies abhor dissembling flatteries. How-

ever the drift of the Proverb is, to shew, that faithfulness and plain-dealing is the best way to preferment; and that the speech of the upright shall be acceptable, when the glosing silken words of parasites shall be hatefull. But see the Note also chap. 16. 13.

Vers. 12. *The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, The Lord doth continue, uphold, and maintain the truth, and the knowledge of the truth amongst his people; as namely, by preserving the Scriptures, the spring of saving knowledge, & those that are ordained of God to teach men knowledge: *and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor*; that is, he confuteth & bringeth to nought the false doctrines of ignorant men & seducers. But because of the opposition of the following clause, I rather take it thus: *The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge*; that is, The watchfull & tender providence of the all-seeing God doth preserve knowing, wise & godly men, & doth uphold & prosper their counsels & endeavours: *and he overthroweth the words (or, the matters) of the transgressors*; all the counsels & enterprises of wicked men; or more particularly, all that they speak or doe against the righteous. And there are some of our best Expositours that conceive that this is added with reference to what was said in the foregoing Proverb. Because it might be objected against that which was said there, that if men out of conscience speak the truth from their hearts to princes, it may bring them into danger; in answer thereto it is here said, that God will preserve him that followeth his counsell herein, though never so many eyes do watch over him to hurt him. Though such men may be counted fools, that cannot dissemble & flatter; yet God esteems this the only true wisdom and knowledge: & though for a time parasites may seem to prosper, & to have all the favour; yet God will discover the vanity of their flatteries, & it may be make those very words of theirs the cause of their disgrace, which they hoped would have been the means of their advancement.

Vers. 13. *The slothfull man saith, There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets.*] To wit, by the lion before mentioned; & hereby the vanity of this excuse is represented as the more ridiculous, because lions use not to be in the streets of towns or cities, but only abroad in the woods and fields. Yet some would have the two clauses here joyned together understood disjunctively: to wit, that if the sluggard be to goe forth to his labour in the field, then he saith, *There is a lion without*, &c. and if he be to goe about any business in the town or city, then he pretends danger of being slain some other way, to wit, by some quarrelsome cut-throats that are abroad in the streets, or by some enemies of his that lye there in wait for him. However, observable is the expression that Solomon useth, *The slothfull man saith*, &c. He doth not think, but only say so, even against the light of his own conscience pretending this by way of excuse. All the lion that endangers the sluggard is that of idleness, which lyes with him in his bed, yea in his bosome; of which he never complains. But see the Note also chap. 15. 19.

Vers. 14. *The mouth of strange women, &c.*] See the Note chap. 2. 16: *is a deep pit*; to wit, because by their kisses and enticing language, they bring men into a sin which will hardly ever be left, and into manifold miseries, out of which men

men do very hardly and seldome escape, but do usually perish in them; see also the Notes ch. 2. 18, 19. *He that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein*; that is, the man that God is highly offended with for some former wickednesse shall, in a way of just vengeance, be delivered up to this sin.

Vers. 15. *Foolishnesse is bound in the heart of a child.*] To wit, because folly, wantonnesse and wickednesse, being naturall to children, it must needs be a very hard thing to make them leave it.

Vers. 16. *He that oppresseth the poor to encrease his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.*] Some understand both clauses of one and the same man, to wit, that he that robs the poor, and then gives bribes to the magistrates and great men, thereby to secure himself, shall certainly come to poverty. But I rather understand it of two different persons or sins: to wit, that he that oppresseth poor men, and likewise he that in a vain-glorious humour, or in hope of getting some great matter by them, will be sumptuously feasting great rich men, and sending them rich presents, so giving to the rich what he should give to the poor, yea what he hath many times injuriously raked from the poor, shall both alike come to poverty; and that not only because rich men do often only flout at those that follow them so with presents, at least they never mind them, nor think of requiting them, but also because God doth often in anger blast their estates.

Vers. 17. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, &c.*] Solomon useth this generall expression, either 1. because he would presse his son to attend to the instruction of all godly wise men, as well as his own; or 2. because in the close of this book he meant to adde the words also of Agur and Barthesaba; or 3. because these instructions of his, being the very word of God, were the same with those that were taught by all those that were truly wise: *and apply thine heart unto my knowledge*; see the Note chap. 2. 2. From the beginning of the tenth chapter to this place, Solomon hath, as by way of doctrine, given us certain short proverbiall sentences, every verse almost containing one entire Proverb by it self; but now from hence to the beginning of the 25. chapter, the manner of his stile is changed: for besides that all is here delivered by way of exhortation, the precepts that are here pressed are for the most part more largely delivered in severall verses, and backed with reasons, much as before it was in the first nine chapters. And hence I conceive it is, that in this and the four following verses this new exhortation, to attend diligently to Solomons doctrine, is inserted either by way of closing up the former Proverbs, or rather by way of a new preface to that which follows.

Vers. 18. *For it is a pleasant thing, if thou keep them within thee, &c.*] As if he had said, Though the words of the wise may at first seem harsh, and hard to be learnt, and over-severe, and so be displeasing to thee; yet if thou keep them within thee, that is, if thou dost once understand and believe them, and so dost upon occasion call them to mind, and meditate on them, & obey them constantly, thou shalt find them very delightfull and comfortable to thee; see the Note chap. 3. 17. *They shall withall be fitted to thy lips*; that is, thou shalt be able opportunely to call

call them to remembrance for the instruction of others, and to speak fluently, aptly, & to good purpose of every thing, as any occasion is offered; yea and that with the acceptance and good approbation of those to whom thou speakest. And indeed then only do holy words and instructions proceed fitly and handsomely from men, when they proceed from the heart & from good men, according to that of David, Psal. 37. 36, 31. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgements; the law of God is in his heart: for which see the Notes there.*

Verf. 19. *That thy trust may be in the Lord, &c.]* That is, To the end that knowing & observing what I have taught thee, thy trust may be fixed upon God, his word & promises, both for what concerns thy welfare in this life, and that which is to come: *I have made known to thee;* to wit, all these truths that I have taught thee: *this day;* that is, at this time, see Psal. 95. 7. or, in this book: *even to thee;* as if he should have said, Even to thee, my son, to whom I cannot better manifest my fatherly love, then in teaching thee these things, & whose duty it is to apply these precepts generally delivered to thy self in particular, and to know them for thine own good. I know some read the last clause thus, *trust thou also,* & the drift of it is as if he had said, I have done my duty in shewing thee those things that should bring thee to put thy trust in the Lord; be thou now as carefull to practise this, as I have been to teach thee.

Verf. 20. *Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?]* That is, excellent counsels, which I have given thee from God, for thine advice and direction in all thy waies, & whereby thou maiest be enabled to give counsell to others; and excellent precepts appertaining to knowledge, to inform thee in all things, which it is fit thou shouldest know, for thy welfare here, or eternall salvation hereafter.

Verf. 21. *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth, &c.]* That is, That I might teach thee, not doubtful conceits, or lying fables, but truths of unquestionable certainty, even the sure Oracles of God: *that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee;* that is, that thou maiest be able to give sound advice to those that send to thee to desire thy counsell, and to satisfy those that send to be informed in some hard cases, or doubtfull questions; or, that thou maiest be able to give a reason of thy judgement or doings to any that shall call thee to give an account thereof, according to that 1 Pet. 3. 15. *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* But now if we read this last clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *that thou mightest answer the words of truth to those that send thee,* then the meaning must be this; that thou maiest give a fair account to those that have sent thee either to be instructed, or to manage any great businesse they have committed to thy trust.

Verf. 22. *Rob not the poor, because he is poor, &c.]* That is, say some, because being poor, he is fitter to be pitied and relieved, then to be robbed and oppressed; or rather, because being poor, he is not able to withstand; let not that encourage thee: *neither oppresse the afflicted in the gate;* to wit, under a pretence

tence of justice; see the Notes Job 5. 4. and 31. 21.
 Vers. 25. *Let thou learn his waies, &c.*] To wit, the angry mans waies, mentioned in the foregoing verse, by being infected by his example & company, as naturally men are prone to imitate those they love; or by being provoked to anger by his anger, & so through often brawling and contending thou gettest at last an habit of frowardnesse: *and get a snare to thy soul;* that is, & so beest entangled in the same sin, to the endangering of thy soul in eternall perdition; or, lest thou bring thy life into danger: to wit, either by thy friends falling suddenly upon thee in his fury some time or other, and taking away thy life; or by some quarters whereinto thou maiest be brought by his means, wherein by thy provoking of others thy life may be brought in hazzard, at least some great mischief or other may befall thee.

Vers. 26. *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 6. 1. and Job 17. 3.

Vers. 27. *If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?*] See the Note chap. 20. 16.

Vers. 29. *Seest thou a man diligent in his businesse? &c.*] As if he should have said, Such a man is deservedly to be noted and observed; and if therefore thou hast taken notice of such a man, observe likewise what the issue of his diligence is: *he shall stand before kings, &c.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Vers. 1. **W**hen thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee.] That is, what plenty and variety there is of dainty meats and delicious wines, and how dangerous they are to entangle men unawares, (whence it is that they are called afterwards vers. 3. *deceitfull meat*) and to draw them to excess in eating and drinking, whilst they will be tasting of every dish, and sipping at every cup, and so consequently to make them in their jollity to speak or doe something that may turn to their prejudice; and that the rather, because great men are often wont to make use of their feasts, as snares to entangle men in this regard, to make them in their drink and heat of blood to utter those things which they would not otherwise discover. I know many Expofitors extend these words to the consideration of the persons present, the Ruler and others, and some to the well weighing of any questions that shall then be propounded; and so take them to be a warning, that he that is called to be a guest at a great mans table should be carefull, that he did no way carry himself rudely, uncivilly and unmannerly, no otherwise then if he were at home at his own tables or, that he should take heed, that when any questions were propounded, he spake nothing rashly and foolishly. But the first exposition is clearly the best, as the following words do manifest.

Vers. 2. *And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.*] That is, one that naturally loveth dainties, and art very inclinable to glut thy self with them. And by those words, *put a knife to thy throat,* is meant, that such a man should

should restrain himself from all excesse in eating and drinking: only this expression seems withall to imply, either first, that he should force himself to forbear by mortifying his unruly appetite, that he might be no more able to run on in filling himself, then if there were a knife stuck in his throat: or 2. that though this bridling of his appetite were never so troublesome & irksome to him, as grievous in a manner to him as if he were to cut his own throat, yet he must doe it; and that because it were better, if any such necessity could be conceived, that a mans throat should be cut, then that he should rush headlong into the miseries which his gluttony & drunkenness would bring upon him: and so the drift of these words is much the same with that of our Saviours words, Matth. 5. 29, 30. *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell, &c.* where the meaning is only, that though the abandoning of any thing that is an occasion of sin, should be as grievous to us as the pulling out our eyes, or the cutting off our right hands; yet we must abandon them; or 3. that he should restrain his inordinate appetite, by thinking with himself of the danger his excesse is like to bring him into; partly in regard of the divers deadly diseases it is like to bring upon men, partly in regard of the slipperiness of their tongues in such a case, to utter those things that may provoke the ruler to displeasure, or otherwise hazard their lives, and chiefly because their excesse is like to bring their souls to eternall damnation; their knives upon the table are like to be more mischievous to them then a knife in their throats would be. And therefore by thinking of these things, as by a knife put to their throats, it is fit that men should endeavour to keep themselves from excesse.

Verf. 3. *Be not desirous of his dainties, for they are deceitfull meat.*] To wit, 1. because when great persons do invite meaner men to their tables, they doe it usually with a purpose some way to ensnare or deceive them; they doe it not out of love, as they pretend, but with an aim to bring them to utter those things, when they have drunk well and are frolick, which at another time they would never have spoken, or some other way to entrap them, & to bring their own purposes about: 2. because men are usually therein deceived, that they think great men are willing they should eat freely of the plentiful provision that is set before them; whereas indeed they grudge them what they eat, as is expressed more fully afterwards verf. 6. 7: 3^{ly}, because the delight men take in such dainties doth unawares draw them into intemperance and excesse, which proves at last the cause of much mischief to them: and 4. because court-entertainment & familiarity is many times unstable, and so they that entertain great hopes upon that ground, are usually deceived of their hopes. But now under this one particular of eating at great mens tables, Solomon intends to imply the danger of all conversing with great men in any way whatsoever, and that men had need to be wisely watchfull over themselves, and to bridle their affections, when they have to deal with great personages in any thing whatsoever: & that because the friendship of such men is deceitfull; it yields not that content usually that men expect in it, but on the other side it brings many vexations with it, and is many waies dangerous. Ma

ny seeking hereby to advance themselves, have ruinated their estates, and utterly overthrown their posterity.

Verf. 4. *Labour not to be rich, &c.*] Riches are the good blessing of God; and therefore may be desired, if it be only so far as it may be for Gods glory, and our good: but absolutely to desire to be rich, and to set our heart upon it, and thereupon to overtoil our bodies, and to afflict and perplex our spirits in seeking to get riches, this is that which is here forbidden. Men must labour in their callings, in obedience to Gods command, and that they may have wherewith to live comfortably, and if God send in abundance, accept it thankfully; but for men absolutely to make it their aim to be rich, & so thereupon to make drudges of themselves, and violently to pursue riches, as if they thought by their toiling suddenly to enrich themselves whether God would or no, that is no way warrantable. *Cease from thine own wisdom;* which will perswade thee that a mans happiness consists in being rich, and will prompt thee to strive after this by all means, though never so unlawfull.

Verf. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?*] That is, Wilt thou eagerly look and seek after, & set thine heart upon that which hath no solid substance in it, (however men are wont vainly to call their riches their substance) that which in true judgement is nothing worth, & for the having whereof men are nothing the better? or, *that which is not*, that is, which it may be will not be had, because those that eagerly seek after riches many times cannot attain them; whereas God frequently bestows them in abundance upon those that mind them not; or, that which when a man hath gotten, will usually be gone on a sudden? And if we thus understand this clause, then the following words are added by way of explaining these (whereas otherwise they may be taken as a second reason against the inordinate desire of riches:) *for riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away*, that is, the man that labours to get them cannot attain them, or, when a man hath gotten them, they will vanish away in an instant: *as an eagle towards heaven*, that is, as an eagle flyeth towards heaven; or, if these words also be meant of riches, we must understand them thus, that riches will be gone beyond all possibility of getting them or recovering them again. The first clause is in the Hebrew, *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to see upon that which is not?* which expression seems to have reference to that which followeth concerning riches fleeing away as an eagle, and so may imply, that though in their desires men flie after riches with never so much eagerness, they will be too swift for them, and how vain a thing it is for men to gape after riches, even as if a man should with earnest desires look after some fowle, which is upon the wing, and in the twinkling of an eye is gotten out of his sight: and therefore it is too that the eagle is mentioned, because no fowle flyeth so high or so swift as an eagle.

Verf. 6. *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye.*] That is, of an envious man, according to that Matth. 20. 15: *Is thine eye evil, because I am good?* or rather, of a sordid covetous miser, that doth envy thee and grudge thee every bit of meat that thou eatest; for so on the contrary the liberall man was before said.

said to have a good or a bountifull eye, chap. 22. 9.

Verf. 7. *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he, &c.*] That is, he is not to be esteemed according to what in his words and his outward deportment he would pretend himself to be, to wit, one that loves thee, and to whom thou art truly welcome; but according to what he thinketh in his heart, as namely, that he is a dissembling miserly churle, that grudgeth at thy eating of that which he sets before thee, as is expressed in the following clause, *Eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee.*

Verf. 8. *The morsell which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, &c.*] Some understand this literally, that by reason of some unwholsome meat which the envious man doth often set before his guests, or by reason of his drawing them with a mischievous intention to overlade their stomachs with his meat or drink, his guests should vomit up what they had eaten, and so also should be disabled from speaking so wisely and acceptably to those that were present, as otherwise they might have done; which they think is intended in the next clause, *and lose thy sweet words.* But by the common consent of most Expositours, the meaning is rather this: *The morsell which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up;* that is, By some snare wherewith he will entrap thee, or some mischief he will afterwards doe thee, he will make thee pay dearly for what thou hast eaten; or rather, When thou shalt perceive either by some distastfull speeches given thee, or by some other means, that he grudged to see thee eat his meat, thou shalt be so inwardly vexed and grieved, that thy meat shall doe thee no good, and in that regard it shall be all one to thee, as if thou hadst vomited it up again; or, thou shalt even loath that very meat of his which thou hast eaten, and repent that ever thou didst eat it, and wish thou couldst vomit it up again: *And lose thy sweet words;* that is, all the sweet glosing words wherewith he welcomed thee, &c. all the content thou didst take therein shall be then lost, they shall doe thee no good, but rather thou shalt be vexed exceedingly, that thou wert so befuddled by his dissembling language; or, thou shalt *lose thy sweet words*, that is, all the flattering language thou gavest him, or all the courteous, sweet, complementall words thou spakest to him, by way of praising his good chear, or acknowledging his love, and returning him many thanks for his kind entertainment, or any good or pleasant discourse wherewith thou soughtest to delight him or his guests, whilst thou wert at his table: all which shall be as lost, either because the covetous churle took no delight in them, whilst he grudged at him for eating up his victuals, or because the man that spake them, when he comes to discover the sordid dissembling of his host that entertained him, shall be fretted that ever he spake them, and shall wish that he had never spoken them.

Verf. 9. *Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.*] To wit, out of ignorance or profaneness; see the Notes chap. 9. 7, 8. But yet this phrase of speaking in the ear, may seem to imply, that this is meant only of private admonition or reproof.

Verf. 10. *Remove not the old land-mark, and enter not into the fields of the fatherlesse.*]

To wit, neither by seizing upon their lands and estate unjustly, nor by any encroachment, through removing their land-marks, nor by breaking violently into them any other way to doe them any damage.

Verf. 11. *For their redeemer is mighty, &c.*] See the Note Job 19. 25: *he shall plead their cause with thee*; see the Note chap. 22. 23.

Verf. 13. *Withhold not correction from the child, &c.*] That is, neither omit it thy self, nor restrain others from doing it, to whom it belongs; see the Notes also chap. 13. 24. & 19. 18: *for if thou beat him with the rod, he shall not die*; that is, such moderate correction will not be his death, to wit, neither at the present, (for a rod will break no bones) nor yet by degrees, by grieving or weakening him, and bringing him into a consumption: or, *he shall not die*, that is, this will preserve him both from being cut off by untimely death, as cocker'd children for their wickedness many times are, and likewise from eternall death, as is more fully expressed in the following verse.

Verf. 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*] This last clause may be taken not only as a promise, but also as a precept.

Verf. 15. *My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoyce, even mine.*] That is, not only shall this yield joy to thine own heart, but to mine also, by whose instruction this hath been wrought, and who for the love I bear thee cannot but rejoyce in thy good.

Verf. 16. *Yea my reins shall rejoyce, &c.*] That is, All the inward parts of my body shall be affected with my joy: *when thy lips speak right things*; that is, when thou becomest able thereby to instruct others: or, when thy speech is pious and every way right: which is therefore particularly mentioned, because this is the highest proof of true wisdom in the heart; *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man*, Jam. 3. 2.

Verf. 17. *Let not thine heart envy sinners, &c.*] See the Notes Psal. 37. 1, 3: *but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long*; that is, continually and constantly, even then when it fares best with the wicked, and worst with thy self and others that live holily and righteously. Now the fear of the Lord is here required in opposition to the fault of envying sinners, either to shew that in stead of desiring to walk in their waies, that we may be sharers with them in their prosperous estate, it is our duty to be constant in the waies of well-doing; or else because the fear of the Lord will cause men to mortify this base lust of envy, it will curb men from murmuring against the secret judgements of God, it will pull down mens pride, and make them contented with a mean condition, it will teach men to put their trust and confidence in God, and to look upon wicked men in their greatest prosperity as men that are to be pittied rather then envied.

Verf. 18. *For surely there is an end, &c.*] To wit, of the prosperity of the wicked; God hath set a period to their flourishing estate, it shall not alwaies, yea it shall not long continue; see the Note Psal. 37. 38: or, there shall be an end of thy oppression, affliction, and misery: or, there shall be an end of thy patience and hope; thou shalt not alwaies in a poor oppressed estate wait for better daies; that which God hath promised as the end and reward of piety, shall be at last

last made good to thee: which agrees with that of David, Psal. 37. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace;* & that of the Apostle Jam. 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.* And thence it is that some do so render this first clause, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *for surely there is a reward.* And if thus we understand these words, then is the same in effect repeated in the next clause, *and thine expectation shall not be cut off;* that is, thou shalt be supported with hope to the last, & the hope which thou hast of a reward of thy piety, far above any thing which the wicked enjoy, shall not be frustrate. Yet it may be understood of the godly mans expectation, that the prosperity of the wicked shall come to an end, to wit, that he shall not be deceived in that his expectation.

Verf. 19. *Hear thou, my son, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 8: *and be wise;* that is, become wise, or study & endeavour to get wisdom by thy hearing: *& guide thine heart in the way;* that is, in all thy courses, or in that right way wherein thou art taught to goe; follow not the guidance of thine own carnall heart, but cause thine heart to follow the guidance of Gods word, wherein are the instructions of true wisdom, that so thou maiest with all thy soul walk in the right way.

Verf. 21. *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsinesse shall cloath a man with rags.*] That is, idlenesse, which causeth drowsinesse: see the Note chap. 19. 15. Yet I conceive it is here expressed by *drowsinesse*, because drunkenness and gluttony do both make men drowsy.

Verf. 22. *Hearken to thy father that begat thee, &c.*] See the Note chap. 1. 8: *and despise not thy mother;* that is, neither the person nor the instructions of thy mother: *when she is old;* as if he should have said, though haply with age she may be grown even childish again, or, though being old thou needest not fear her correcting of thee, nor canst hope that she should store up for her children as formerly.

Verf. 23. *Buy the truth, &c.*] That is, the knowledge and belief and practise of the truth contained in Gods word, according to that Joh. 17. 17. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth;* use all possible means for the gaining of it, spare no pains nor cost, yea rather expose thy self to any perill, and to the losse of all that is dear to thee, then not get it: *and sell it not;* as if he should have said, Whereas merchants buy their precious commodities, that they may sell them again, doe not thou so; be not like Esau that sold his birthright for a messe of pottage; when thou hast gotten the truth, forget it not, for any gain or sinfull pleasure; deny thy self in all things whatsoever, rather then abandon this precious treasure.

Verf. 24. *The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoyce, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 1. and 15. 20.

Verf. 25. *She that bare thee shall rejoyce.*] As if he had said, and so this will be some recompence for all the pains and sorrows she endured in bearing thee in her womb, in bringing thee into the world, in nursing thee up with so much labour and tender care. And so also there is covertly herein a warning given to young

young men to beware, that they did not by their wickednesse bring many bitter after-throes upon their mothers, even in their old age.

Verf. 26. *My son, give me thine heart, &c.*] That is, Apply thy heart to learn mine instructions, and to obey my precepts; or, which is all one in effect, set thine heart upon God only, and upon true wisdom: for Solomon speaks here as in the name of God, according to that 2 Cor. 5. 20. *as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead.* And then it follows, *and let thine eyes observe my waies*; that is, apply thy whole mind, diligently to mark and observe the waies wherein I walk, as a pattern for thee, or, which I prescribe thee, that thou maiest heedfully walk in them; lest wandering from these waies, thou fallest into the ditch or pit mentioned in the following verse.

Verf. 27. *For a whore is a deep ditch, &c.*] To wit, amongst other reasons, because whoremongers not only by reason of the nasty diseases to which they are subject, but also by reason of the detestableness of their sin, are as loathsome amongst men, as a man must needs be that hath fallen into some miry stinking ditch: *and a strange woman is a narrow pit*; see the Note chap. 22. 14.

Verf. 28. *She also lyeth in wait as for a prey, &c.*] Or, which is all one in effect, *as a robber.* The meaning is, that as a robber doth usually lye lurking in some den or wood, and that commonly in the night, that he may get some booty, and hath for the most his companions as good as himself, to help him, and is not content with one booty, but seeks to make a prey of many one after another, sparing none, though he chiefly looks after the richer sort, and doth usually bereave travellers not of their money only, but of their lives too; so it is with the whorish woman in all these regards: This night-bird doth use all kind of craft, secretly to get many men into her power, and those too for the most that are of the richer sort, though she spares none, and hath her companions, bawds and panders, to help her; and when she hath gotten them into her power, she maketh a prey of their estates, and bereaves them of their health, good names, graces, reason and understanding, yea their very lives and souls. There may be also an allusion in these words to the custome of harlots, who were wont to sit by the high-waies covered with vails, that they might entice men to them, as we may see by that which is said of Judah and Tamar, Gen. 38. 14, 15. for which see the Notes there. *And increaseth the transgressours among men*; which is as if he had said, Of which, alas, there was no need, there being but too many of that crew already. Now this is said of the whore, partly because she often enticeth other maids and wives into the same wickednesse; but especially because so many men are corrupted by her.

Verf. 29. *Who hath wo? who hath sorrow? &c.*] That is, Who is it that at last comes to undergoe manifold miseries, temporall or eternall, and thereupon to mourn and lament bitterly, with Woe and alas? *who hath contentions? who hath babling? who hath wounds without cause?* that is, wounds and bruises, that were not gotten upon a just cause, as men are wounded in the war, where they have hazarded themselves for their prince and countrey; but merely by their own folly: as when they have hurt themselves by dangerous falls; when they and their
compa-

companions have fallen in their cups into causlesse quarrels about mistakes or mere trifles; or when they have been beaten for the wrong they have done to others in their wine causlesly, & sometimes merely in derision, when they have given no just cause of offence to those that did it; or when for some evil pranks they have committed in their drunken fits, they have been punished by the magistrate: *who hath rednesse of eyes?* & consequently many times blindness? Now all these questions import as much as if Solomon had said, Every man knoweth who these men are, to wit, drunkards; and that these are the sad effects of their merry meetings.

Verf. 30. *They that tarry long at the wine, they that goe to seek mixt wine.*] See the Note chap. 9. 2.

Verf. 31. *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, &c.*] To wit, as being clear, and brisk and lively: *when it moveth it self aright*; that is, when it boyleth and sparkleth, and as it were danceth in the glasse or cup.

Verf. 32. *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*] Or, *a cockatrice*. That is, it will fill the body with insufferable pains & deadly diseases, torture the conscience, disturb the mind, & make men mad, & bring upon them shame and poverty, &c. yea it will poison & destroy the soul; evils worse then the venomous biting of a serpent, or stinging of an adder.

Verf. 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*] That is, Thou shalt think, desire, contrive, and resolve upon within thy self, or, out of the abundance of thy heart thy mouth shall speak, (as indeed drunkards are usually wont to utter all that is in their hearts) *perverse things*, that is, filthy, unclean things; or more generally, thou shalt vomit out all kind of wicked speeches, blasphemies, railings, &c.

Verf. 34. *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lyeth down in the midst of the sea, &c.*] To wit, *that lyeth down to sleep*; or *as he that lyeth, to wit, sleeping, upon the top of a mast*. Very probably we may conceive, that as those that in a ship are tossed by a storm at sea are thereupon compared to a drunken man, Psal. 107. 27. *they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end*; so here the drunkard is compared to a man that is tumbled up and down in a ship by sea, because being drowned in drink, this makes him light-headed & stagger as he goeth, and troubles his brains with such giddinesse, that every thing seems to him to swim or turn round. But because Solomon compares the drunkard to a man that sleeps in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast, I rather think the meaning of these words to be, either 1. that drunkenness maketh mens sleep troublesome and unquiet, so that they apprehend themselves to be tossed up and down as those are that are in a tempest in the midst of the sea; or 2. which I like far the best, that drunkards are in as much danger of perishing, and yet withall as ignorant, secure and fearless of the dangers they are in, as the man is that being in a ship that is tossed with tempests in the midst of the sea, it may be upon the top of a mast, is in danger every moment to be cast away, & so far from land, that there is no hope of escape by swimming, and yet the whilst lyes fast asleep, no way able to doe any thing

towards the preserving of the ship he is in from perishing in the waters, and yet never thinking of the least danger.

Verf. 35. *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick, &c.*] That is, I cared not for it, I was not much hurt: *they have beaten me, and I felt it not*; and therefore have no great cause to be troubled for it. Now though drunkards will sometimes thus slight the blows they have had given them whilst they were in their drink, thereby to shake off, as it were, the disgrace of being so basely abused; yet it is clear that Solomon here represents the speeches of a drunkard, when he is a little come to himself, and awakes in the night, though not thoroughly, but is still half awake & half asleep, as appears by the following words, *when shall I awake?* as if he should say, the rather because of his drought and thirst, Oh that it were day! when will it be morning? to wit, that he might return to his cups again, as is expressed in the last words, *I will seek it yet again.* Yea we may well think that Solomon intended these words as the language of their practise rather than their lips, and that the drift of them is only to set forth the stupid blockishness of drunkards, that no inconveniences which they undergoe by their drunkenness will beat them off from it.

C H A P. XXIV.

Verf. 1. **B**E not thou envious against evil men, &c.] See the Note Psal. 3. 7: *neither desire to be with them*; to wit, as thinking to joyn with them in their wickedness, that thou maiest share with them in their prosperity.

Verf. 2. *For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.*] As if he should have said, By this means they become great, and thus they make use of their greatness; & therefore who would share with them in it? But now some of our best Expositours understand the words thus, that in all the mischief which wicked men devise and speak against others, they do indeed study & talk how to destroy themselves; which is not improbable. But however observable it is, that he saith *their heart*, thereby implying that the wicked are usually of one heart and of one mind for the working of mischief.

Verf. 3. *Through wisdom is an house builded, &c.*] As if he had said, with reference to what went before verf. 1, 2. This therefore is a better way that we may thrive and prosper in the world, then to joyn with the wicked in their cursed ways. But see the Note chap. 14. 1.

Verf. 5. *A wise man is strong, &c.*] To wit, not only for acts of spirituall fortitude, see the Note chap. 16. 32; but also for the accomplishing of those externall enterprises, which are usually effected by diligence and strength of body: see the Note chap. 21. 22.

Verf. 6. *For by wise counsell thou shalt make thy war; and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.*] See the Notes chap. 15. 22. and 20. 18.

Verf. 7. *Wisdom is too high for a fool, &c.*] That is, he apprehendeth it to be above his reach, and so will take no pains to get it; or, being wholly intent upon earthly things, wisdom is above his sight, that he cannot discern the preciousness

ness of it, yea it is above the reach of his naturall capacity; 1 Cor. 2. 14. *the naturall man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishnesse unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* So it follows, *he openeth not his mouth in the gate;* that is, he shall not be able to speak a word in his own defence, when he shall be questioned before the magistrate; as on the contrary it is said of others, Psal. 127. 5. *they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate:* or rather, such an one shall never be called to any place of magistracy, which is a place for wise men; or if he be, he will not dare to offer to speak, or, he will not be able to speak, or at least, not to speak any thing to the purpose.

Verf. 10. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*] That is, say some Expositours, it will fail more & more, and will become very small; if thou dost not hearten & encourage thy self, but sufferest thy heart to faint within thee, thy strength will grow lesse & lesse: or rather thus, Though thou seemest never so courageous in a prosperous estate, yet if thou faint when adversity comes, as apprehending that thou shalt never be able to endure it, or that there is no hope of escape, this is a clear sign that thy strength is small; since it is not so much the quality or the greatnesse of the affliction, that maketh a man faint, as the cowardinesse or weaknesse of his own spirit.

Verf. 11. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, &c.*] To wit, by unjust violence; if thou doest not what might be lawfully done towards their deliverance: *and those that are ready to be slain;* that is, those that are in some danger of death, by reason of some plot that is in hand against them, or rather, that are in present danger of death, just ready to be slain.

Verf. 12. *If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not, &c.*] To wit, neither did I know it, nor those that were about me, who otherwise would certainly have informed me. And the meaning may be, either that they knew not how to deliver them; or rather, that they knew not the danger he was in, or that he was unjustly in danger. *Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it?* that is, doth not he exactly know, whether it be so or no? *and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?* where Gods keeping and preserving mans soul is mentioned, to imply, either 1. that he that keepeth the soul must needs know the thoughts of the soul; or 2. that Gods preserving the life of a man might well be an engagement to make him the more carefull to preserve the lives of others when they were in danger, especially considering that it might be that for that very end God had preserved him; or 3. that God having every mans life at his command, every man had cause to be very carefull, that they did not by slighting others in their dangers provoke him to displeasure; or 4. that God was able to preserve any man, if he should be brought into any danger, by appearing for those that were unjustly oppressed: *and shall not he render to every man according to his works?* and therefore will he not reward thee, if thou shewest mercy to the oppressed, or on the other side punish thee, if thou dissemblest, and neglectest to aid those that are in danger, causing others likewise to be as prilese towards thee?

Verf. 13. *My son, eat thou honey, because it is good, &c.*] That is, both wholesome and

and sweet: *and the honey-comb, which is sweet to thy tast*; see the Note Psal. 19. 10. It is as if he had said, As men naturally love honey for its sweetnesse, so should they love wisdom, as is expressed in the next verse.

Vers. 14. *So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul, &c.*] To wit, so profitable and pleasing: *when thou hast found it*; to wit, when with much labour thou hast at last truly attained it, and durst not flatter thy self with a vain imagination that thou hast it, when indeed there is no such thing: *then there shall be a reward, and thine expectation shall not be cut off*; and so though at first thou dost not find the benefit of it, yet at last thou shalt. But see the Note chap. 23. 18.

Vers. 15. *Lay not wait (O wicked man) against the dwelling of the righteous, &c.*] Some would have the meaning hereof to be this; Watch not secretly to discover any wickedness in the righteous man, that thou mayst some way to his hurt charge it upon him. But the following clause, *spoil not his resting-place*, maketh it methinks very clear, that the full scope of these words is to charge men, that they should not seek to bring any hurt or disquiet upon the righteous man, his family, or any thing that belongs to him, either by secret fraud, or open violence.

Vers. 16. *For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again, &c.*] This also some would have to be meant of the just mans falling often into sin, & rising again by repentance. But by the foregoing verse it is clear that the meaning of this is, either 1. that though the righteous seem often to be much cast down & overwhelmed with their afflictions, yet they do as often rouse up & encourage themselves again; or else that though they are often afflicted, yet they are alwaies again delivered: for which see the Note Psal. 37. 24. *But the wicked shall fall into mischief*; to wit, irrecoverably, never rising again.

Vers. 17. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, &c.*] See the Notes Job 31. 29. and Psal. 58. 10.

Vers. 18. *Lest the Lord see it, & it displease him, & he turn away his wrath from him.*] That is, say some Expositours, Lest God remove his judgements from him, & so thine enemy become again able to doe thee a mischief, and thy triumphing over him be turned into confusion, grief & shame; or rather, Lest God *turn away his wrath from him*, to wit, upon thee, & so then he shall insult over thee, as thou didst before over him. However, doubtlesse Solomon doth not by this expression intend, that men should be unwilling that their enemies should be freed from any judgements that God had brought upon them, (for this all men ought rather to desire) but only that men should take heed that by their rejoycing at their enemies miseries, they did not bring their miseries upon themselves.

Vers. 19. *Fret not thy self because of evil men, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 24. 1. and Psal. 37. 1, 3.

Vers. 20. *For there shall be no reward to the evil man, &c.*] That is, no good reward: though he may flourish for a time, yet it shall be seen at last, that the good things he enjoyed here were not given him in way of a reward, as if God had approved of his waies, because at last God shall cut him off, & his plagues and miseries shall be perpetuall; though he may flatter himself with hope, that even after this life he shall fare as well as others, yet it shall not be so: when the righteous after

all their misery shall receive the reward of their piety, there shall be no happiness nor salvation for him: *the candle of the wicked shall be put out*; see the Notes chap. 13. 9. and 20. 20. Job 18. 5, 6. and 21. 17.

Verf. 21. *My son, fear thou the Lord & the king, &c.*] God is first mentioned, both because in all things our fear of him must have the preeminence, and we must no farther obey earthly magistrates then may stand with our obedience to God; & also because we must fear princes for conscience sake, out of the reverence we bear to God, & as looking upon them as Gods vice-gerents: & *meddle not with them that are given to change*; that is, to change & break the laws of God & the king; or, to revolt from their obedience to God or the king. I conceive it is chiefly meant of seditious persons, that are given to make changes and alterations in kingdoms and commonwealths, as by subverting their fundamentall laws and customes, by treasonable practices against their princes, &c.

Verf. 22. *For their calamity shall rise suddenly, &c.*] That is, it shall come upon them ere they are aware, when perhaps they think they have carried their designs so secretly that they cannot be discovered, yea that all things are so ordered that they shall surely prevail. And indeed Princes are wont to make quick dispatch of seditious persons & traitors for fear of danger. And *who knoweth the ruine of them both*? that is, say many Expositours, who can foresee it? It comes upon them usually more swiftly & unexpectedly then is conceived. And thus if we understand the second clause, it is the same in effect with the first. But doubtlesse this expression implyeth also, that their ruine, the punishments & torments which they shall undergoe, will be more horrible and insufferable then is usually imagined. And indeed if hell torments, which are frequently the just reward of such persons, be also included, we may well say that no man can conceive what they will be. As for the word *both*, I conceive thus of it: that no man can well conceive the ruine and destruction either 1. which both God and the king shall bring upon such men; or 2. which will come upon both those that are seditious & *given to change*, and those also that *meddle* with them; or 3. both those that fear not God, and those likewise that fear not the king. But yet some extend the word farther, and say it is meant of the wicked mentioned verf. 19, 20. and of those seditious persons mentioned verf. 21.

Verf. 23. *These things also belong to the wise, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, to Judges and Magistrates; and they understand it of those sentences which follow in this & the next three verses, & that because they concern matters of judgement: or rather, These following Proverbs are fit to be minded & observed by those that will carry themselves as becomes wise men. But because I see no probable reason, why upon any such grounds this preface should be here prefixed; I rather conceive that this is prefixed, to shew that though the Proverbs and sentences that follow from hence to the end of the chapter were not Solomons, yet they were the sayings of other famous wise men, and therefore inserted in this place with the Proverbs of Solomon.

Verf. 24. *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, &c.*] That is, that in a way of flattery applaudeth the person of a wicked man, or any of his wicked waies,

especially if it be a wicked prince or magistrate (as indeed of such the Proverbs here joyned together seem to speak;) or rather, He that from the seat of justice shall acquit & justify any guilty party: *him shall the people curse*; to wit, some by praying to God to punish him, others by hard censures, revilings & imprecations, which though they may not be lawfull, yet they are a punishment to them that undergoe them; see also the Note chap. 11. 26. However the meaning is, that not God only, but all men generally must needs condemn and abhor such men: (as indeed those that seem to favour them most do usually detest them in their hearts) and that both because nothing can be by the very light of nature more odious, then that those, whose place & business it is to maintain justice, should themselves pervert it; and likewise because this must needs encourage and harden men in their sins, & doth indeed directly tend to the utter ruine of kingdoms and commonwealths.

Verf. 25. *But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, God & man shall delight in such men. But the meaning rather is, either that those that shall faithfully reprove the wicked, (whether princes or others) or that being judges shall censure & punish them, shall enjoy the delight of a good conscience, & of the comfort of knowing that both God and men do favour them, (as indeed the wicked themselves, if ever they truly repent of their wickednesse, will commend them and pray for them;) or, that God shall bestow many blessings upon them, which shall yield them much delight. And then it is the same in effect with the following clause, *and a good blessing shall come upon them*; for which see the Notes Job 29. 11, 12. Though faithfull reproofs may be better to the wicked, and provoke them to much anger and rage, yet to them that therein discharge a good conscience they shall yield much sweet refreshing.

Ver. 26. *Every man shall kisse his lips that giveth a right answer.*] That is, that from the judgement-seat pronounceth a just sentence; or more generally, that in bearing witness, or in giving advice and counsell, or in any other way, doth alwaies speak that which is true, just and equall, without all flattery or dissimulation; or, that speaketh fitly & to the purpose in any cause or matter propounded to him. And by every mans kissing such a mans lips is meant, that every one will dearly love and highly honour him, and will be ready to doe him any service he is able, and that because of the great good which such a man doeth by his speaking, and because such faithfull lips are so rarely found; for of these things kissing was a token and pledge: see the Note 1 Sam. 10. 1.

Verf. 27. *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thy self in the field, and afterwards build thine house.*] The drift of this Proverb is, to teach us, that we must never undertake any enterprise, till we are sure of the means whereby to effect it. But indeed the generality of Expositours understand the words otherwise: *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thy self in the field*; that is, first get grounds, and store them with cattel, & sow and plant them, & every way husband them so, that they may yield thee much fruit, and that the fruit thereof may be carefully gathered and inned; and when by this means (or, which is proportionably the same, when by learning some trade or calling, and following it dili-

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gently) thou hast gotten somewhat whereon to live comfortably, and well to maintain thy self & family, then trim and enlarge & furnish thy house according to thy estate, or build thee a new house, fairer then that which thou hadst before; or, then get thee a wife, & provide for posterity. And some also conceive Solomons intent to be, that these works of husbandry must first be done in their season, because the season being passed, they cannot be done at any time. But however both the one & the other conceive the drift of the Proverb to be this, that men must first provide for things necessary and of greatest importance, and then afterwards for those things that are of lesse moment.

Verf. 28. *Be not a witnesse against thy neighbour without cause, &c.*] That is, without just ground, as by accusing him of that as a fault which is not a fault, or by testifying that against him whereof he is guiltlesse, which thou doest upon mere uncertainties, or against thine own conscience, when he hath given thee no cause so to wrong him, or to raise such a report of him. And if we thus understand the first clause, the second may be to the same effect, *and deceive not with thy lips*; to wit, by misinforming men, and making them believe that to be truth which is not, or, making shew hereby that thou art a faithfull honest man, when indeed it is not so, or, by colouring over a bad cause with a varnish of fair words, thereby to deceive those that hear thee, and not speaking the truth simply & plainly. Or else we may understand the first clause thus, *Be not a witnesse against thy neighbour without cause*; to wit, not being legally cited and called thereunto; offer not thy self herein of thine own accord, which will imply that thou doest it rashly, out of ill will or envy, or in a way of revenge: *and deceive not with thy lips*; to wit, by flattering men, or by deceitfull promises and pretences of love. So the first clause may forbid deceiving men by false witnesse, and the second deceiving them by flatteries. Or if we understand the first clause, as most do, of backbiters, the meaning of the whole sentence may be briefly this; Do not slander him secretly, and in the mean season flatter him to his face.

Verf. 29. *Say not, I will doe so to him as he hath done to me, &c.*] See the Note chap. 20. 22: *I will render to the man according to his works*; as if he had said, thereby proudly speaking of thy self in the very language of God. But now some understand this particularly, with reference to the foregoing verse, of a mans resolving to deceive or bear false witnesse against his neighbour in a way of revenge, because he had formerly done so to him.

Verf. 34. *So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, &c.*] See the Note chap. 6. 11.

C H A P. XXV.

Verf. 1. **T***Hese are also Proverbs of Solomon, &c.*] To wit, These that follow to the end of the 23. chapter, as well as those before from the beginning of the 10. at least to the 23. of the foregoing chapter: *which the men of Hezekiah*, that is, his servants or courtiers, perhaps his secretaries, or, the men which he had appointed to that service (whether private men, or Priests, or Levites, or prophets that lived in his time, as did Isaiah amongst others, it is not

not expressed) *copied out*; to wit, out of some writings or fragments of writings then extant, wherein Solomon, or some other from his mouth, had written many of his Proverbs; or, it may be, out of some publick Records that were kept of Solomons Acts and Monuments. It seems Hezekiah, in his zeal to promote the cause of Religion, appointed some to this service of collecting the choicest of Solomons Proverbs that were found at that time in any other book; which having done, & reduced them into order, and prefixed this Inscription, they were joyned to this book: see the Note chap. 1. 1.

Verf. 2. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, &c.*] God may be said to *conceal a thing*, 1. in that he doth not communicate his counsels and purposes unto others, by way of advising concerning any thing which he intends to do, (for, saith the Prophet, Isa. 40. 13. *Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?*) but doth, without any such consultation, what ever seemeth good in his own eyes: 2. in that he hath made known to his people in his word many truths, which are to them unsearchable mysteries, the causes whereof, and the manner how they should be, humane reason is no way able to reach; as the Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead, the eternall generation of the Son, and proceession of the holy Ghost, & many such like: 3. in that there are many things the knowledge whereof God imparteth not to any, but reserveth it wholly to himself; as the hour of mens naturall death, and the day of judgement; and many things again there are which he revealeth to some, and not to others, according to that Matth. 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes*: and 4. in that he doth many things, the causes and reasons whereof the wisest of men are no way able to comprehend and search out; which as it is true in many naturall things, (for who can exactly demonstrate the reason of the blowing of the winds, Ioh. 3. 8. & of the ebbing and flowing of the sea?) so much more in his higher acts of providence; as when he decreeth and bringeth about the sinfull actions of wicked men, without being in the least degree the author of their sins, when he punisheth infants for the sins of their parents, and many other things of the like nature, of which we see what the Prophet saith, Isa. 45. 15. *Verily, thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Israel*. Now however God hath much glorified himself by revealing many things to men, especially of his will and counsel concerning mans salvation; yet by this his concealing things in other regards from men, he hath brought far more glory to himself: and that because hereby it appeareth 1. how infinite and incomprehensible the wisdom of God is, the wisest being forced to cry out with the Apostle, Rom. 11. 33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out!* 2. that God is to be believed in what-ever he saith, because he hath said it, though man be not able to conceive how it should be; and 3. that God may do what-ever he pleaseth, and that his will is the supreme rule of all justice, and that he is no way bound to give an account of any thing that he saith or doth, Iob 33. 13. As for the following opposite clause, *but the honour of kings is to search out a matter*, the drift of that is, to shew that the greatest of men must not think

think to be like God herein; but that even kings themselves ought to esteem it their honour, to advise and consult with their friends and counsellors in all their great affairs, and that it is indeed an honour to them, and that for which they shall be greatly loved & feared & revered, when they make diligent enquiry into the state of their kingdoms, & as far as may be into the secretest transactions of other neighbouring nations, so that no plot shall be so closely carried on at home or abroad, but that they shall discover it; when they shall with much pains search into all kind of knowledge, divine & humane, especially that of their own laws, & what-ever may best enable them for their government, & gain credit there-to; when they can search out the truth in the most intricate causes that are brought before them, as Solomon did in that of the two harlots, 1 King. 3. (see the Note also Job 29. 16.) & when they are carefull to clear unto the people the justice of all their judicall proceedings. This, I conceive, is that which Solomon intended in this obscure Proverb. Yet there are other Expositions given of it, which have likewise some probability in them. As 1. that it is for the glory of God that the Scripture, wherein he reveals his will to men, should be in many places obscure & hard to be understood; because, through the just judgement of God, some profane persons stumbling hereat, do despise it & cast it away, whilst the godly do with the greater diligence enquire into it, & reverencing it the more for this, are the more careful not rashly at any time to meddle with it: but that it is for the honour of kings, with all diligence to search the Scriptures, that they may be the better able to carry themselves in all things as Gods vice-gerents. Yea because the following Proverbs in this place are for the most part the more intricate, because they are expressed under severall similitudes & tropes & allegories, therefore with particular respect to them this may be premised, that it is for the glory of God thus to conceal things; but that it will be for the honour of kings to search out the meaning of them. And 2. that when God seeth the wickednesse of men, & yet passeth it by as if he took no notice of it, this is for his glory, because hereby it is seen how infinitely long-suffering & patient he is; but that kings must not with us wink at the wickednesse of men, it being much for their honour to search out and to punish notorious offenders. But the first exposition is clearly the best.

Verf. 3. *The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.* That is, As no man can exactly search out the height of the heaven, or the depth of the earth; or, As no man can discover what is in the heaven above, because of its height, or what is in the earth beneath, because of its depth; so neither can men search out the hearts of kings, or discover the designs and counsels that are in their hearts. Now though this be generally true of all mens hearts, that other men cannot exactly know them, Jer. 17. 9; yet it is here particularly affirmed of kings, as being more eminently so with them than with others: and that either because dissimulation is a chief piece of that policy, which they call king-craft; or else rather because the cares and counsels of kings must needs be so exceeding many, and their wisdom (when they are such as they ought to be) so exceeding great, and their aimes and designs so high, and their projects so profound, and all these are usually carried on so closely, that other men

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are not able to reach them. And the drift of this Proverb is, either 1. to teach kings how they ought in this regard to carry themselves; or 2. to shew that it is as vain and foolish a curiosity, (though many be much taken with it,) to goe about to search out the secret designs of kings, as to search out the height of the heaven, or the depth of the earth; or else 3. to imply (as with reference to the foregoing verse) how much more impossible it must therefore needs be, to search out the counsels and judgements of God.

Verf. 4. *Take away the drosse from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.*] That is, The silver being so refined, will be fit to be made into any vessel of plate by the work of the gold-smith.

Verf. 5. *Take away the wicked from before the king, &c.*] That is, let them be cut off, or banished either out of his kingdome, or out of his Court: *and his throne shall be established in righteousness;* to wit, 1. because God is pleased with such impartiall execution of justice upon offenders, and others will be hereby made the more carefull to avoid all such waies of wickednesse, both which will move God to blesse and establish both king and kingdome; yea the more righteous the people are, the more faithfull they will be to their king, even for conscience sake; and 2. because evil counsellors and flattering parasites, when they are the favourites of kings, and familiar with them, do usually hinder the justice that should be in his government, and by their oppression of the subjects, do alienate their affections from him, and both these tend to the ruin both of king and kingdome. See the Note also chap. 20. 8.

Verf. 6. *Put not forth thy self in the presence of the king, &c.*] To wit, either 1. by way of vaunting and boasting and exalting thy self above others, for thy knowledge, or wisdom, or any such thing; or 2. by way of flaunting it out in the bravery of thine attire, the gallantry of thine attendance, thine horses and chariots, or any thing of that nature, as if thou meantest to vye with himself or his princes in these regards, (which is indeed perillous, because princes are wont to look upon such persons with a very malignant and jealous eye;) or, by way of intruding thy self to be near unto him, or of any bold carriage of thy self in his presence. And thus it may be much the same with that which follows, *and stand not in the place of great men;* that is, thrust not thy self into those places, wherein Nobles, or at least persons of greater rank then thy self, should sit or stand; or, do not insinuate thy self into their company, or to sit cheek by jowle amongst them; or, do not ambitiously affect to be in offices and places of honour about kings. For indeed the affectation of being in kings Courts, and the ambitious striving to be in high places, is that against which this Proverb seems to be intended.

Verf. 7. *For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; then that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom thine eyes have seen.*] As if he should have said, into whose presence thou hast ambitiously intruded thy self, even to be near to him, and then at last all that thou gettest by it is to be disgraced in his presence; or, who hath honoured thee by admitting thee into his presence, and now by being present at thy disgrace doth encrease thy shame.

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And it may seem that from hence our Saviour took that parable of his, Luk. 14. 7, &c. concerning mens seating themselves in the lowest places when they are invited to any feast.

Verf. 8. *Goe not forth hastily to strive, &c.*] That is, without just cause, or upon every trivial occasion, or rashly, before thou hast well considered of the business, and what the event of it is like to be, or before all fair means have been used to compose the difference in a peaceable way. As for that expression here used of going forth to strive, it may be meant either of going forth before the judgement-seat of the magistrate; or, as some would have it, of running forth in hasty anger, upon any word of displeasure heard, into the streets, there to chide or quarrel with a neighbour that hath so offended him; or else, it may be used to imply, that men should not meddle with other mens contentions, or rather, that they should not enter into strife of their own accord, unlesse they were forced and as it were drawn to it. *Lest thou know not what to doe in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame;* to wit, by foiling thee in thy suit, and so discovering the injustice of thy dealing with him, and haply causing thee to undergoe some mulct or punishment; or, by prevailing against thee some other way to thy disgrace, wherewith thou wilt be so enraged, that, as a man bereaved of sense and reason, thou wilt not know in a manner what thou doest; or, whereby thou wilt be so puzzled, that thou wilt not know what to doe, either in thine own defence, or against thine adversary, but maiest haply be transported to doe something that may be dishonourable and prejudiciall to thee.

Verf. 9. *Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, &c.*] That is, Argue the matter of difference which thou hast against thy neighbour between thee and him alone, and so make an end of it: *and discover not a secret to another;* that is, let not others by your open contending, whether before the judge or elsewhere, be made privy to that secret quarrel that is betwixt thee and thy neighbour: or, however, if the cause be brought before others, be sure that thou do not then in the heat of anger upbraid him with any secret fault which thou knowest by him; keep close to the cause in hand, and run not out into any opprobrious terms by way of twitting him with other secret offences of his, to which thou only wert privy. This I conceive is the meaning of this Proverb. Yet some understand the last clause more generally, of all blazing abroad the secret offences of men, or the secrets which they have been entrusted with, and accordingly they read it, *and discover not the secret of another.*

Verf. 10. *Lest he that heareth it, put thee to shame, &c.*] If by discovering a secret in the foregoing verse, we understand the bringing of a private difference to a publick hearing, then accordingly this may be meant of mens condemning him for this when it shall come to be heard, or of his being censured for the injustice of his cause, and the shame he will undergoe thereby, as before verf. 8. But if it be meant of a mans upbraiding his neighbour with any secret offence formerly known to him, whilst they are contending about some other matter of difference before a magistrate or otherwise, then this clause may be understood thus,

Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame; that is, Lest those that stand by and hear this, observing thy furious and revengefull spirit, do think the worse of thee and thy cause, and condemn thee for it in every place where they come. And last of all, if we understand the last clause of the foregoing verse of all blazing abroad any secret imparted to them, then this clause here may be understood two severall waies: *Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame;* that is, Lest those to whom thou dost discover thy neighbours secret, do afterwards spread it abroad to others, and so hereby thou comest to be generally talked of as a blab and tale-bearer: or, *Lest thy neighbour that heareth it do upbraid thee for violating the lawes of friendship in this case, and report it abroad to thy discredit, that thou art a treacherous unfaithfull man, and one that cannot keep counsell.* *And thine infamy turn not away;* that is, and so this will turn to thy perpetuall reproach: and by thy seeking to credit thy self by disgracing others, thou wilt at last bring the greatest discredit upon thy self.

Verf. 11. *A word fitly spoken, &c.*] That is, in season; see the Note chap. 15. 23. Yet it may be meant also of that which is spoken to the purpose, and in a right manner, with all fitting vehemence or softnesse, elegancy or perspicuity. It is in the Hebrew, *A word spoken upon his wheels,* (the ground of which expression seems to be this, that when men speak in such a manner, their words are carried as it were with wheels, to wit, roundly and readily, into the eares and hearts of those that hear them, to affect them with that which is spoken, and to convince them of the truth of it; whereas without these due requisites in speaking, they goe on heavily as a cart that is drawn without wheels.) *Is like apples of gold in pictures of silver;* that is, most precious and pleasant. Now by these *apples of gold in pictures of silver* are meant, either pieces of gold cast or made in the form of apples, and then compassed about with a kind of silver net-work curiously wrought, through which the golden apples might appear; or else rather, pictures that are overlayed with silver, and then afterwards beautified with the gilded figures of oranges, pomegranats, apples, &c. or pictures engraven on tablets of silver, adorned with inlayed figures of apples of gold.

Verf. 12. *As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprov-er upon an obedient ear.*] This may be added here as an instance of that which was said in the foregoing Proverb concerning the good that is done by a word fitly spoken. But yet it may be understood severall waies: as 1. that a man that reproveth others with such wisdom that thereby he winneth them to hearken to his reproof, is a very precious treasure, *as an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold:* or 2. that a wise reprov-er, and one that is willing to hearken to such reproofs, are both in their place very precious; the one as *an ear-ring of gold,* the other as *an ornament of fine gold:* or 3. that as a golden ear-ring, and some precious jewell of fine gold hanging thereon, do most fitly agree, and are a mutuall beautifying one to the other; so a faithfull reprov-er, and one that submissively hearkeneth to his reproof, are not only futable and well met, but are also mutuall an honour

nour each to the other: or 4. that a wise reproof, when he meets with one that is obedient to his reproofs (for otherwise a reproof never doth good) is an ornament to such a man, as is an ear-ring of gold to a man, or an ornament of fine gold, or as is an ear-ring when it hath also some precious costly jewel hanging upon it. The drift of the Proverb is, to shew that it is no dishonour, but rather an honour, to a man to be faithfully reproofed: though a reproof may be painfull, as is the boring of the ear to put in an ear-ring, yet a wise reproof is the ears best ornament, to wit, when the ear is opened, digged or bored (as the word in the original signifieth in that place Psal. 40. 6. *mine ears hast thou opened;*) and that not only because it is a great honour to a man quietly to submit to a wise reproof, but also especially because the grace that is wrought in a man, and the manifold benefits that redound to him thereby, are a most choice and lovely ornament to him; and therefore every man should rather love then hate such a wise reproof.

Verf. 13. *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, &c.*] That is, As the cold of snow in harvest (supposing it should then unexpectedly & miraculously fall,) or, As cold as sharp as that in snowy weather, or that is caused by winds that come from Northern snowy countries, or the hills and mountains where the snow lyeth all the year long, doth exceedingly refresh men in the heat of summer, especially those that labour at harvest-work; or rather, As when men have cooled their hot wines or any other drink by setting it in the snow, (as they doe in Spain and other hot countries, where they reserve it from winter to summer, or have it continually brought down to them from the tops of the mountains) this must needs exceedingly revive and refresh them in their drought and heat: *so is a faithfull messenger to them that send him;* to wit, both in regard of that hope and confidence they have in him, which doth somewhat refresh and ease their hearts in the midst of all their cares and fears, as at the very time when they do send him, so also all the time he is away from them; & likewise especially in regard of the good account that he is sure to give at his return, of the faithfull dispatch of their businessse, which after such eager expectation, such longing & languishing desires, must needs be a great refreshing to them, & most of all if by his diligent dispatch he returns before he was expected.

Verf. 14. *Who so boasteth himself of a false gift, &c.*] To wit, by promising great things, which he never performeth: *is like clouds and wind without rain;* because as such clouds & winds put men in hope of rain, but yield none, & so by the disappointment of mens hopes, their grief is the greater; so is it when a man promiseth great matters, and faileth those that thereupon expected much from him. But yet some conceive that this may be understood also of those that boast of gifts & graces and endowments, which indeed they have not. However such men, in regard of their airy emptiness & high-flown pride, & loftiness of carriage, & withall their lightness & inconstancy, may well be compared to bustling mutable winds, & high-flying clouds, that never yield a drop of rain. And it may well be

also that it is with reference to this place the Apostle Iude vers. 12. compares false teachers to *clouds without water, carried about with winds* : because such men, though they usually make a great vaunting shew of high-flown notions, and much that is in them above other men; yet indeed they are mere vapours and empty nothings, unstable and changing with every wind, and all the glorious promises which they make to their disciples of pardon of sins, peace and liberty, are empty and deceitfull. 2. Pet. 2. 19.

Verf. 15. *By long forbearing is a prince perswaded, &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, When a Prince doth for a while forbear pouring forth his rage upon those with whom he is offended, his anger will cool by degrees, and then he may be easily perswaded to what is fitting. And if we thus understand this clause, then the next, *and a soft tongue breaketh the bone*, may be accordingly meant of a princes prevailing with a stiffe, stubborn and tumultuous people, by fair and gentle language. But I rather understand the first clause of the forbearance of subjects or servants towards their prince, to wit, that if they can with patient silence bear what-ever the prince saith or doth to them, forbearing to manifest the least discontent either by word or gesture, yea a while forbearing to beg pardon, this is the best way to pacify and perswade them. And to the same purpose is the following clause, that *a soft tongue*, that is, *a soft answer*, as it is chap. 15. 1. mild and lowly language, *breaketh the bone*; that is, overcometh the stoutest, the most stern and rigid men, that otherwise would never bend nor yield, and so appeaseth the greatest and hardest anger. There may be herein an allusion to some precious oyle, that will not only supple the flesh, but also soak to the very bone, and have some operation thereon. But questionlesse the drift of Solomon in the expressions here used was to represent it as a strange thing, that so soft a piece of flesh as the tongue is should break a hard bone.

Verf. 16. *Hast thou found honey? eat thou so much as is sufficient for thee; lest thou be filled, &c.*] As if he should have said, Eat not excessively of the most pleasing meats; or more generally, be moderate in the use of those things, which for the sweet pleasure and delight they yield, men are naturally prone with much eagerness to desire, lest exceeding therein, they prove at last in the effects thereof bitter and distastfull, hurtfull and dishonourable to you. But now many expositors conceive, that the lesson intended hereby is, that when a man hath met with a friend, whose conversation is pleasing and delightfull to him, he must be careful that he be no way burdensome to him: and so accordingly they hold that the meaning of this similitude is set forth in the following verse, *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbours house, or, Let thy foot be seldome in thy neighbours house; lest he be weary of thee and hate thee.*

Verf. 18. *A man that beareth false witnesse against his neighbour, &c.*] To wit, either by spreading abroad false reports of him, or by testifying any thing that is false of him before a magistrate: *is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow*; that is, he is by all manner of means mischievous to his neighbour, both to his person, his estate and good name; or, he is of all things the most mischievous to men, the wounds he gives are most deadly & incurable; that which he doth is all one as if he

he should beat out a mans brains with a club, or cut his throat, or let out his bowels with a sword, or strike his heart through with an arrow: and that not only because a mans good name is more precious to him then his life, but also because by false witnesses the very lives of men are often taken away.

Verſ. 19. *Confidence in an unfaithfull man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*] To wit, because it will both fail a man in a time of need, and likewise put him to much sorrow and misery, as a broken tooth will do when a man comes to chew his meat with it, and as a foot out of joint will do when a man offers to go upon it: and that not only because it must needs exceedingly vex and fret a man that he did put confidence in such an one; but also because such faithlesse men do often in stead of helping their friend in his misery, become most cruell and deadly enemies to him; at least they are wont to cast some aspersions or other upon him, whom in his distresse they forsake, as desiring thereby to excuse or justify themselves. Some make the ground of the similitude to be this, that as a broken tooth and a foot out of joint use to be full of pain in foul weather; so confidence in an unfaithfull man bringeth great grief and misery upon men in the hour of affliction. But the former explication of the similitude is far the clearest.

Verſ. 20. *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.*] I know that most of our best Expositors do own a Translation of the words here in the Original, that is quite contrary to this in our Bibles, to wit, that *As he that putteth on a garment in cold weather, and poureth vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.* And indeed according to this Translation the meaning of the Proverb is very plain: to wit, that as the putting on of garments in winter doth keep off cold, and warm the body, and as nitre is dissolved and wasted by vinegar; so doth musick and singing and words of consolation allay or drive away the bitterness of a grieved spirit. But now according to our Translation, the sense of this Proverb must needs be directly opposite to that: to wit, that musick and singing, and all other things tending to mirth and chearfulness, are altogether unfitting and unseasonable for a man in great heaviness, and do encrease the misery of him that was in misery enough before; even as it must needs be unfitting and unseasonable to strip a man of his garments in cold weather, and to poure vinegar upon nitre. Indeed because it is hard to determine certainly what this *nitre* was, therefore it must needs be hard to shew wherein the similitude consists, betwixt pouring vinegar upon nitre, and singing songs to a heavy heart. It is usually said, (and it is gathered from that which Pliny and other ancient Authors have written hereof) that it was a kind of matter or substance, white in colour like salt, and bitter in tast, usually found in Iudea and Egypt, there being a place in Egypt that was thence called *Nitria*; that it was by the heat of the Sun made of some kind of mould, or of rain or river-water in fenny countries, and was often so compacted by the Suns heat, that it would be as hard as a stone; and that it was commonly used, as in many physick waies, so also for clearing the skin of spots and treckles, and especially for the cleansing of woollen or linnen cloaths, and the taking out of

of staines and bloches that were in them, which is indeed evident by that of the Prophet Jer. 2. 22. *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.* Now hence we may in part conceive, why the singing of songs to a heavy heart is compared to *vinegar upon nitre*: to wit, either 1. because as vinegar doth hinder the cleansing quality of nitre, stains cloaths, making them fowler rather than cleaner, & doth also in other respects hinder the vertue of the nitre; so is the singing of songs rather a trouble and vexation, then any refreshing to a man overwhelmed with sorrow: or 2. because as vinegar doth dissolve and mar the nitre, & being poured upon it maketh it burn & smoke & crackle, as lime with us will do when water is poured upon it; so songs & merriment do even melt the grieved soul, & are so far from allaying, that they rather mightily encrease a mans heavinesse. Besides that naturally passions opposed are wont to grow more violent: in the case here mentioned the heavy heart is apt to be afflicted, because others do not compassionate him in his miseries, & apt to suspect that they make his misery the ground of their songs & rejoycing.

Verf. 21. *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, &c.*) That is, any food that is requisite for him: whence it is that the Apostle Rom. 12. 20. renders this in more generall terms, *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him.* And under this is comprehended the doing of any other office of love or courtesy for an enemy, which he stands in need of; as is evident by that which the Apostle addeth in the fore-cited place verf. 21. *Be not overcome with evill, but overcome evill with good.*

Verf. 22. *For thou shalt heap coales of fire upon his head, &c.*) That is, say some, Hereby thou wilt cause him presently to cast away all hatred, & all thoughts of evill intended against thee, out of his heart, as a man, if coales of fire should be poured upon his head, would immediately strike or shake them off. And again, others understand it simply thus; that by thus returning good for evill to enemies, men shall manifest very ardent love to them, which God will surely requite, as is expressed in the following words, *and the Lord shall reward thee.* And others likewise thus; that hereby men shall cause the hearts of their enemies to burn within them either with terrors of conscience, grief, vexation or shame, appearing outwardly in the fiery blushing of their faces, because they have formerly hated and injured those that now have manifested such wonderfull goodness & love to them; or else with fervent love towards them, whom they have formerly hated with a deadly hatred, and so of enemies shall become their friends. Yea & the most of Expositors also hold, that this expression of heaping coals of fire upon an enemies head may imply, that if he be not overcome by so many multiplied kindnesses heaped one upon another, feeding him when he is hungry, & giving him drink when he is thirsty, &c. this will bring the curse of God, yea the more heaps of wrath and punishments upon him. And thus Solomon, say they, sets down together what the effect of this would be, 1. upon his enemy, if he proved irreconcilable, to wit, that God would punish him; and 2. upon himself, *and the Lord shall reward thee.* But I rather think that in this figurative expression there is an allusion, either to a way that ancient Physicians had of curing apoplexies & phrenies, that proceeded from cold causes, by applying coals of fire to their heads;

heads; or else rather to the custome of founders, who by making great fires upon their metals, yea though it be the hardest iron or steel, do thereby melt them: and so that which is hereby implied is, that by shewing kindnesse thus to an enemy, a man may cure him of all his former rancour; or else, that if an enemy be not wholly drosse, if there be any metall of ingenuity or good nature in him, this would make him melt, and relent, and of an enemy become a friend. Nor do I see but that hereby also might be implied, that if with this an enemy were not as silver and gold melted and purged, then he would be as drosse burnt up & consumed: for though a man ought by no means to make this his aime in doing good to an enemy, yet that doth not hinder but that Solomon might shew us that thus it will be.

Verf. 23. *The North-wind driveth away rain; so doth an angry countenance a back-biting tongue.*] This is plain. But now this may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *The North-wind bringeth forth rain* (& so the Rabbins say it doth in Iudea, because of the watry clouds that are engendred by the Mid-land Sea that lyeth on the North-west of that country;) *so doth a back-biting tongue*, that is sharp & bitter as the North-wind, *an angry countenance*, that is, a frowning cloudy discontented countenance: and that either 1. in those that are slandered & back-bitten by it; or 2. in those who upon slanderous tales reported to them, look angrily upon those that never deserved it at their hands; or 3. in those that by their angry looks intend to discountenance all tale-bearers, & send them packing away.

Verf. 24. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house top, then with a brawling woman, &c.*] See the Note Chap. 21. 9.

Verf. 25. *As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far countrey.*] See the Note above verf. 13. It is said here *from a far countrey*, 1. because the businesses are for the most part very weighty about which we send into far countries; 2. because we hear seldome from thence, & so the longer we wait, & the greater our fears have been, the more welcome are good tidings from thence when they come. And this doubtlesse Solomon knew by experience, by reason of the navies which he sent forth into countries far remote from Ierusalem, 1 Kings 9. 26, 27, 28. see also the Note above verf. 13.

Verf. 26. *A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, & a corrupt spring.*] A righteous man in regard of his purity, the delight that men take in him, & the manifold great benefits that redound to many by him, may well be compared to some clear and pleasant spring that is for publick use; see the Note Chap. 10. 11. And accordingly, if by *a righteous man falling down before the wicked*, we should understand (as many do) a righteous man overcome, banished, imprisoned, or otherwise oppressed by wicked men, he may well be compared to *a troubled fountain, & a corrupt spring*, that is, a fountain or spring that is mudded, or stopped up with mire & filth; & that because he is thereby unjustly dishonoured & disgraced, & kept from doing much good which otherwise he would do, & that by wicked men who are vile & base: & it must needs be judged to be against all right & reason, a very sad & deplorable thing, when

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men that are such publick blessings should be thus suppressed & oppressed, when such precious fountains shall be thus mudded by the insultations of such wretches, as by the feet of so many beasts trampling upon them. Or 2. if by a *righteous man falling down before the wicked*, we understand, as others do, a good man so falling into any grosse & scandalous sin, that wicked men take notice of it, it may well be said that he is *as a troubled fountain, & a corrupt spring*, that is, a mudded fountain, or, a spring marred with the mixture of any unwholsome waters, or by the casting in of any poyson or carrion into it: and that both because such a man doth hereby loose his former honour and credit, & is dishonoured & disgraced, (for wicked men will be sure in such a case to insult over him, & to spread abroad & aggravate his sin by all possible wayes;) and likewise because he becomes hereby either hurtfull, poysoning & corrupting others by his example, or at least uselesse or unprofitable, in that men will no more thenceforth hearken to any instruction or advice of his, then they will drink of mudded or stinking water. But rather *the righteous falling down before the wicked*, here intended by Solomon, is a righteous man crouching & bowing before a wicked man in any way of servile flattery, or yielding by any way of base compliance to his commands, or that falls from his integrity for fear of his wrath, or in hope of his favour; either by neglecting to doe his duty (as when he shall not dare to reprove him, or to make profession of the truth, &c.) or by doing any thing against conscience, which he knoweth to be evill. And he is said to be *as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring*, because those naturall corruptions, that lay before in him, as so much mud or gravel at the bottome of a clear fountain, being stirred up by the seducements of wicked men, the purity of his soul & life is hereby mudded with carnall respects & worldly interests; & so he that was before highly honoured, & a great Blessing to the place where he lived, becomes hereby (which is a thing very lamentable) worthlesse & base, rather hurtfull then profitable to any.

Verf. 27. *It is not good to eat much hony, &c.*] That is, it is very hurtfull, in that it breeds choler, & so brings men into many dangerous diseases; but see the Notes chap. 17. 26. & 18. 5: *so for men to search their own glory, is not glory*; that is, for men to seek the praise & applause of men, or any place of honour & dignity above others, (which are naturally indeed to men as sweet as hony) is so far from being an honour & glory to men, that it is rather base & dishonourable. To enjoy any of these upon due cause is a blessing from God; but ambitiously to hunt after them & not to seek the glory of God onely, is vain-glory, & maketh men vile & despicable: the more men labour for them, the more unworthy they are of them.

Verf. 28. *He that hath no rule over his own spirit, &c.*] See the Note chap. 16. 32. *is like a city that is broken down and without walls*; that is, he is continually in desperate danger: to wit, because as when a town is dismantled of her walls, any body may go out & come in at their pleasure, which often brings ruine to it, and it lyeth alwaies open to the incursion of enemies; so when a man hath no command of his corrupt affections, many things proceed from him in word & deeds which

which bring mischief upon him, & his enemies, evill spirits & wicked men, may at all times break in upon him, & prevail over him, & bring him into bondage, & make him doe what-ever they please. Man was once in the state of innocency, as a well-walled city: but Satan having broken down this wall by the sin of our first parents, unlesse it be repaired again by renewing grace, every man, by reason of the violence of his corrupt passions, is continually lyable to be made a prey to his spirituall enemies.

C H A P. XXVI.

Verf. 1. **A** *snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, &c.*] See the Note 1 Sam. 12. 17: *so honour*, that is, praise & preferment, *is not seemly for a fool*; to wit, 1. because they belong not to him; they should be the reward of wisdom & vertue; disgrace & dishonour are fitter for him; & therefore it is against justice & reason that such should be honoured: 2. consequently, because it is unsuitable, it is uncomely, enough to offend those that behold it; so far it is from being any ornament to him, that it makes his folly the more to be taken notice of: & 3. because a fool knoweth not how to make use of it, but will rather be sure to abuse it, both to his own hurt, being puffed up thereby, & to the hurt of others. And indeed, as *snow in summer & rain in harvest* are the curses & scourges of God upon a land; so are wicked fools when exalted to places of honour: & as *snow in summer* would be looked upon as a kind of ominous thing; so may we look upon the advancement of such men, as presaging much evill to the places where they live.

Verf. 2. *As the bird by wandring, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causelesse shall not come.*] Many severall wayes this similitude may be applyed, & that not without good probability. For the meaning may be, 1. that as no man can appoint the flying bird where it shall light & rest it self, but it wandreth & rovet up & down where it pleaseth; so neither can any man by cursing cause any evill to fall upon him that hath not deserved it: 2. that as the flying & roving of a bird in her flight can no way hurt a man, & is therefore no way to be feared; so neither can any body be the worse for a causelesse curse: 3. that a causelesse curse never comes to any thing, but passeth away with a breath, & as a bird flyeth away in the air: & 4. that as birds, when they see the fowler, the nets, snares or pit-falls that are set for them, do easily by flying get away, & save themselves; so shall a man be alwaies secured from a causelesse curse, it shall never come nigh him, he needs not fear it.

Verf. 3. *A whip for the horse, a bridle for the asse, &c.*] To wit, that the rider may rule and turn him, which way he pleaseth, (for Solomon speaketh here after the custome of his own country, where they used horses either only or chiefly in the war, or for drawing, & asses to ride on:) & *a rod for the fools back*; for which see the Note Chap. 10. 13.

Verf. 4. *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.*] And then it follows in the next verse, *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit*: and yet there is no contradiction betwixt these two sentences, but they may both be reconciled together; and that three severall wayes. For the meaning may be, 1. that men must *not answer a fool according to his folly*, to wit, by

by way of consenting to him, flattering or encouraging him in his folly and wickednesse, lest hereby they become partakers with him in his folly & wickednesse: but that they must *answer a fool according to his folly*, to wit, by giving him such an answer as his folly or wickednesse requireth, as namely, by reproving him, & discovering his folly to him, &c. lest by sparing him he be puffed up in his own conceit. Or 2. that according as the folly of a wicked fool is, sometimes men ought not to vouchsafe him an answer, & sometimes it is fit on the other side that they should answer him; circumstances of time, & place, & persons, & things, must be all duely herein observed. As for instance, if he be known to be an incorrigible scorner, see Chap. 9.8. or if he be a half-headed man, or one distempered with drink, that knows not well what he saith, or if he be one that is of a contentious spirit, that will not be convinced nor yield what-ever is said to him, or that he be in the company of profane scoffers, in this case he that should answer him would thereby become like unto him, seeing it would be manifest folly to be so far moved with his words, as to vouchsafe him an answer, or at least to answer him so unseasonably; & it would be to no more purpose to instruct & admonish or reprove such a one, then it would be to hold a candle to a blind man, to talk to a deaf man, or to instruct a brutish beast: yea & besides, by undertaking to answer such an one, a man may be drawn to break forth into many words (wherein there is usually some folly or vanity, Eccles. 5. 7.) or into passion & anger, & it may be to blows, & so be as culpable in point of folly as the other was whom he undertook to answer. But then on the other side, if a man perceives that by his silence the glory of God may be obscured, or some scandall & offence may be given, or that the fool be like to conclude from hence that he is in the right, & so to become thereby the more insolent, & to doe the more mischief, then it is fit he should reprove the fool, & make him know his absurdities & folly, that he may not grow wise in his own conceit. Or 3. that a man must *not answer a fool according to his folly*, that is, he must not answer a fool foolishly, to wit, neither by conforming himself to his vain jangling, & weak manner of reasoning, nor by speaking rashly & furiously as he did, nor by returning scoffes for scoffes, & reviling for reviling; because hereby the answerer will shew himself to be as very a fool as the other: and yet that a man must likewise *answer a fool according to his folly*, namely, by confuting his errors, & reprovng his misdemeanours, with all wisdom & gravity, that he may see his folly, lest otherwise he continue in his ignorance & folly, & be withall wise in his own conceit. And indeed this last Exposition I like the best. But withall I may adde, that some make the sense of both verses to be this; that a fool ought not to be answered with words, but with a rod & correction.

Vers. 6. *He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, &c.* That is, he is as one that cutteth off his own feet: to wit, either 1. because he carrieth himself as if he had no feet, since no man that were able to go himself, would not rather endure the pains of that journey, then commit a business of moment & weight to the trust of a fool; or, 2. because by the folly of his messenger he hath brought his affairs into such a desperate lost condition, that he can no more hope by going after.

afterward himself to bring his businesse into a better estate, then he could hope to go, when he had already cut off his feet; or 3. because he doth thereby greatly hurt himself, or bring great vexations upon himself, yea it may be looseth his very life; or rather, he is as one that should cut off a mans feet, and then send him on a message, it being as impossible that a fool should well manage any message committed to him, as that a man should goe without feet. As for the following clause, *and drinketh damage or violence*, the meaning of that must needs be, either 1. that he must be content to swallow down all the damage that shall befall him in his estate, his good name, or any other way, by his messengers folly in the ill-ordering of his businesse; or, 2. that he must needs be filled with sorrow and discontent for the damage that redounds to him, by entrusting such an one with such weighty affairs, the miscarriage thereof being as grievous to him, as if he had drunk something that agreeth not with his stomach; or 3. that he usually undergoeth trouble thereby, in that through the folly of his messenger, they to whom he was sent being highly enraged, do often fall upon him some way or other with a great deal of violence.

Verf. 7. *The legs of the lame are not equal, &c.*] And consequently by reason of his halting caused thereby, and the writhing of his body now one way and then another, his going is very uncomely: *so is a parable in the mouth of fools*; that is, it no way becomes them; see the Note chap. 17. 7: and that especially, because the wise and holy sentences, and Scripture-expressions which such men will often have in their mouths, do not suit well neither 1. with the wickedness of their hearts; nor 2. with their uneven walking in their lives & conversation; nor 3. with their other speeches, as when they curse and swear & lie, &c; nor 4. with those things to which they do usually apply them: & that because a fool knoweth not how to frame a comparison or similitude, but if he undertaketh to doe it, as we use to say, it halts most grossely; and when he would make use of any wise sentence, he doth it for the most part lamely. So that in a word, as fitting is most comely for a lame man, so is silence most comely for a fool.

Verf. 8. *As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool.*] This may be understood severall waies: as 1. that as it is a foolish thing, and mere lost labour, to bind or fast to tie up a stone in a sling, because when a man comes to whirle the sling, the stone so fastened in it will not be thrown out; so it is to no purpose, & mere lost labour, to give honour to a fool, because he will never be able to make any good use of it: or 2. that honour by way of praise or preferment given to a fool is as a stone put into a sling, that is presently cast out and lost; & that because a fool will soon by his folly forfeit his preferment, and wipe off his praises, & shew that they no way belonged to him. But now this Proverb may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *As he that putteth a precious stone in a heap of stones, so is he that giveth honour to a fool*: and then the meaning must needs be, that as it is an act of great folly to put a precious stone or jewell into an heap of ordinary stones, that's no place for it, there will no notice be taken of it there, but it is like to be trampled under feet and lost; so it is an absurd and foolish thing to bestow honour upon a fool, and that because honour so disposed no

man will esteem, neither is honour there in its proper place; it is as if a man should hang a smoky kitchin with curious tapestry hangings, or set a chamber-pot upon the cupbords head amongst the plate. See the Note above vers. 1.

Verf. 9. *As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*] If by the going up of a thorn into the drunkards hand be meant the running of it into the flesh of his hand, then the meaning of this proverb may be, either 1. that as a drunkard being besides himself, nor well seeing or knowing what he doeth, whilst he thinks to catch at a rose, or any other flower or fruit, doth instead thereof lay hold on some thorn or briar, and so sorely pricketh and scratcheth himself, and is exposed to the laughter and derision of all that are about him; so when a fool void of true wisdom and understanding, thinks with a great deal of gravity to make use of some wise parable, he doeth it so fillily, that he thereby wrongs and shameth himself, and becomes ridiculous to those that hear him: or 2. that as a thorn runneth up into the hand of a drunkard, and yet he feels it not; so any wise saying in the mouth of a fool tends to his shame, either because he doth foolishly make use of it, or because it discovers the wickedness of his life not agreeable thereto, but yet all the while he never perceiveth it. But now if by the going up of a thorn into the hand of a drunkard be meant, a thorns happening to come into a fools hand, or his holding or lifting up a thorn or a goad in his hand, then the meaning of the Proverb seems to be, that as a drunkard being deprived of the use of his reason, and having such a thorn or goad in his hand, doth usually abuse it to his own hurt and the hurt of others, pricking and scratching therewith, sometimes himself, and sometimes others that are about him; so a senseless wicked fool is so far from well using any wise and holy sentences, any religious speeches or passages of Scripture, that he doth usually pervert and abuse them, (according to that of the Apostle Peter, 2 Pet. 3. 16. where speaking of some obscure passages in Pauls Epistles, he saith, *which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction*) and doth thereby many waies hurt both himself and others: himself, both because his perverting and profaning and abusing of such holy sentences and speeches doth notably discover his folly and wickedness, to his shame, and may perhaps secretly gall his conscience, but also because such a mans tongue shall condemn him, and his judgement shall be the greater; and then others, not only because he seeks thereby to jear and abuse the holy servants of God, but also because it must needs be a vexation to every good man, to hear a wicked profane fool so basely & mischievously to abuse sacred things, and because many are brought hereby even to abhor religion it self. And this, I conceive, is the fairest exposition of the words. Only let me adde, that because by a parable in Scripture sometimes a taunting proverb is meant, (see the Note Numb. 21. 27.) therefore the meaning may be also, that as a drunkard having got a thorn in his hand, is wont to lay about him therewith, & doth usually hurt both himself & others; so doth a fool usually, when he hath gotten a taunting parable in his mouth, he is ready therewith to abuse every man that comes nigh him, though indeed by reproaching others, he doth chiefly wrong and abuse himself.

Verf. 10. *The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressours.*] This may be understood three severall waies: as namely, that the great God, who being the Creatour, is therefore the Lord of all the creatures, doth 1. punish according to their deserts, both those that sin through folly & ignorance, & those that sin wittingly & against conscience; or 2. doth reward any good done by such men with temporall blessings; or 3. doth give food & raimēt, & all other necessities, both to fools & to wicked ungodly men, as well as to the wise & righteous, according to that Mat. 5. 45. *He maketh his sun to rise on the evil & on the good, & sendeth rain on the just & on the unjust;* & this he calls rewarding them, because these outward things are such things as Lords are wont to give to their bond-slaves, as their pay for their labour. But now if we read this Proverb, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *A great man grieveth all, & he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressours,* then the meaning must be, either 1. that usually the great men of the world do vex & oppress all that live under their power, & to the end they may the better bring their purposes to pass, are wont to hire for their souldiers, servants & officers, the worst sort of men, both fools & knaves, both those that are void of all true wisdom & goodnesse, & those that are desperately wicked, that will not stick to aid them in all their detestable designs; or 2. that great men & tyrants are wont to lay heavy taxes upon the people, & then to bestow what they wrest thus from their subjects upon fools and parasites.

Verf. 11. *As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.*] This Proverb is cited by Peter, 2 Pet. 2. 22. And the drift of it is to shew, 1. how filthy & loathsome a thing sin is, like a dogs vomit; 2. how abominable a thing it is to return to a forsaken sin; 3. that usually fools forsake their sins for a time, not because they begin to hate the sin, but merely because of the terrors of their consciences, or some evil their sins have brought upon them; as the dog casts up what he hath eaten, not because he dislikes the meat, but because it griped his stomach, & made him sick; & 4. how brutish wicked fools are, that will return to those very sins, that have perhaps lately brought such gripings of conscience and other great miseries upon them, even as a dog licks up his vomit, forgetting the pains which a little before it had wrought in his bowels.

Verf. 12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool then of him.*] That is, of a simple ignorant, or a wicked man: and that because the one will be instructed, the other will not; the one sins of ignorance, the other against knowledge; & then besides, *God resisteth the proud, & giveth grace to the humble.* Ja. 4. 6.

Verf. 13. *The slothfull man saith, There is a lion in the way, &c.*] See the Note ch. 22. 13.

Ver. 14. *As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothfull upon his bed.*] That is, he turneth now one way, & then another, but still continues in his bed; as the doot still continues upon the hinges. Which is said, either to shew the vanity of the sluggards good purposes, that though sometimes he may move himself as intending to rise, yet presently he turneth to his rest again; or else the absurdity of his sloth, that though he be awake, and be weary with lying, or have slept so exceeding long that his sleeps become short and troublesome; and that makes him so often tisse up and down, yet rise he will not.

Verf. 15. *The slothfull hideth his hand in his bosome, &c.*] See the Note chap. 19. 24.

Verf. 16.

Verf. 16. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit then seven men that can render a reason.*] The meaning may be, that 1. he thinks himself wiser then many wise men dissuading him from his slothfulness, yea though they alledge never such clear and convincing reasons for that which they say, and therefore will not hearken to them; or, 2. that he thinks he hath more knowledge then the wisest of men, even those that can render a reason of every thing they doe or say, or that can give prudent & fit answers to those that ask their advice, and that therefore he needs not take pains to get knowledge, or goe to these wise men to be instructed by them, seeing he knoweth already as much as they; or 3. that he thinks himself wiser then the wisest of men, because they toil themselves and break their brains that they may attain to such wisdom, whereas he the whilst taketh his ease and pleasure, which he concludeth to be farre the greater wisdom. See the Notes Eccles. 4. 5, 6.

Verf. 17. *He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*] That is, he dealeth as foolishly and absurdly, as he that taketh a dog by the ears: & that either 1. because, as he that taketh a dog by the ears doth thereby unadvisedly & needlessly provoke the dog, & expose himself to the danger of having the dog fly in his face, and perhaps of being bitten sorely by him, & that both in regard that dogs cannot endure to have their ears touched, especially when they are fighting or otherwise enraged, & likewise in regard that it is a very hard thing to hold a dog by the ears; so he that intermeddleth with strife that belongeth not to him, doth thereby causelessly expose himself to much danger, ill language, stripes & wounds being all that a man usually gets by such intermeddling: or 2. because, as he that holdeth a dog by the ears is in danger to be bitten, whether he holds him fast or whether he lets him goe; so he that meddleth in this kind with other mens quarrels, is in danger to have either the one or the other of the parties quarrelling to fall upon him; or he is like to suffer by it, what-ever course he takes; in that if he gives over the strife, the party or parties, whom he had formerly so provoked to contend with him, will be encouraged thereby to fly the more violently upon him, & if he pursues the strife, he must then neglect his own affairs, & suffer all to goe to wrack, that he may follow the quarrell that hath been causelessly thus raised betwixt him & others. Now this may be meant of those that intermeddle with composing of quarrels, if they doe it rashly, foolishly, & without a just call to doe it; (for though in a prudent manner to seek to make peace between parties contending be very commendable; yet it is not so if a man doe it rashly, & with rugged reproofs, mens ears in the heat of their contending being no more able to endure that, then a dog will endure one to pluck him by the ears) & therefore in so doing men are only like to bring mischief upon themselves: or else rather it is meant of those that meddle in strife that belongs not to them, to wit, by taking part with one against another, or by any way of blowing the coals of contention between them, whereby men do indeed most causelessly expose themselves to danger.

Verf. 18. *As a mad man who casteth fire-brands, &c.*] To wit, to set houses on fire, or to mischief the persons of those at whom he throws them: *as*

ows and death; that is, other such like instruments of death.

Verf. 19. *So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith; Am not I in sport?*] That is, The man that doth seduce, or in any fraudulent way wrong or abuse his neighbour, and then thinks to excuse it by pretending sport & merriment, is no otherwise to be esteemed then as such a mad-man: to wit, because he is as mischievous as such an one can be, not caring what mischief he doeth; seeing, as no man will punish or be offended with a distracted man when he doeth such things, in regard that he knoweth not what he doeth, so he thinks after the same manner to wipe off all blame from himself, by alledging that he intended no evil, but that all was done in sport, and therefore would still be accounted as a friend. Some Expositours limit this to such jesting & sporting companions, as are wont to abuse those with whom they converse by words & deeds, that pierce them to their very hearts, and then think to excuse themselves with saying that all was done in merriment. But however the drift of this Proverb is, to shew that these kind of men are of all men the worst and most unsufferable, and that such mad-merry men are carefully to be avoided as so many Bedlams.

Verf. 22. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, &c.*] See the Note chap. 18.8.

Verf. 23. *Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a pot-sheard covered with silver drosse.*] Some by *burning lips* understand lips that utter words full of fiery hatred & fury, or lips that by slandering & backbiting are wont to kindle strife amongst men; & by an evil heart, a malicious heart: & accordingly they conceive that these are compared to a *pot-sheard covered with silver drosse*, only to imply that they are futable the one to the other, as silver dross is futable to an earthen pot-sheard, both naught; such a man by his words sheweth what he is, being stark naught both within and without. But I question not but that by *burning lips* are meant glossing, fawning & flattering lips, that make a shew of a great deal of hot fervent love, but hiding under them a false heart, that thinks otherwise then such lips make shew of. And accordingly these are said to be like a *pot-sheard covered with silver drosse*, because though such lips may make a fair shew, as the silver dross doth, which silly people may take to be true silver; yet 1. in truth they are both worthless and contemptible, no better then dross upon earth or dirt; and 2. such counterfeit shews of love will be found to be but a cover of a malicious heart, in regard that as the dross doth not change the pot-sheard, and therefore, either by the mouldring away of the dross or the breaking of the pot-sheard, it will be ere long discovered what it is, so neither doth such flattering language change the heart, but it remaineth full of malice, which will quickly some way or other discover it self.

Verf. 24. *He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips, &c.*] To wit, as concealing his hatred, and making perhaps a shew of great love: *and layeth up deceit within him;* that is, he intendeth thereby to deceive him, and plotteth to bring some mischief closely and cunningly upon him, waiting his opportunity that he may the better effect it. Indeed the first clause may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *He that hateth is known by his lips, &c.* and then the meaning must be, that though he hath nothing but mischief and deceit in his heart, yet he will not

be able so to conceal it, but that it will be discovered; either his very flatteries, being so grosse and excessive, or at least somewhat that will slip from him, will betray his malice. But the first exposition is the best, as appears clearly in the following verse, *When he speaketh fair, believe him not, &c.*

Verf. 26. *Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickednesse shall be shewed before the whole congregation.*] Some understand these words thus; that when a malicious man dissembleth his malice, if the man he hateth be in likelyhood to be chosen to any place of honour, or, on the contrary, be called in question for any thing in any publick judicature, then such a dissembler, either to prevent his advancement, or to hasten his ruine, will be sure to shew himself, and to lay on load upon him, and so his malice will be discovered and abhorred by all men. But with the current of Expositours, I rather take it thus; that the wickednesse of a malicious dissembler *shall be shewed before the whole congregation*, that is, it shall be some way openly and plainly discovered, that all men in a manner shall take notice of it. Or if we will understand it literally of publick assemblies, then the meaning must be, that such a dissembler shall by some speciall hand of providence be wound in to vent his malice in some way of villany upon him, whom he hath so long secretly hated, for which being questioned, and punished by publick order of justice, his malice shall by that means be discovered before the whole congregation: or else we must referre it to that great day of Christs judging the world, *when the Lord will both bring to light the hidden things of darknesse, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts*, 1 Cor. 4. 5. But now if we read this Proverb, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *whose hatred is covered in secret, his wickednesse shall be shewed before the whole congregation*, then clearly the drift of the words is only to imply, that though he keeps it never so close to himself, yet sooner or later it shall be known to all the people.

Verf. 27. *Who diggeth a pit, shall fall therein, &c.*] In those times hunters were wont to dig pits, and then to cover them over cunningly, as if they were firm ground, that so when the wild beasts they pursued were running over them, they might fall into them and be taken. Now because whilst they were digging these pits, the earth sometimes fell upon them and overwhelmed them, and whilst they were pursuing such wild beasts, they did often themselves unawares fall into these pits; in reference hereto, it is said of those that fall into that mischief which they have contrived to bring upon others, that *who diggeth a pit, shall fall therein*. And to the same purpose is that which follows, *and he that rolleth a stone, to wit, up hill, and with a purpose there to doe some mischief with it, it will return upon him*; that is, it often falls back upon him, and so destroys him. See also the Note Psal. 7. 16.

Verf. 28. *A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it, &c.*] Either the meaning is, that he that afflicts or hurts any man with a *lying tongue*, to wit, by slandering him, or by flattering him, when he intends him mischief, or by any other way of deceit or falshood, doth indeed, let him pretend what he will, hate him whom he thus wrongs; or else rather, that he that hath inju-

red a man by his lying tongue, doth for ever after hate him whom he hath thus injured, and would be glad to see him utterly destroyed; and that because he perswadeth himself that such a man must needs hate him, and feareth lest he should study revenge against him: *and a flattering mouth worketh ruine*; to wit, by drawing men through his flatteries into those waies of wickednesse which prove their ruine, or by bringing his mischievous purposes the better to passe thereby, the man that is flattered not fearing any thing, or by drawing in others through his flatteries to promote his wicked designs. The drift therefore of the Proverb may be, to shew, either, that though the man that hath wronged his neighbour with his lying tongue, must needs inwardly hate him whom he hath thus wronged, yet he dares not seek his ruine, but by away of flattery; or else, that the flatterer doth ruine men by his flatteries, as well as he that afflicts them by his lies or false witnessse; only the one doeth it openly, and the other secretly.

C H A P. XXVII.

Verf. 1. **B***oist not thyself of to morrow, &c.*] That is, of any thing thou intendest to doe, or any thing which thou thinkest to have or enjoy to morrow: *for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*; to wit, either the present day, or the morrow-day; thou knowest not what may happen this day to prevent thine expectations to morrow, or what may come to passe to morrow contrary to thine expectations this day. As no man knoweth what is in the womb of a woman with child, till the child be born; so no man can tell what a day, which is big, as I may say, with Gods decrees, will bring forth, till it suddenly comes to passe. Now the drift of this Proverb is, to shew the folly of all vain boasting of future things, and likewise of all delaying to doe what it is fit should be presently done, upon pretence of doing it hereafter.

Verf. 2. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth, &c.*] As if he should have said, So behave thy self, that other men may praise thee; but however praise not thy self. And indeed, unlesse there be a necessity for it, as when it is for the vindicating of a mans own innocency, or when the not doing of it is likely to tend to the hinderance of the truth, the hurt of the Church, or the impairing of Gods glory, it is both an unseemly and an unfitting thing for men to praise themselves. Besides that such praises may be justly suspected, it discovers much vain-glory and folly in him that doeth it; whence it is that the Apostle Paul, being forced in his own defence to praise himself, doth often use that expression 2 Cor. 12. *I speak as a fool*. And to the same purpose are the next words, *a stranger, and not thine own lips*. Yet some would have it, that the word *stranger* is here added, because to be praised by a mans own kindred, or near relations, is all one as if his own mouth should praise him.

Verf. 3. *A stone is heavy, & the sand weighy; but a fools wrath is heavier then them both.*] Whether a *fools wrath* be expressed by some great mischief, which may well be

compared to some huge massy stone, or by many frequent quarrellings and lesser wrongs, which may well be compared to a load of sand, it is heavier than either stone or sand, that is, it is more intolerable and harder to be born; and that because a fools wrath is usually causelesse, and against all reason, it is boundlesse and endlesse, there is no dealing with such men, no pacifying of them: and it is also more mischievous to men, and that especially because it crusheth and oppresseth the minds and souls of men, whose pressures are most grievous; neither are any indeed but the wiser sort of men able to bear the burden of it.

Verf. 4. *Wrath is cruell, and anger is outrageous, &c.*] In the Hebrew it is, *and anger an overflowing*, that is, it will not be kept within bounds, but breaks out, and is like overflowing waters, that carry all before them with unresistable violence: *but who can stand before envy? or, jealousie?* for which see the Note chap. 6. 34. The meaning is, that envy is more dangerous then either wrath or anger: and that 1. because envy (which hideth it self, as being ashamed of its cause) doth secretly seek the ruine of men, and so cannot be avoided; whereas wrath and anger do presently shew themselves: and 2. because, whereas wrath and anger will of it self soon be over, and come to nothing, at least they may be appeased, especially with benefits; envy is rather encreased by such meanes, and can no way be appeased, but is endlesse and boundlesse in its rage. See the Note also chap. 14. 30.

Verf. 5. *Open rebuke is better then secret love.*] By *open rebuke* is not meant a publick rebuke before many witnesses, (for that in many cases is not fitting) but a plain and free reproof without any dissimulation, and to a mans face, rather then behind his back. And this is said to be *better then secret love*, that is, good will pretended, but no way expressed; or, not discovered as it ought to be, by reproofing men for their sins. And the reason is, because such open reproofs discover the reprovers to be faithfull friends, and tend to the good of the reproofed, which secret love doth not. Yea this may be extended also to the reproof of an enemy, that cares not how he shames a man by blazing his faults openly: and thus even such reproofs may be said to be better, that is, more profitable, then secret love.

Verf. 6. *Faithfull are the wounds of a friend, &c.*] That is, the sharp and piercing reproofs and chastisements of a friend; to wit, because they proceed from an upright heart, and a sincere desire of the good of the party reproofed, and because men in so doing doe the part of a faithfull friend: *but the kisses*, that is, the fawnings and flatteries, *of an enemy are deceitfull*; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *earnest*, or, *frequent*; to wit, that under the pretence of very fervent love, he may the better deceive.

Verf. 8. *As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.*] This is severall waies understood by Expositours: as 1. that as a bird leaveth not her nest, but to seek meat for her self and her young ones; so neither ought a man to leave his calling & family, but upon such necessary occasions: or 2. that as God by his providence feedeth the bird that thus flyeth abroad for

for her provision; so will God provide for the man that seeks about in a lawfull way to get a livelyhood for him & his: or 3. that a man who carries not at home, but wanders up & down abroad, not minding his family, is like a bird that wanders up & down from place to place, & minds not her young ones. But the truest & most genuine Exposition I take to be this: that by *a man that wandreth from his place* is meant, a man that, out of mere lightnesse & inconstancy, or out of timorousnesse, or any such like cause, not having any just ground or warrant for it, is never contented with his present state or condition or calling, but loveth to be changing, & can never stay long in one place or way: & that such a one is compared to *a bird that wandreth from her nest*, that is, that leaves her nest, & is still flirting abroad & roving from one place to another, to imply thereby, either 1. that such a man is no wiser, nor better stayed, then such a bird is; or 2. that he is no more likely of his own accord to settle himself any where, then such a bird is any where to repose her self; or 3. that as a bird is never so safe as in her nest, (especially amongst the Iewes, where God had provided that a bird should not be molested in her nest, Deut. 22. 6, 7.) being abroad she is lyable to manifold mischiefs, & doth many times come short home; so it is with those that are still leaping out of one place & calling into another: whereas at home they lived quietly, & in the good esteem of their neighbours, being got so abroad, they wander they know not where, & many times some mischief befalls them. Yea & some think that Solomon spake this principally with reference to those birds that are wont to fly away from those regions where it begins to be cold, into some warmer country; & that because such birds at those times are wont to be killed in great numbers, & so are the fitter to represent the danger of those that abide not in their calling, but are ever seeking to change their condition.

Verf. 9. *Oyntment and perfume rejoyce the heart; so doth the sweetnesse of a mans friend by hearty counsell.* See the Note Psal. 55. 14.

Verf. 10. *Thine own friend and thy fathers friend forsake not, &c.* To wit, neither the one nor the other; or, him that hath been both the one and the other: *neither go into thy brothers house in the day of thy calamity*; as if he should have said, having such an ancient approved friend, in all thy straits make use of him rather then any kinsman or brother; & that not only because such friends do many times (though it be not alwaies so) love more affectionately then brothers, but also especially, because such friends doe usually dwell together, (neighbourhood being commonly the originall of such firm & faithfull friendship) & so are able to help one another sooner, & oftener, then a brother dwelling far off can possibly doe: whence that last clause is added, *for better is a neighbour that is near, then a brother far off*; to wit, when a neighbour is such an ancient approved friend; or, this may be spoken as arguing from the lesse to the greater, that if a neighbour, much more a friend is better then a brother.

Verf. 11. *My son, &c.* See the Note Chap. 1. 8: *be wise, & make my heart glad*; see the Notes Chap. 23. 15. & 10. 1: *that I may have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me*; that is, that by the discovery of thy wisdom in time to come, I may be able to shew the folly of those that now would reproach me, for not giving thee good education.

Verf. 12. *A prudent man foreseeth the evill, &c.*] See the Note Chap. 22. 3.

Verf. 13. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, &c.*] See the Note Chap. 20. 16.

Verf. 14. *He that blesteth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning it shall be counted a curse to him.*] I conceive that there is in these expreffions an allusion to a practise that was customarily used in those times, namely, that flattering parasites were wont to goe to the doors of great men, & that very early in the morning before it was day, as affecting to out-strip others, & to be the first in that service, & there with a loud voice, that all the neighbours might hear them, to proclaim their goodnesse & bounty by some formes of salutation or prayer, which were then used, as, Long live such or such an illustrious Prince, &c. or, God save my noble worthy bountifull benefactor or Patron, &c. or such like. And by saying that when a man thus *blesteth his friend, it shall be counted a curse to him* Solomons meaning is, that as this, so all other unseasonable & immoderate praifings of men to their faces, & in the hearing of others, are no better, nor can be any better esteemed or endured by wise men, (& much lesse is God like to esteem otherwise of them,) then if they were so many direct imprecations: & that 1. because such waies of praifing men cannot but be discerned to be palpable flatteries, & that men do it moeely to curry favour with such great ones, whereas indeed they do rather hate & curse them in their hearts; 2. because if a man should accept of such flatteries, men might have just cause to account him a vain-glorious fool, one that affected to be praised, yet could not discern betwixt those that praised him, & those that did only delude & deride him; & 3. because such flatteries do exceeding much hurt to those that are so flattered in spirituall respects. Yet some understand that last clause, *it shall be counted a curse to him*, thus; that such a way of praifing a mans friends shall prove a curse to him that so praifeth them, in that every one shall count him a fawning parasite, which shall be much to his reproach.

Verf. 15. *A continuall dropping in a very rainy day, & a contentious woman, are alike.*) See the Note Chap. 19. 13. Yet the meaning may be also, that as the one will not suffer men to stay abroad, so neither will the other suffer them to abide within doors.

Verf. 16. *Whosoever hideth her, &c.*] That is, Whosoever goeth about to order her so, that she may not discover her outrage by her chiding & brawling, or at least that her loud out-cries may not be heard, & that so it may not be known what she is, both to her own & her husbands shame, as namely by using her with all possible kindnesse & gentlenesse, that she may not be angry, or by not answering her again, or by seeking to pacify her when she begins to be angry, & to hush her brawling & scolding, or by shutting her up in some place that neighbours may not hear her: such a one *hideth the wind, and the oyntment of his right hand, which bewrayeth it self*; that is, he undertakes that which is as impossible, as if he should undertake to shut up the whistling wind in any place, or to hold it in his hand, that it should not blow, & that the noise thereof should not be heard, or to hold some odoriferous oyntment so fast in his hand, as not to suffer so much as the smell thereof to go forth: for as there is no restraining of the winds blowing, *who hath gathered the wind in his fist?* saith Solomon afterward Chap. 30. 4. where it gets into

into a room, we see it will get through every cranny, & the more opposition it meets with by any thing that stands in its way, the more violently it blows; & as there is no hiding of such an oyntment in ones hand, because being pressed by a warm hand it will slip the sooner through the fingers, & the sweet savour of it will the more spread it self all about; so neither is there any preventing or suppressing the clamours of a contentious woman, but the more means is used to that purpose, the more she will make the house to ring with her loud chiding, yea the whole neighbourhood round about.

Verf. 17. *Iron sharpeneth iron, &c.*] As namely, when all cutting tooles are sharpened by the file, & when by rubbing one sword or knife against another, they are mutually made the brighter & sharper, & so do cut the better: *so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend*; that is, say some Expositors, so doth a man by his rugged & wrathfull looks, language & behaviour, provoke the anger of his dear relations, & make his friend look sowrely & sharply upon him; or rather, so doth a man by his presence & conference & consolation, make the countenance of his friend smooth & quick & lively, that was before, by reason of some affliction & sorrow that he lay under, exceeding sowre, dull & dejected. Yea it may be extended to all the benefits that flow from the conversing of friends together: whereas men being alone by themselves, are usually heavy & dull, & like a tool whose edge is blunted, good in a manner for nothing; when they come to converse with their friends face to face, by their mutuall conferences, instructions, counsels & exhortations, & by the good example they have one from another, they are every way much bettered hereby; it brings them to be of a sharper wit, & a more vigorous & quicker piercing judgement, their behaviour in all things becomes the more polished & refined, & they are continually provoking & whetting on one another to good works, Heb. 10. 24. For because all the affections of men do much appear in their countenances, therefore in all the particulars fore-mentioned it may be well said, that *a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend*.

Verf. 18. *Who so keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof, &c.*] That is, He that diligently dresseth it, & preserveth it from wind & cold & all other annoiances, shall sooner or later reap the benefit of his labours in the fruit he shall eat of it: *so he that waiteth on his master*; that is, that constantly & diligently attends upon his person & businesse, & is faithfull & trusty therein: *shall be honoured*; that is, he shall at last, if not presently, be well rewarded & preferred, either by his master, or others that shall observe his commendable qualities, or at least God will do it. The drift of this Proverb is to shew, either 1. that as there are wayes & means for householders to benefit themselves, so also for servants in their places; or 2. that servants must be content to wait for the recompence of their faithfull service, as the husbandman doth for the fruit of his trees, after he hath bestowed much pains upon them; or 3. that it is as equall & just that a good servant should be well rewarded & honoured by his master, as that one should eat of the fruit of that tree which he hath carefully dressed & tended.

Verf. 19. *As in water face answereth to face; so the heart of man to man.*] That which some would have to be the meaning of this Proverb, that mens minds & fancies

cies differ as much as their faces, so many men so many minds, is clearly made good in the severall Expositions that are given of it, there being very few that undertake to shew the sense of it that agree in one and the same Exposition. But the most probable Expositions that are given of it are these: 1. that the hearts of all men living are in regard of naturall corruption as like one to another, as the shadow of a mans face in the water is like to the face whose shadow it is; in the heart of the wickedst men the best of men may see, as in a mirror, what their own hearts naturally are: 2. that mens minds, affections & dispositions, are many times as like, as in the water face is to face; there is no man, but some other may be found that in regard of his inward temper & disposition doth exactly resemble him; if one man be of a cheerfull or sad temper, so are others; if one man doth affect learning, or merchandise, or husbandry, others may be found that are also just the same way inclined; and the like may be said in many other particulars: 3. that as a man may see the face of another man, in seeing the shadow of his face in the water, though he do not directly see the man himself, but yet it is but very imperfectly; so men may, by observing the outward behaviour of men, & by the knowledge & experience which they have of their own hearts, discover what is in the hearts of other men, though it be but imperfectly, by guess & conjecture, rather than by any clear discovery; see the Note Chap. 20. 5: 4. that as in water, natures looking-glasse, if it be clear & still, men may truly see their faces, though but imperfectly; so by reflecting & looking back into their own hearts & minds, observing diligently wherein they doe most frequently busy themselves, and whereto they are most enclined, men may, as in a looking-glasse, truly, though but imperfectly, see themselves, the conscience of every man, if it be clear & undisturbed, will truly tell him what he is; for, saith the Apostle 1 Cor. 2. 11. *what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?* & 5. that as the shadow of a mans face in the water will be proportionable to his face, so mens affections will be mutually answerable & proportionable to one another; & that because the inward affections of men will discover themselves in their faces, & hereupon men will be affected to other men, as they see other men affected to them; a friendly heart will be answered with a friendly heart, & as men deal with others, others will deal with them. Each of these Expositions hath some good probability in it: but the two first I like the best.

Vers. 20. *Hell & destruction are never full, &c.*) That is, hell & death, or, hell & the grave; see the Note Job 26. 6: *so the eyes of man are never satisfied*; that is, the eyes of his mind are not satisfied with knowledge; or rather, the eyes of his body are never satisfied with seeing: either they have never enough of seeing that which they are delighted to see; or being gluttred with what they have seen, they still desire to see some new thing. But that which I conceive is chiefly here intended is, that mens covetous desires after earthly things, (which is called *the lust of the eyes*, 1 Job. 2. 16. because all earthly things are chiefly represented unto us by the eye) can never be satisfied; they are still craving more, & are still disquieted, either because they cannot have what they desire, or because being gluttred with what they enjoy, they still desire new things. The comparison here used by Solomon seems

to imply as much as if he had said, And why should we not then hate this insatiable desire of earthly things, even as we would hate destruction & Hell?

Verf. 21. *As the fining-pot for silver, & the furnace for gold, &c.*] That is, As these are used for the trying & purifying of silver & gold, see the Note Chap. 17. 3: *so is a man to his praise.* And this Expositors understand severall waies. For some take the praise given a man to be as the fining-pot & the furnace, which discovers what a man is, & that either 1. because when a man is every where commended & extolled, it is a signe that he is a man of a good life, & one that hath done many praise-worthy deeds; see the Note Chap. 12. 8; or 2. because by the men that praise him, it may be judged what he is: if a man be praised by wise and good men, it is a signe that he is a good man; but if wicked men praise him, it is a signe that he is also such as they are. But then again others conceive, (& that methinks the words seem most clearly to imply) that the man that is praised, is here compared to the fining-pot & the furnace: & that either 1. because every man in his own conscience, if he will deal faithfully with himself, is best able to judge whether those praises be justly due to him, or whether there be a great deal of the drosse of flattery in the praises that are given him, according to that Gal. 6. 4, *Let every man prove his own work, & so shall he have joycing in himself alone, and not in another;* or 2. because a mans carriage of himself when he is so praised will discover whether he be truly praise-worthy or no: for if he be one that deserveth them not, he will be exalted in his mind, & carry himself vainly & proudly; whereas if he be a good man, he will be no way puffed up with it, but rather be the more humbled, & even troubled to hear himself so praised, ascribing all to the free grace of God; yea such a one will endeavour thereupon to be really such as he is commended to be, & to purge himself from every thing that is not agreeable to the praises that are given, & to proceed on & to be more and more abundant in every good work.

Verf. 23. *Be diligent to know the state of thy flocks, & look well to thy herds.*] That is, leave them not wholly to the care of servants, but be thou thy self carefull over them, to see that they be every way provided for & ordered, as it is fit they should be. And under this particular, a provident care over mens estates in any other calling is likewise enjoyned.

Verf. 24. *For riches are not for ever, &c.*] That is, If men be idle, & negligent, & do not provide for the preserving of what they have, if men continually spend upon the stock, & do not daily adde to their estates by some honest labour, the greatest estates that are will soon be wasted, & come to nothing: *and doth the crown endure to every generation?* as if he should have said, Even the treasures of Princes will be exhausted at last, if they be excessive in their expences, & do not preserve their estates with care & diligence; yea men in highest places of honour may be cast down from their places of dignity, & so may stand in need of something that hath been stored up against future times.

Verf. 25. *The hay appeareth, &c.*] To wit, when it is meet & ready for carriage; or rather, the grasse in the meadows sprouteth out, which is to be reserved for hay against winter: *and the tender grasse sheweth it self;* to wit, in the

the pastures which are for the summer feeding of the cattell : & the herbs of the mountains are gathered; that is, the grasse, & other herbs which the mountains yield, are gathered for fodder, & other uses for the cattell & family. And indeed the mountains may be mentioned only with respect to the land of Israel, that was full of mountains. But now the aime of Solomon in reciting these particulars is, to shew the commodity which the husbandman shall reap by the provident ordering of his estate; to wit, that being carefull seasonably to gather & store up the plenty which God of his goodnesse causeth the earth to yield in the summer, he shall not only have his cattell well supplied with food for that season, but also lay up for them in store against the winter.

Verf. 26. *The lambs are for thy cloathing, &c.*] That is, with the skins and the wool of thy lambs & sheep, whether sold or made into cloath, thou mayest provide all sorts of cloathing for thy self & family; wherein also is implied, that men should be content with such plain attire, & not wast their estates in bravery above their condition: and the goats are the price of thy field; that is, with the money which thou makest of them, (and the goats some say are particularly mentioned, because they might be better spared then the sheep) thou mayest pay the rent of the ground which thou hirest; or, make full as much of it, as another man would give for it, if it were thine own; or, hire land also for tillage, & defray all the charges laid out therein; or, corn for thy family, as well as if thou didst keep tillage in thine own hands; or, purchase lands for thee & thine heires after thee.

Verf. 27. *And thou shalt have goats-milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy house, & for maintenance for thy maidens.*) Under this particular of goats-milk (which some think is expressed, as that which is most nourishing & wholesome) all other milk, & that which is made of milk, is comprehended, & that as the food, wherewith the frugall husbandman shall do well to nourish both himself & his servants.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Verf. 1. **T**He wicked flee when no man pursueth, &c.) To wit, either merely by means of the terrors of their own guilty accusing consciences; or it may be by reason of some pannick fears wherewith they are in an extraordinary manner stricken by God: but the righteous are bold as a lion; to wit, because they have a good cause & a good conscience, do contemn all earthly things, are comforted in Gods favour & protection, & by the spirit of God are usually strengthened with incredible courage & boldnesse.

Verf. 2. *For the transgression of a land, &c.*] That is, For the generali folly and wickednesse of a nation or state: many are the princes thereof; that is, many at the same time striving one against the other for the supreme power, or many in a short time succeeding one another; & that either because God by his own immediate hand doth quickly cut them off, or else because they are often cut off by the insurrections & treacheries of others, that thereby get into their places: which doth usually bring great calamity upon the people, and makes great havock amongst them; partly by great exactions imposed upon them, & partly by the shedding of much blood amongst them. But by a man of understanding and knowledge the state.

state thereof shall be prolonged; that is, by a man eminently wise: which may be meant, either of a wise prince, that useth all good means to suppress or reforme the wickednesse of the people; or any other wise man amongst the people, whether near to the Prince or otherwise, that by perswading the seditious to be still & quiet, or by his counsell any other way, may do that which may be much for the safety & good of a land. And so the drift of the Proverb may be, to shew, that when a land is indangered by the generall profanenesse & folly of a nation, by the wisdom & piety of some one man amongst them it may be preserved; or, that the welfare of a nation shall be prolonged by men singularly wise & understanding & pious amongst the subjects: Or, we may read it, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *by men of understanding & wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged*, that is, the lives of the princes shall be prolonged.

Verf. 3. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, &c.]* As namely when a beggerly judge or officer in some inferior place doth abuse his power for the crushing of some poor man, or when any other poor man doth by false accusations, or any other way of fraud or force, oppress; such an one *is like a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food*; to wit, because it washeth away not only the fatnesse of the land, but even the seed it self, & many times tears up by the roots, & carries away the new-grown corn, & beateth the fruit off the trees. Now though the drift of this similitude may be to imply the unnaturalnesse of this sin, in that as the rain, that should make the earth yield her fruit, doth in such a case destroy it; so the poor that should above others commiserate the poor, do oppress & undoe them: yet I conceive it is chiefly to imply how boundlesse such mens oppression is; partly because such men are of a base & sordid spirit, & partly because their own penury maketh them insatiably greedy; (even as we use to say, that a hungry louse will bite sore) where they oppress a poor man they sweep all away: whereas the rich will not mind small things; with such beggerly people all is fish that comes to the net, & what they seize upon is presently swallowed down without all hope of recovery.

Verf. 4. *They that forsake the law praise the wicked, &c.]* And consequently also they will reverence & favour them, justify them & take their part upon all occasions: but such as keep the law contend with them; that is, they will not only find fault with them, but they will also rebuke them sharply, they will withstand them in the evill they would doe, & cause them to be punished for the evill they have done. But yet the drift of this Proverb may be to imply, that though it be enough to prove a man wicked, if he be one that is wont to praise & applaud wicked mens; yet he that will approve himself a good man, must do more then dispraise the wicked, he must contend with them.

Verf. 5. *Evill men understand not judgement, &c.]* See the Note Psal. 37. 28, 30. Through their own blindnesse & wisfulness, & the just judgement of God upon them, they are not able to discern what is just & equall; and consequently, whatever knowledge they may have in other respects, they may be well looked upon as such as understand nothing: but they that seek the Lord; to wit, by hearing the word & prayer, & by an earnest endeavour to approve themselves, & to

obtain his favour : *understand all things* ; that is, all things that are necessary to be known for the well-ordering of their lives, & the attaining of life eternall.

Verf. 6. *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, &c.*] That is, he is a happier and indeed a richer man : *then he that is perverse in his wayes* ; that is, then a wicked false-hearted man ; see the Note Deut. 32. 5 : *though he be rich* ; see the Note Chap. 19. 1.

Verf. 7. *Who so keepeth the law, &c.*] And so in obedience thereto, & not merely for worldly respects, avoideth the company of riotous persons ; *is a wise son*, & so an honour to his father : *but he that is a companion of riotous men*, as being one that regards not Gods law ; *shameth his father*, that is, he is a foolish son, & so dishonoureth his father. See the Notes Chap. 10. 5. & 27. 11.

Verf. 8. *He that by usury & unjust gain increaseth his substance, &c.*] Or by usury & increase, as it is in the Original : & then by *usury* may be meant the taking of interest for the lending of money ; & by *increase*, the taking of an overplus for the lending of any other things, according to that Lev. 25. 37. *Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. He shall gather it for him that will pity the poor* ; that is, God will not let him long enjoy it, but by his providence will some way bring it into the hands of those that will do good with it.

Verf. 9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, &c.*] That is, He that wittingly & wilfully refuseth to hear or obey the word of God : *even his prayer shall be abomination* ; see the Note Chap. 15. 8.

Verf. 10. *Who so causeth the righteous to go astray in an evill way, he shall fall himself into his own pit, &c.*] That is, They that allure men to the doing of any thing, whereby they hope to bring some evill or mischief upon them, shall, through Gods just judgement, fall into that very mischief which they hoped to bring upon the righteous : see the Note Chap. 26. 27. I know that many Expositors, by *causing the righteous to goe astray in an evill way*, do understand the seducing them into some way of error & heresy, or other wickedness ; & that of such it is said, that they shall fall into their own pit, because those that mislead men out of the right way, into those crooked wayes that lead to the infernall pit, shall themselves also be cast into that pit whereinto they have caused others to fall, according to that Matth. 15. 14. *if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*. But I conceive it is evident, that the first clause must be understood of misleading men into some way of mischief, because of that following clause, *he shall fall himself into his own pit* : Only in regard that usually men draw the righteous into the evill of mischief, by seducing them into some *evill way* of sin, therefore both may be included. *But the upright shall have good things in possession* ; that is, the righteous, whom they sought to insnare, shall not only escape their snares, & so continue to enjoy those good blessings for which they were malign'd, but they shall also possess the good of those that would have ensnared them ; or rather, they shall be blessed of God with all good blessings, both of this world, & that which is to come.

Verf. 11. *The rich man is wise in his own conceit, &c.*] To wit, 1. because finding how bravely he lives in every respect, and how he is honoured and applauded

in the world by reason of his riches, he concludeth that it was wisely done of him to seek after riches, & not foolishly, out of a scrupulous conscience, to neglect the doing of good to himself; 2. because he apprehends that it hath been merely by his own wisdom that he hath gotten so great riches; & 3. because riches do usually puffed up men, & make them highly conceited of themselves in every regard: *but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out*; that is, he minds not his outward condition, nor is carried away with the opinion and applause of others, but he weighs & examines whether his speeches & actions be such, as do according to the rule of Gods word argue him to be a wise man, or no, and accordingly he judgeth of him as he is. The drift of the Proverb may be, to shew that God giveth riches to some, and wisdom to others.

Vers. 12. *When righteous men do rejoyce, &c.*] To wit, in the down-fall of wicked men, (as appears by the opposite clause) & because good men do prosper and are exalted, whether themselves or others, see the Note chap. 11. 10: *there is great glory*; that is, both the Church & commonwealth in generall, & the estates of private men in particular, are in a prosperous & flourishing condition; Religion is advanced, justice is executed, peace & plenty abounds, & the glory of God is every where exalted: *but when the wicked rise, a man is hid*; that is, the good man, that indeed only deserves the name of a man, lyeth close & hideth himself, to wit, either for fear of oppression, or for grief, not caring to stir abroad when he seeth things in so ill a condition; or, it may be understood more generally of all men, both good & bad, that in such a case men are wont to hide themselves, either out of discontent, or for fear of rapine & oppression. And to the same effect is that other translation, which is added in the margin of our Bibles, *when the wicked rise, a man is sought for*; that is, a good man is sought for, and cannot be found; or, men are never in safety, but oppressours, whether the prince or others, are continually hunting after them; the godly are sought for to be slain, and the rich to be spoiled.

Vers. 13. *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, &c.*] That is, it shall doe him no good, as he hopeth it should, for the securing of him either from shame or punishment; or, God will punish him for it without shewing him any mercy: for this is clearly implied from the following opposite clause, *but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy*, to wit, in every regard.

Vers. 15. *As a roaring lion and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.*] That is, in stead of being to them what a shepherd is to his flock, as by his place he ought to be, he is a terrour to the poor miserable people, and doth with insatiable covetousnesse and cruelty tear and devour them, being herein like a hungry roaring lion, and a ravening bear. Yet by *the poor people* here may be meant the poorer sort of people, whom to oppress is the greatest cruelty; & who are notwithstanding ofteneft devoured by such tyrants, because they are least able to withstand or revenge their oppressions.

Vers. 16. *The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressour, &c.*] As if he should have said, he is also one of those that are to the poor people as roaring lions and ranging bears, as was said in the foregoing verse; or, as he is a

fool, so he is also through covetousnesse a great oppressour, and therefore shall not prolong his daies: which is implied from the following opposite clause, *but he that hateth covetousnesse*; and so like a wise man doth not oppress his subjects, shall prolong his daies; to wit, through the blessing of God; and the love of his people.

Verf. 17. *A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person, shall flee to the pit, &c.* That is, he shall suddenly be brought to the grave, and till then he shall be in continuall terrours and fears: *let no man stay him*; that is, let no man undertake to save him; or, no man shall be able to secure him.

Verf. 18. *Who so walketh uprightly shall be saved, &c.* To wit, from all the evil designs of his enemies; from all dangers & mischiefs here, and from eternall destruction hereafter: *but he that is perverse in his waies shall fall at once*; to wit, so that he shall never rise again; he shall be suddenly, utterly & irrecoverably destroyed. But see the Note chap. 10. 9.

Verf. 19. *He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread, &c.* See the Note chap. 12. 11.

Verf. 20. *A faithfull man, &c.* That is, The man that trusteth in God, & is constantly faithfull in word & deed, shall abound with blessings; to wit, because he is contented with his estate, & will not enrich himself by unlawfull means; see the Note chap. 10. 6: *but he that hasteth to be rich, shall not be innocent, or, unpunished*; to wit, because he is an unfaithfull man, and will not forbear any thing whereby he may enrich himself; see the Notes chap. 20. 21. & 6. 29.

Verf. 21. *To have respect of persons is not good, &c.* See the Note chap. 18. 5: *for, for a piece of bread that man will transgresse*; that is, if a man make no more conscience of being exactly just, or, when a man hath once against conscience judged unjustly, with the least bribe that can be conceived will such a man be corrupted.

Verf. 22. *He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, &c.* That is, he grudgeth to part with any thing, & looketh with a grudging malignant eye upon those that receive any thing from him; or, he envieth & coveteth what others enjoy, (see the Note chap. 23. 6.) & consequently he will watch to bereave & defraud others of what they have, not caring by what evil means he enricheth himself: *and knoweth not that poverty shall come upon him*; that is, that notwithstanding all his care to flee poverty, & to enrich himself, yet poverty shall suddenly & unexpectedly surprize him, as well he deserves for his griping from others, (see the Note chap. 20. 21.) And consequently hereby also is implied, that he little therefore considers, that he shall stand in need of the compassion of others, & shall have as little shewn him as he hath shewn to others.

Verf. 24. *Who so robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, &c.* To wit, either openly with his lips, or secretly in his heart, *It is no transgression*, to wit, as concluding that children are to live upon the estates of their parents: *the same is the companion of a destroyer*; that is, a man-slayer & murderer, (for so the word seems to be taken Exod. 12. 23, Ezek. 9. 1.) or a thief and high-way robber, or a plunderer in war, or a riotous spend-thrift and waster, as the word is translated

chap. 18. 9. And the meaning is, that such an one, under what vain pretences soever he thinks to justify himself, yea though it should be of giving that to God which he so steals from his parents, much like that of the Pharisees Corban, Mat. 15. 5, 6. he is no better then a thief & robber, yea a murderer, & as such deserves to be put to death, according to those laws Exod. 21. 17. & Deut. 21. 18, 21: and that because he robs them of their livelihood, and breaks their hearts with grief. Yet some hold, that Solomon by saying that such an one is *the companion of a destroyer*, intends to shew, either that it is by the perswasion of riotous spend-thrifts, with whom he keeps company, and the base courses whereinto they draw him, that such an one is brought to this wickednesse of robbing his parents, or that such an one is like to joyn himself at last even with cut-throat robbers.

Verf. 25. *He that is of a proud heart, stirreth up strife, &c.*] See the Note chap. 13. 10. 1. because such an one out of pride of heart cannot bear the least damage or injury done him by others; 2. because he will be prone causelessly to think himself slighted and injured, if all be not done according to his own mind; 3. because he will not rest upon God for the righting of him, but will be his own avenger; 4. because having great thoughts of himself, he is eager still to seek great things for himself, and in the pursuit hereof is ready to oppresse others, and be offended with those that any way hinder him in his designs, therefore he will be still quarrelling and contending with others; which as it must needs tend to the wasting of his estate, and cause him to pine away with inward vexation of mind, so it often provokes God to pull him down: which is implied from the following clause, *but he that putteth his trust in the Lord*; that is, he that being of an humble spirit, can patiently bear injuries, and will by no means be injurious to others, as reposing himself upon Gods carefull providence over him: *shall be made fat*; that is, he will live peaceably with all men, and by that means he shall abound with blessings; see the Note chap. 11. 25.

Verf. 26. *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool, &c.*] That is, He that relyeth upon his own corrupt wisdom and reason, (see the Note chap. 3. 5.) or upon his own strength and abilities any way, and so despiseth the counsell of others, yea never minds the counsell and direction of God in his word, but doeth whatever seemeth good in his own eyes, and confidently rusheth into any temptation and danger, he is a proud presumptuous fool, and shall surely fall into many errors, and desperate inevitable miseries: as is implied from the following opposite clause, *but who so walketh wisely*; that is, warily and advisedly, and according to the rule of Gods word, and the counsell of wise men, and that having no confidence in himself, trusteth in God, and in all things seeketh to God for a blessing: *he shall be delivered*; to wit, out of all those dangers wherein otherwise he might have perished.

Verf. 27. *He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack, but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*] That is, The poor people shall lade him with imprecations, and God shall poure forth manifold plagues and miseries upon him.

Verf. 28.

Verf. 28. *When the wicked rise, men hide themselves, &c.*] To wit, by flying their country, or concealing themselves in secret places; & that either to avoid the tyranny of such Rulers, or else to decline those publick judgements which God is wont to bring upon people in such corrupt times: see the Note above verf. 12. Yet if we understand the first clause of the righteous only, then the meaning may be, that in such times there are but few righteous men to be found, and that because all in a manner follow the example of their wicked rulers. *But when they perish, the righteous encrease;* to wit, not only because those that before lay hid, do then appear again; but also because many others are wonne into the waies of righteousness by their counsell and example; yea also by observing the judgements that are fallen upon their wicked rulers, and by the encouragement and good example they have from those good rulers, that succeed in their room.

C H A P. XXIX.

Verf. 2. **W***hen the righteous are in authority, the people rejoyce, &c.*] It may be read also, *When the righteous are encreased;* but this is included in the other; for where the righteous are in authority, the number of the righteous amongst the people will then encrease: see the Notes chap. 11. 10. & 28. 12, & 28. *But where the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn;* that is, though it may be they dare not openly complain, yet at least they secretly sigh and mourn; to wit, not only because such rulers are usually great oppressours, but also because the people for want of good order are then fearlessly injurious one to another, & running into all kind of wickednesse do cast themselves headlong into the pit of destruction, and because the Lord also doth usually then plague such a people with manifold judgements.

Verf. 3. *Whoso loveth wisdom, rejoiceth his father, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 1. & 15. 20. The love of wisdom is here opposed to the love of harlots, as appears by the following clause, *but he that keepeth company with harlots, spendeth his substance.* See the Note chap. 5. 9.

Verf. 4. *The king by judgement stablisheth the land, &c.*] That is, by administering justice equally to all, he setteth both his kingdom and people in a safe and flourishing condition: *but he that receiveth gifts;* that is, the king that taketh bribes, whether it be for the putting of men into places of magistracy, or for the perverting of justice, by acquitting the guilty or condemning the innocent: *overthroweth it;* to wit, 1. because by such hope of impunity men will be encouraged in their injurious dealings, and in all kind of wickednesse, which often proves the ruine of kingdoms; 2. because the people do hereupon become mutinous; and 3. because such injustice will however provoke God to destroy a people. That which is translated, *he that receiveth gifts,* is in the Original, *a man of oblations:* and accordingly some understand this of sacrilegious Princes, that seize upon those things which have been given to God. And some Expositours conceive also, that because Solomon saith not, *a king that receiveth gifts,* but *he that receiveth gifts,* this is to imply, either that such an one deserveth not the name of a king;

king; or, that bribe-taking overthroweth kingdoms, whether it be done by the king himself, or by his subordinate officers.

Verf. 5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.*] The meaning is, either 1. that flatterers are so far from being friends, that they are no better then deadly enemies, in that they doe that to those they flatter, which is all one in effect as if they lay in wait to take away their lives, to wit, because by flattering them in their vices, for which they should reprove them, they encourage them to run on in those waies of perdition, & by extolling them above measure, they puff them up with damnable pride & self-conceit; or 2. that what-ever flatterers may pretend, their aime is always thereby to beguile & deceive those they flatter, & so to ensnare them, & bring them into some danger, or to get them into their power, & to make a prey of them, according to that of the prophet, Mic. 7. 2. *they all lye in wait for bloods; they hunt every man his brother with a net.*

Verf. 6. *In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare, &c.*] That is, though he may promise himself safety and content in his wicked way, yet it will bring judgements & terrours of conscience upon him; see the Notes Deut. 7. 16. & Prov. 5. 22. & 11. 5, 6. & 12. 13. & Job 18. 7, 8, 9. & so he shall mourn & howle: which is implied by the following opposite clause, *but the righteous doth sing & rejoyce*; to wit, because he is at peace with God, & is free both from such snares & from the fear of them, & knoweth he hath just cause to rejoyce even in his afflictions. But some do otherwise understand this Proverb, as thus: *In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare*; that is, he is ensnared by the evil he intendeth or doeth to the righteous: *but the righteous doth sing & rejoyce*; to wit, both for his own deliverance, & Gods just judgement upon the wicked; see the Notes chap. 11. 10. & Psal. 58. 10. Or thus: *In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare*; because he labours to draw others to partake with him in his wickednesse: but the righteous is delivered from this snare, and so rejoyceth.

Verf. 7. *The righteous considereth the cause of the poor, &c.*] That is, If a man be righteous, whether judge or private person, though he will not respect the persons of the poor, yet he will carefully search into the justice of their cause, & will accordingly help & relieve them; see the Notes Job 29. 16. & Psal. 41. 1: *but the wicked regardeth not to know*; to wit, that he may the more freely slight and oppresse them.

Verf. 8. *Scornfull men, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 1. 22. and 8. 8. and Psal. 1. 1: *bring a city into a snare*; that is, into desperate dangers, to wit, by stirring up the wrath of God or the magistrate against the city, with their obstinate and incorrigible wickednesse and rebellion; or by provoking with scornfull and opprobrious words or usage, (as Hanun dealt with Davids embassadours, 2 Sam. 10. 3, 4.) any that may be stirred up thereby to come in a hostile manner against them to ruine the city. But this may be read also, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Scornfull men set a city on fire*; to wit, by kindling dissensions, or raising tumults therein; or by drawing down judgements from God by their wickednesse upon the inhabitants. *But wise men turn away wrath*; to wit, the wrath of God, or the supreme magistrate, or any other incensed against the city; as namely by appeasing mutinies, by their wise counsell, by their prayers and righteous

conversation, and opposing the wickedness of others; & so they deliver the city from danger.

Verf. 9. *If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, &c.*] To wit, as seeking thereby to pacify him, or to reclaim him from any evil way, or to convince him of any point of truth or right: *whether he rage or laugh*; that is, whether he do it in a severe manner, with much vehemency of spirit, & with discovering himself to be highly offended at the fools presumption & obstinacy, or whether he do it with all mildness, in a smiling & jesting way, as pitying & laughing at his impertinencies & folly: *there is no rest*; that is, he shall never be able to quiet or content or satisfy the fool; or, he himself shall never be quiet, nor shall be ever able to free himself from him. But yet because the expressions here used of raging & laughing do better fit the foolish than the wise man, I should rather understand that clause of him; to wit, that when a wise man contendeth with a fool, whether the fool do rage against the wise man, or whether he laugh & scoff at him, *there is no rest*, that is, there is no quieting of him; or he is as insufferable to the wise man, when he laughs & is in sport, as when he is furious and rageth.

Verf. 10. *The blood-thirsty hate the upright, &c.*] That is, even the upright man that is most harmless & innocent in his life; or, they so hate him, that they will not spare his life: & that because his upright life doth condemn their wickedness; & because upright men are wont to oppose such bloody men, and to endeavour to have them punished; yea this may imply also, that even in hating him, they are no better than murderers in Gods sight. *But the just seek his soul*, that is, they love the upright, & so seek to save his life, & so rescue him from the malice of the blood-thirsty; or, they will require his life of the blood-thirsty that have slain him, by bringing them to suffer for it: yea & some understand it thus, that whereas the blood-thirsty hate & slay the upright, the just and upright, on the other side, will seek to preserve the life of the blood-thirsty man.

Verf. 11. *A fool uttereth all his mind, &c.*] See the Notes chap. 10. 14. & 12. 16, 23. & 14. 33. & 15. 28. & 17. 27.

Verf. 12. *If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.*] That is, say some Expositours, he thinks them all such, because by those liars, to whom he hearkens, they are reported to be such; or rather, they are usually wicked, to wit, flatterers & slanderers, & such as will tell him all manner of lies, as hoping thereby to please him & get his favour: And then besides 1. Servants are usually such as are their rulers; 2. such rulers will, if it may be, have no other servants; & 3. God doth often in his wrath fit them with servants sutable to their temper. Some conceive also, that it is not said, *all his servants are liars*, but more generally, *all his servants are wicked*, because lying is usually a covert for all kind of wickedness.

Verf. 13. *The poor and the deceitfull man (or, the usurer,) meet together, &c.*] That is, the poor and the rich, for he mentioneth the usurer, or the deceitfull man, only, because rich men do usually get their great estates by usury and deceit: *the Lord lighteneth both their eyes*; that is, they both live by him, see the Note Psal. 13. 2. and he causeth his sunne to shine upon them both; or, he sheweth mercy and giveth the graces of his spirit equally to both, without any

any respect of persons. But see the Note chap. 22. 2.

Verf. 15. *The rod and reproof, &c.*] That is, either of them severally; or, the rod, when it is accompanied with reproof: *give wisdom*; (so far is it from making children fools, as fond parents are wont to say it will do) & therefore such a child will be an honour to his parents, which is implied from the following words, *but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame*; to wit, through his folly and wickedness: see the Note, chap. 10. 1.

Verf. 16. *When the wicked are multiplied, transgression encreaseth, &c.*] To wit, not only because there are then the more to transgress Gods laws, but also because wicked men are wont to solicit others to sin, to encourage & help one another in their wickedness, yea their very example is infectious; & especially because the very multitude of the wicked is in it self a ground of making them bold in all kind of wickedness, in regard that they are prone to justify themselves in that they doe, by the example of a multitude; at least they become hereby fearless of being hindered in the evil they would doe, or of being punished for it when it is done, & may rather hope thereupon to be countenanced & favoured by many. And hence it is that the presumption of the wicked Israelites is set forth by this, Hof. 4. 7. *As they were encreased, so they sinned against me.* As for the following clause, *but the righteous shall see their fall*, see the Note Psal. 91. 8. It is doubtless here added, either to secure the righteous from being drawn away by the throng of the wicked, to the encrease of their transgressions; or to comfort them both against their fear of being in danger in such times, & against their sorrow for such abounding wickedness, & so likewise to beat off wicked men from hoping to escape punishments because of their multitudes, by giving them to understand, that the more their transgressions are encreased, the more the measure of their sin is filled up, & so the nearer they are to destruction.

Verf. 17. *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest, &c.*] That is, though it may be irksome and grievous to thee to doe it, yet afterwards it will free thee from all those vexations which his former miscarriages had brought upon thee; yea it will free thee from the fear of future trouble, because coming to more years, he will be the more easily governed, so that thou maiest sleep quietly, and when thy time comes thou maiest die the more peaceably. Besides it may be meant of the rest which such a father may take in his old age, because his son so made good by correction will so manage all his businesse for him, that he may then sit still, & never trouble himself; or of the peace of conscience which he may inwardly enjoy, however it fares with his child, because he hath used the means that God hath appointed. As for the following clause, *yea, he shall give delight unto his soul*, see the Note chap. 10. 1.

Verf. 18. *Where there is no vision, &c.*] That is, no prophecy & publick preaching: & that, either because those whose office it is to teach, do wholly neglect their duty; or because the people will not endure teaching, at least when it is faithfully discharged; or because God, for the former wickedness of a people, doth remove their teachers, (which must needs be a sign of imminent destruction:) *the people perish*; to wit, because for want of instruction they run into all kind of

wickednesse, and so bring utter destruction upon themselves; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *the people is made naked*, for which see the Note Ex. 32. 25. As for the following clause, *but he that keepeth the law happy is he*, that is added to imply, either 1. that though a people that enjoy not the publick ministry, are for the generality in great danger of perishing thereby; yet it followeth not but that those amongst them that do conscionably practise what they have formerly learned, may be truly happy: or 2. that though the want of a teaching ministry be enough to destroy a people; yet the enjoying of such a ministry is not enough to make men happy, unless they practise what is thereby taught them.

Verf. 19. *A servant will not be corrected by words, &c.*] This may be meant either of one that is indeed a servant, or of one that is of a servile and stubborn disposition: *for though he understand, he will not answer*; that is, he will not doe what he is enjoined; or, out of stoutnesse and fullennesse, he will not so much as give an answer when he is spoken to, he will not so much as say that he will doe what he is commanded, and so he carrieth himself as if he understood not what was said to him, that he may have that for an excuse for his not obeying. The meaning is, that such an one doth not forbear to answer or to doe what was enjoined him, because he did not understand what was said to him; but wilfully, out of stubbornnesse or lazinesse, and therefore he ought to be forced by stripes to doe his duty.

Ver. 20. *Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? &c.*] To wit, as never considering before-hand of what he saith, & forward to answer men before he well understandeth what they say; or, *seest thou a man that is hasty in his matters?* for which see the Notes ch. 19. 2. & 21. 5: *there is more hope of a fool then of him*; see the Note ch. 26. 12.

Verf. 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, &c.*] That is, from a youth, a boy: (or, it may be meant of a bond-slave born in a mans house,) *shall have him become his son at the length*; that is, he will at last carry himself more like a son then a servant; he will no longer doe the work of a servant, he will carry himself insolently & arrogantly towards the rest of the servants, as if he were their equall. Yea some adde, that such an one will not stick at last to make away the children, and to seize upon their inheritance.

Verf. 22. *An angry man stirreth up strife, &c.*] See the Notes ch. 15. 18. & 26. 21: *and a furious man*; that is, as it were mad with rage: *aboundeth with transgressions*; such an one will curse, swear, revile, slander, shed the blood of others, and will not stick at any wickednesse whatsoever.

Verf. 23. *A mans pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*] That is, it shall raise him up, & keep him up; see the Notes ch. 11. 2. & 15. 33.

Verf. 24. *Who is partner with a thief, &c.*] To wit, by counsell, consent, or any other way: *hateth his own soul*; see the Note ch. 6. 32: *he beareth cursing, & bewrayeth it not*; that is, say some Expositours, he beareth the thief belch out curses against God or man, (as indeed such profane varlets thieves usually are) and never maketh it known. But by the relation which the second clause hath to the first, it seems clear to me, that those words, *& bewrayeth it not*, must be understood of the thieves theft, thus: *he beareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not*; that is, he beareth the thief adjure

adjure him by a curse not to reveal his theft, & thereupon accordingly he doth conceal it; or rather thus, he heareth those that have lost their goods cursing the thief, & those that conceal his theft, it may be himself particularly, upon suspicion; or, he heareth the judge adjuring him under a curse, or some other in his presence, to discover what he knoweth therein, & yet he concealeth it; for which see also the Note Lev. 5. 1.

Vers. 25. *The fear of man bringeth a snare, &c.*] By the fear of man may be meant any immoderate & inordinate fear in man; as when men lye under such desperate apprehensions of Gods wrath, that thereupon they cast away all hope of mercy, & all endeavour of doing any thing that God will be pleased with; or when men lye under slavish fears of any evill or mischief whatsoever. But because in this Proverb there seems to be an opposition betwixt fearing of man & trusting in God, *The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe*, I rather think that by the fear of man here is meant mens being afraid of man, & of any evil that man can do them. However, of either of these fears it may be said, that it *bringeth a snare*: either 1. because such men are usually so continually perplexed & troubled, that they can seldome or never enjoy any peace or tranquillity of mind; 2. because it makes others the readier to injure & hurt them; 3. because it consumes mens bodies, & disables men severall waies from doing any thing for their preservation; & 4. especially, because it makes men neglect their duty, and puts them oftentimes upon many rash & wicked & ruining resolutions, and so involveth them in many mischiefs both to soul & body, sometimes those very mischiefs which by pleasing men they sought to escape. But *whoso putteth his trust in the Lord*, & so feareth not man, *shall be safe*, or, as it is in the Originall, *shall be set on high*; to wit, in that safety that men are on some high rock, where the waters cannot drown them, or in some inaccessible high fortresse above the reach of danger.

Vers. 26. *Many seek the rulers favour, &c.*] To wit, in any cause which they have to be decided by law: but every mans judgement cometh from the Lord; who orders the hearts & tongues of judges to give sentence as he pleaseth. Yet this may be understood more generally, of mens seeking the favour of great men in any respect whatsoever (It is in the Originall, *the face of the rulers*; because the favour of men is usually seen in the cheerfulness of their countenance.) And then the meaning of the following clause, *but every mans judgement cometh from the Lord*, must be, either that great persons can doe nothing to those that seek their favour, whether good or evill, but as God by his Providence is pleased to order it; or else, that God is the great judge, that shall at the last day passe sentence of eternall salvation or damnation upon men, & that in regard thereof his favour was rather to be sought than the favour of all the great men that are in the world.

C H A P. XXX.

Vers. 1. **T**He words of Agur the son of Iakob, even the prophecy, &c.] Many of the Hebrews hold that it is Solomon that is here called Agur: But because the reasons which they give from the signification of these words, Agur the son of Iakob, are extremely forced, & because the style of this

chapter is so different from that of Solomons Proverbs, and because that which follows ver. 8. *Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me*, is so unsuitable to Solomons condition, a Prince so glorious & great, & upon whom God bestowed such abundance of wealth; there is no question to be made but that this *Agur the son of Iakeb* was some other man, that was famous for his eminent wisdom, and that given him by the speciall inspiration of Gods spirit, it may be in the dayes of Solomon (though that be the more questionable, because he is not named amongst the wise men of his time, 1 Kings 4. 31.) or rather in the daies of Hezekiah, whose servants collected all the last recited Proverbs from the beginning of the 25. chapter unto this place; & so his Proverbs are here added together with Solomons. Nor need it seem strange, that these sayings of his are called a *prophecy*; because, as teaching is often in the Scripture termed prophecy, so any holy doctrine, especially when given by divine inspiration, may be called a *prophecy*. The man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel & Vcal; who were certain men in those times to whom he delivered these following instructions. I know that severall of our best Expositors do hold that by *Ithiel and Vcal* here Christ is meant, *Ithiel* being equivalent to *Immanuel*, & so signifying the union of two natures, the divine & humane, in the person of Christ, as likewise Gods gracious presence with us in & through the Lord Christ; only they say *Immanuel* signifieth *God with us*, & *Ithiel* by a nearer application, *God with me*; & *Vcal* importing Christs omnipotency, because the word signifieth, *I shall prevail*. But for my part, I see no clear ground in these words for this great mystery, but doe rather understand the place plainly thus, that this *Ithiel & Vcal* were the friends or the disciples of Agur, or it may be his sons, or his scribes, to whom he dictated all that followeth in this chapter.

Verf. 2. *Surely I am more brutish then any man*, &c.] To wit, in & of my self; in regard of any knowledge that I have attained by mine own endeavours, I am the simplest of men; others have more knowledge then I have: *and have not the understanding of a man*; that is, the understanding wherewith man was at first created, or which is requisite for man, or the understanding of any mean ordinary man. And it may indeed well be, that Agur was some mean unlearned man, & that the wisdom he had was by the extraordinary revelation of Gods spirit; as it was also with the prophet Amos, chap. 7. 14, 15. *I was a herdman and a gatherer of sycomore fruit*; &c. As for the scope of these words, some conceive that Agur being desired by Ithiel & Vcal to inform them in some matters of high concernment, or to resolve them concerning some difficult questions, or generally to impart unto them some of that great wisdom which God had conferred upon him, he first gave them this modest answer; not unlike to that of Socrates, *Hoc tantum scio, quod nihil scio*: as if he should have said, Alas, why do you seek these things of me, that am the simplest of men, & am ignorant of many things that it were fit I should know? Again others hold, that being to propound certain hard questions to them, that were above the reach of mans understanding, therefore he begins with this acknowledgement of his own weaknesse and ignorance; & that to shew, that men are not to weary their minds with a curious

enquiry into such high questions, but modestly to keep themselves within the bounds of the Scripture, contenting themselves with the knowledge of those things which God hath there revealed to them. Or rather lastly, his drift seems to be, in the beginning of his speech to lay down this conclusion, that both himself & all other men are naturally ignorant of all saving knowledge, & can no otherwise attain it but by the revelation of God in Christ, as he hath manifested himself in his holy word. And to the same purpose is that which followeth.

Verf. 3. *I neither learned wisdom, &c.*] Some understand this first clause of the knowledge of men in naturall & civill things; & so they conceive that Agurs purpose therein was to shew, that as he knew very little by his own naturall understanding, so neither had he been trained up as a scholar, for the learning of such kind of wisdom by the instruction of others; and that therefore he was not fit to teach others, that had not been himself formerly taught by others. And then for the second clause, *nor have the knowledge of the holy*, that they understand of the knowledge of the angels, who are called the Saints or the holy ones, Dan. 4. 13, 17, & 8. 13. or of the holy prophets in former times; and so they conceive the drift of these words to be all one as if he had said, that considering the weightiness & difficulty of those things he was to speak of, he could not but acknowledge his own insufficiency, such things being fitter to be discoursed of by angels, or by the holy inspired prophets, then by him. But I conceive both clauses are to be understood of true saving wisdom & knowledge: *I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy*; that is, I have not learned heavenly wisdom by the instruction of worldly men, nor have I by mine own reason, & understanding, & study, attained the knowledge of the mysteries of salvation, *the knowledge of the holy*, those saving holy truths which are revealed in the holy Scripture, & which all the saints, & they only, do attain.

Verf. 4. *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? &c.*] That is, Who is it that doth by his Providence govern all things both in heaven above and in the earth beneath? or rather, Who hath been able to goe up into heaven, to see what is done there; or to know what God hath there determined concerning the way and means of mans salvation? and who hath then descended again, to tell what he hath seen there, or to make known unto others the counsels of God concerning mans salvation? It is as if he had said, surely no mere man ever did this: It is as possible for man with his body to climb into heaven, and then to come down again, as it is for him to know all the creatures in heaven and earth, or much more to rule and govern them, or, as it is for him to understand of himself, or by his own power, the way and means of life eternall: It is only God that hath all the creatures at his beck and command, and that therefore exactly understands them all; and it is God only that can reveal to man what he hath from all eternity appointed concerning the way of mans salvation. So that the drift of this passage is, to shew how poor and weak and brutish mans knowledge is, in comparison of Gods; or how impossible it is that man should understand any thing of true wisdom, unlesse it be by revelation from God in Christ. And it may well be that with respect to this place,

Christ

Christ used that expreffion concerning the impossibility of mans attaining the saving knowledge of heavenly mysteries, unless they were by him, who came out of the bosome of the father, revealed unto them, Ioh. 3. 13. *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven.* Yea and to the same purpose are the following Questions. *Who hath gathered the wind in his fist?* that is, Who hath the winds absolutely at his disposing, so that he can hold them in or let them loose at his pleasure? *Who hath bound the waters in a garment?* that is, as in a garment: which may be meant both of the waters in the clouds, which are as a black mantle, wherewith the heavens are sometimes covered, & wherein the waters are bound up, that they may not all fall down together suddenly, but may be distilled down by little and little, as through a strainer; & likewise of the waters below, as namely the waters of the sea, which are there held within the sea-shoares by the speciall Providence of God, as with a garment, (for which see also the Note Iob 38. 9.) or the waters in the earth, which are there covered & bound up as in a garment, & so are strained out here & there in springs & fountains. *Who hath established all the ends of the earth?* that is, Who hath caused the whole globe of the earth from end to end every way to stand fast in the midst of the aire, without any thing to support it? or, Who hath settled the sea-shoares so fast & sure, that they are not overborn by the sea, notwithstanding the raging billowes thereof do with such violence beat upon them? *What is his name, & what is his sons name, if thou canst tell?* As if he should have said, Tell me who it is; name me the man, if thou art able, that hath done these things: or, if such a man there hath been, only he is now dead, tell me then any of his sons or posterity that are descended from him. And the question doth doubtlesse imply a vehement negation, that there was never any but God, & the only-begotten Son of God, that could do these things: whose name must needs be ineffable, because his essence & being is incomprehensible, which shews that the scope of all these Quere's is, to imply, how brutish the knowledge of man is in comparison of the wisdom of God, whereby he hath done, and doth daily such wonderful things, and so far above the reach of our understanding; and that therefore the only way for men to attain wisdom is, not curiously to search into those things which are above their reach, but humbly to seek it from God in Christ.

Verf. 5. *Every word of God is pure, &c.*] See the notes Psal. 12. 6. & 119. 140. Having shewn in the foregoing verse, that God in Christ is the only fountain of all true wisdom, this is added to shew, that God hath in his word, the unquestionable foundation of faith, revealed this wisdom unto us, and that here therefore we can only attain the saving knowledge of God and of Christ. *He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him;* that is, to them that having attained the true knowledge of him do thereupon put their trust in him, & in the sure promises which in his word he hath made to them.

Verf. 6. *Adde thou not unto his words, &c.*] As namely, by pretending any revelation from God, by canonizing any humane writings, or by misinterpreting the Scriptures, & so affirming that to be the word of God which indeed is not. And obser-

observable it is, that Agur makes no mention here of the sin of diminishing ought from Gods word, as Moses doth Deut. 4. 2. which was doubtlesse because men are most prone by false glosses & wresting of it, to adde unto it. *Lest he reprove thee;* that is, Lest he severely punish thee, to wit, for thy sawcinesse & presumption in falsifying his word: *& thou be found a liar;* namely, when God shall discover thy forgeries & impostures.

Verf. 7. *Two things have I required of thee, &c.*] To wit, two things particularly & principally, as most needfull both for Gods glory & his own good: *deny me them not before I dye;* that is, as long as I live in this world; for so it is in the Original, *withhold them not from me before I dye.*

Verf. 8. *Remove far from me vanity and lyes, &c.*] By *vanity* may be meant all vain courses, as Idolatry, (see the Note 2 Kings 17. 15.) or pride, or covetousnesse, & such other sins as carry men greedily to seek after, or to glory or delight in the vain things of this world, (see the Notes Psal. 4. 2. & 24. 4.) yea all kind of sin and wickednesse whatsoever; see the Note Iob 31. 5; & by *lies*, all errors in judgement, & evill thoughts concerning God, all false dealing either by word or deed, all perjury, craft, couzenage & hypocrisy. And by desiring that God would remove these far from him may be meant, that God would pardon him, & not lay these to his charge, & likewise that he would sanctify him, & purge him from these corruptions, & not suffer them at any time to prevail against him. And this is the first of those two things mentioned in the foregoing verse which he had desired of the Lord, which is concerning the immediate good of his soul. And then the second followeth in the next words, which is concerning his outward estate, yet with reference to his spiritual welfare, *Give me neither poverty nor riches, &c.* And therefore this must be supposed to be desired only conditionally, so far as might stand with Gods good will & pleasure, & might prevent his sinning against God. I know some Expositors hold, that the two things which Agur desired of God are both comprehended in that first clause, *Remove far from me vanity and lyes;* & that the following words are but added by way of amplifying his requests herein. But the former Exposition of the words is far the clearer.

Verf. 9. *Lest I be full, &c.*] That is, say some Expositours, Lest being rich I gluttonously fill my self; for this indeed is usually the cause of mens running out into many enormities; or rather, Lest I come to live in great abundance of all things: *and deny thee;* to wit, either 1. by trusting in my wealth, rather than in thy protection, which would be a manifest deniall of thee, and making my riches my God; or 2. by refusing to obey thee: *and say, Who is the Lord?* that is, and so carry my self as if I owned no God, at whose command I was bound to withstand mine own carnall desires. This first part of the verse may be read, *Lest I be full, and belye thee, &c.* that is, Lest being full I live so wickedly, that thereby implicitly I cast false aspersions upon thee, as if my plenty came not from thee, as if I were not bound to serve thee, and that there were no comfort in thy work or waies, &c. Or *lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain;* that is, lest by my poverty I be tempted to steal, and by perjury or any other way of wickednesse to seek to help my self; or, lest I steal, and

then forswear my self, to conceal my theft; or, lest by theevery, or any other loosensse of life, I should cause the name of my God, that is called upon by me, to be blasphemed.

Verf. 10. *Accuse not a servant unto his master, &c.*) To wit, wrongfully, out of hatred, or any other evill intention, rashly, & out of a tatling humour, or for every light fault & triviall occasion; thereby incensing his master to deal roughly with him, whereas he ought rather to be pittied for the misery of his servile condition. Because it cannot be judged evill to make known to masters the offences of their servants, when they are very great, & when it is done with a good intention both to the master & servant, therefore this precept must be understood with these limitations. *Lest he curse thee;* that is, say some Expositors, lest he, by way of revenge & recrimination, speak some evill of thee, or discover some secret offence of thine: *& thou be found guilty;* that is, & so thou art thought to be guilty, yea, it may be, mayest be found to be guilty of the evill he layeth to thy charge, & so art accordingly punished for it. Or rather thus, *Lest he curse thee;* that is, wish any evill to thee, or pray to God to poure out some curse upon thee: *and thou be found guilty;* that is, and so God, judging thee culpable for this thine accusing of a poor servant, doe accordingly inflict some judgement upon thee, it may be the very curse, which such a servant hath wished might fall upon thee. Now this may be applyed to all other inferiors: and the drift of it may be to teach us, that we should be very tender of adding to the misery of them that are in an afflicted condition, that we should not encourage our selves to wrong the poorest, but should endeavour to live peaceably with all, and to maintain peace amongst all, so farre as we are able.

Verf. 11. *There is a generation that curseth their father, &c.*] That is, There is a company of wicked wretches) a brood (as it were) or race of them, proceeding from one age to another, (see the Note Psal. 24. 6.) that stick not to curse their own parents; see the Note Lev. 20. 9. In the sequele of this chapter, the wise man gives us, together with other sentences intermixed, six Quaternaries, as I may call them, wherein the better to help the memory, & the more to affect the minds of those that read them, he joynes and compares together, some four things that are in some common respect very notable: And so here in the first place he reckons up four sorts of notorious wicked people, implying, as I conceive, the same that Solomon doth elsewhere expresse chap. 6. 16. namely that they are above other sinners, most abominable to God, & mischievous in the world.

Verf. 14. *There is a generation whose teeth are as swords, &c.*] This is meant of those that devoure & destroy the poor by their false slanders, or any other way of cruell oppression; see the Notes chap. 12. 18. & Psal. 57. 4. And these are mentioned in the last place, as the worst of those four sorts of notorious wicked wretches that are here compared together.

Verf. 15. *The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give, &c.*] That is, she hath two forks in her tongue, wherewith she first pricketh the flesh, either in men or beasts, and then sucketh the blood, and is indeed never satisfied. Some under-

stand this mystically, as that by the horseleach is meant the devil, or naturall concupiscence: and so likewise they interpret in a spirituall sense all that followeth in this and the next verse; wherein they take liberty to themselves severally, as in such Expositions all men may doe, according to their severall fancies. But I conceive the drift of Agur in these words is only this: Having spoken in the foregoing verse of a generation of men that were insatiable devourers of the poor, in this & the following verse he mentions severall things in nature, to which for their insatiable greedinesse they may be justly compared; as first the horseleach with her two daughters, and afterwards to four other things mentioned in the following verse, to which he makes way in the last words of this verse, *There are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not, It is enough.*

Verf. 19. *The grave, &c.*) See the Note chap. 1. 12: *and the barren womb*; which is reckoned amongst those things *that are never satisfied*, either because barren women are so exceedingly desirous of children, that nothing else can quiet their desires, as we see in that of Rachel, Gen. 30. 1. *Give me children, or else I dye*; or because such are usually most violent & unsatisfiable in their lust, as we see in common strumpets, that are for the most part barren: *the earth that is not filled with water*; that is, that drinketh in all that falls upon it, & is never so full but that within a while it is ready to receive more; even in an over-wet year, when it is glutted & made drunk with rain, so that it vomits it up again, yet within a while it will chap & chawne, & as thirstily gape for water, as if it had had no watering before; Noahs flood could not satiate this thirst of the earth: or it may be meant of dry and sandy ground, which will drink up abundance, so that presently no drop thereof will be to be seen: *and the fire that saith not, It is enough*; to wit, because it never leaveth burning, as long as it hath any fuell to feed upon. Now all these are mentioned, to expresse the unsatiable desires of covetous oppressors: see the foregoing Note.

Verf. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his father, & despiseth to obey his mother, &c.*] It is as if he had said, They that can, when they look upon their parents, deride & mock them for any thing which they judge despicable or ridiculous in them, yea though it be but with a scornfull winking with the eye, or any other contemptuous look: *the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, & the young eagles shall eat it*; that is, they shall be brought to the gallows, or cast forth without buriall. And this expression the wise man here useth, because indeed crows are wont first of all to pick out the eyes of any dead carcases. As for these words; *the ravens of the valley, or, of the brook*, as it is in the margin, either thereby are meant young ravens, agreeable to the following clause, *& the young eagles shall eat it*, & that because ravens are wont to build their nests in valleys & near to brooks & rivers; or else this phrase is used, because ravens, being of a hot constitution, do usually frequent valleys where there are brooks and rivers, and therefore we see 1 Kings. 17. 3, 4, the place where Elijah was sent to be fed by the ravens, was by the brook Cherith; and it may be also because they used to execute malefactors in valleys and desolate places.

places. However this seems to be added with reference to that first generation of vile wretches, mentioned before vers. 11.

Vers. 18. *There be three things which are too wonderfull for me, yea four which I know not.*] That is, they are above my reach, and which I cannot by any means discover or know.

Vers. 19. *The way of an eagle in the aire, &c.*] To wit, because no sign of that place in the aire through which she hath flown can possibly be discerned. And though this be true of the flying of any bird in the aire, yet the eagle is particularly mentioned, because she flyeth so high and so swiftly: *the way of a serpent upon a rock*; because there she leaves no print behind her, as she doth when she glides away in the dirt or dust, nor any thing else whereby it may be known which way she went, not so much as any slime as worms and snails do: *the way of a ship in the midst of the sea*; because though the ship at first leaves a kind of path or furrow behind her, yet in the twinkling of an eye the waters will close together again, so that it cannot be seen where she hath gone, especially by one that standeth farre off on the shoar: *and the way of a man with a maid*; to wit, when she is wonne to be unclean with him; and that because they are wont to carry it so slyly and closely, and afterwards to dissemble the matter with so much cunning and impudence, that many times they are never suspected, at least it is not possible to convince them of unchastity. Thus I conceive of the meaning of this place; and that the drift of it is to teach parents narrowly to watch over their children in this regard. And some conceive that this passage is added, with reference to that second generation of wicked men before-mentioned, to wit, those vers. 12. that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthinesse. I know that by some another exposition is given of these words: as namely that the many cunning waies and enticements, whereby young men are wont to obtain their desires upon young virgins, though never so watchfull over themselves, and never so warily kept by others, are not to be known; no more then how an eagle can fly so high in the aire, or how a serpent can without feet climb up upon a rock, or how a ship can be so tossed in the seas, and yet ride it out, and not be drowned. But the first exposition is far the clearest and most generally approved.

Vers. 20. *Such is the way of an adulterous woman, &c.*] That is, so close and unknown: *she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickednesse*; that is, she satisfyeth her unclean desires, and then looks so demurely, and carrieth it away with a brazen face, as if she had done nothing amisse; being herein like some liquorish filching children or servants, that in secret eat what they should not, and then wipe their mouths, that nothing of what they have eaten may appear.

Vers. 21. *For three things the earth, &c.*] That is, the inhabitants of the earth: *is disquieted*; to wit, with anger, grief and fear; they raise great troubles both in families and commonwealths: *and for four; which it cannot bear*; that is, which men are not able to endure, because they are so absurd, and

and contrary to all reason, and every way intolerable. Yet it may be spoken of the earth it self by way of an hyperbole, to wit, that the earth it self may even tremble and shake because of these things, and as not able to bear such kind of persons, may be ready to open her mouth and swallow them up. What these four insufferable things are, he sets down in the two following verses; two that concern men vers. 22. and two that concern women vers. 23. And because they are all the effects of pride, that which some have noted may seem the more probable, namely, that this passage is added with reference to that third generation of wicked wretches, mentioned before vers. 13. whose eyes are so exceeding loffy, &c.

Vers. 22. *For a servant, when he reigneth, &c.*] To wit, because such are unfit to rule, and people are very prone to murmur, and to rise up in mutiny against such mens government: *and a fool, when he is filled with meat;* that is, say some, a wicked man that is given to gluttony & drunkenness; or rather, a wicked wretch living in a prosperous & plentiful estate, because such are prone to carry themselves foolishly & insolently, & thereby to stir up many quarrels & uproars. But see the Note chap. 19. 10.

Vers. 23. *For an odious woman when she is married, &c.*] That is, a woman of odious qualities, that for her pride & frowardness, or other vile qualities, is worthily had in detestation in a manner by every body that knows her: for such an one, if once she be married, will quickly shew what metall she is made of; her husband must doe what-ever she will have him, & an insufferable burden she will be to all his relations: especially if once her husband begin to hate her, & to deal any way roughly with her; for then she will grow intolerable, and will raise endless and unquenchable quarrels & troubles amongst them. As for the last of these insufferable evils mentioned in the following words, *and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress,* though thereby might be meant a maid-servant, that is by her mistress appointed after her death to inherit her goods (for such indeed are many times insolent enough;) yet because she is mentioned in the last place, as the most insufferable of all the four, it is more probably thought that the wise man intends hereby, either a hand-maid that is taken into her mistresses place, her mistress being cast out of doors, or at least, neglected & disregarded, (for such a one doth commonly grow so insolent & injurious, that neither children nor servants, nor at last the husband himself, are able to abide her) or rather a hand-maid that after her mistresses death is married to her master, & so comes to possess all that before her mistress did enjoy: & that because children & servants will scorn to be brought into subjection to such an one; & besides, such wives, raised so suddenly from a servile condition, are usually wont to swell and grow proud, nor are any commonly more costly, more turbulent and imperious then they are.

Vers. 24. *There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise.*] The drift of this passage may be, not only to set forth the wonderfull power & wisdom of God, in the strange acts of wisdom that are done by these little creatures: but also to teach us by them, 1. that we ought not to be proud of our wisdom & knowledge, since even in many things of this nature we may find

our selves out-stripped by the meanest of the creatures; & 2. that bodily strength tends not so much to the prospering of endeavours, as wisdom doth; and that therefore those that are weak ought not to be despised by others, nor to be discouraged in themselves, or, under a pretence of feebleness, to neglect any business that belongs to them.

Verf. 25. *The ants are a people not strong; yet they prepare their meat in the summer.*] In these creatures we are taught diligence and providence, and that especially with respect to those things that concern life eternall. But see the Note chap. 6. 6.

Verf. 26. *The conies are but a feeble folk; yet make they their houses in the rocks.*] In these we are taught 1. that the hardest things may be effected by constant labour; & 2. that wisdom should teach us, as to provide betimes an habitation for our selves, especially in heaven, against the time we must leave the world, so also to provide for the safety of our selves & children, & to secure our selves, as far as we are able, against all wrong and injury, & that especially by making the Lord our rock of refuge.

Verf. 27. *The locusts have no king; yet goe they forth all of them by bands.*] To wit, some going one way, & some another, like so many severall squadrons or bands of an army. And hereby men are taught, that needfull and good things ought to be done, though they be not enjoined by authority; & that concord & unanimity amongst men, yea the association & combination of men in lawfull things, is very usefull and commendable.

Verf. 28. *The spider taketh hold with her bands, &c.*] To wit, on the thrid she hath spun, & therewith she weaves her web, & builds her house: *and is in kings palaces*; which is noted, to shew the art & industry of this little creature, in that she builds her house & spreads her nets even in kings palaces: though their rooms be often high & lofty, yet she makes a shift to get up to those roofs & battlements, & there takes up her dwelling; & though their palaces are much frequented, & often swept & cleansed, yet will she find a time to build her house there. And hereby men are taught, either 1. not to shrink from doing what belongs to them to doe for fear of the greatest; or 2. not to be discouraged with the difficulty of any undertaking, & that because by art & industry any enterprize may be effected, though never so many obstacles lye in the way; or 3. to know that the meanest men may by diligence & worthy enterprizes attain to highest places of honour; according to that chap. 22. 29. *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, &c.*

Verf. 29. *There be three things which goe well, yea four are comely in going.*] These patterns of comeliness in going are propounded, to teach all sorts of people to walk orderly & decently, according as is seemly for men in their places, that their deportment of themselves be with all gravity and comeliness; and that especially in regard of magnanimity, as the following instances do import, even that men should not dishonour themselves with any base cowardise, but proceed on constantly & courageously in every enterprize they undertake. But yet I conceive that this is principally propounded with respect to magistrates, because the

the following instances do most fitly resemble them, as we may see in the first mentioned vers. 31. which is the lion, that is usually tearmed the king of beasts; and so in the rest.

Vers. 31. *A grey-hound, &c.*] Or rather, *A horse*, as it is in the margin of our Bibles; for indeed there is no such stateliness in the going of a grey-hound. It is in the Hebrew, *girt in the loins*, which imports strength and agility; and this agreeth to the horse, as well as to the grey-hound. But besides the warlike horse is fitter to be propounded as a pattern to men in high place, with respect to whom especially, as I have noted in the foregoing verse, these examples of courage and stateliness in the creatures are propounded. And therefore likewise the next mentioned is, *an he-goat also*, that useth to goe stately before the flock, leading them in the hardest and most troublesome waies: and then in the close he addeth, *and a king against whom there is no rising up*; that is, with whom none must compare for the stateliness and majesty of his gate; or rather, a mighty and magnanimous king, prosperous in his reign, & of uncontrollable power, and against whom none have risen, nor dare rise up, & therefore he goeth with the more state and courage..

Vers. 32. *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy self, &c.*] That is, If thou hast foolishly upon any occasion lifted up thy heart with pride; or, if through the lifting up of thy heart with pride thou hast any way behaved thy self foolishly, or by any proud or contemptuous carriage of thy self, or breaking forth in anger against others, (for that anger is here also intended may be very probably gathered from the words of the following verse:) *or, if thou hast thought evil*; to wit, by entertaining any unjust surmises or evil purposes against any body whatsoever: *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*; that is, be silent, see the Note Job 21. 5. utter it not by word or deed; or, as some would have it, think seriously of the evil done or intended (for the hand upon the mouth is often the gesture of a man full of sad and serious thoughts) and goe not about to defend it, but give it over. Much is said by many Expositours, to shew how this is added in the close of Agurs speech with respect to that which went before: as 1. Some hold, that having in this chapter stirred men up to severall vertues, in the close here he warns them, that they should not hereupon be puffed up with pride, at least that they should not obstinately persevere in any evil, which out of pride they had fallen into; and 2. some conceive, that having in the three last verses taught men to be courageous and magnanimous, and to maintain the dignity of their places, he addeth here this caution, that under pretence hereof they must not grow proud and turbulent, at least if their spirits began to incline that way, they must be very carefull to restrain themselves; & 3. some think it is added with reference to the last words in the foregoing verse, *and a king against whom there is no rising up*, & that by way of advice, that in case any had foolishly lifted up themselves, & thought any evil against a king, they should doe well to make a stop, & proceed no farther in such a dangerous thing. But I see not why we may not take this to be here added as a particular precept, without any dependance upon that which went before.

Vers. 33.

Verf. 33. *Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood; so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.*] That is, the urging of men to wrath, that haply are of themselves of a calm and gentle spirit; or, the pressing of men to farther wrath that are of a cholerick nature, and in a passion already, by many reiterated provocations, must needs cause great contentions. Now this may be added as a reason why, as was said in the foregoing verse, men should beware of such foolish, proud, and angry carriage of themselves towards others, or of farther enraging those that are angry already by any provoking language; to wit, because such provocations do usually produce bitter quarrels, and those do usually end in great mischiefs.

C H A P. XXXI.

Verf. 1. **T**He words of king Lemuel, &c.] That is, king Solomon. Because there was no other king of Israel or Judah of this name, and because in the Hebrew there is much affinity betwixt these two names, *Lemuel* and *Solomon*, this I conceive cannot be questioned. The word *Lemuel* is by interpretation, *of God*, or *to God*; or, as some would have it, *God to him*, or, *God with him*. And therefore it is probable that this name was given him, to signifie, either that he belonged to God, as his son or servant, or that he was of God or by God ordained to be king of Israel, or at least that his mother desired it should be so. But now whether this name was given him by speciall direction from God, (the rather because Solomon was to be a type of Christ, the Lords anointed, the true *Immanuel*) or whether Solomon speaking of himself here in a third person, gives himself this name, or whether it was his mother that gave him this name, when she saw he was to succeed or had succeeded his father in the throne, (which some are the more inclined to think, because it is his mother here that calleth him *Lemuel*;) it cannot be certainly determined. However it is clear, that they are called *the words of king Lemuel*, because it was king Solomon that wrote them, and lest them upon record: for that they were the words which Bathsheba his mother spake to him, is evident by the following clause, *the prophecy that his mother taught him*; to wit, either when she first discovered his naturall temper enclining to those sins which here she warns him to avoid; or rather in his tender years, when her love only made her fear lest he should dash upon these rocks; or when haply, by the extraordinary guidance of Gods spirit, she foresaw his danger in these regards, and so laboured by these holy instructions to antidote him against these sins: for which cause it is, as some think, that these instructions are here called a *prophecy*. But for that see the Note chap. 30. 1. Before Solomon had told us chap. 4. 3, 4. how his father instructed him; and here now he tells us how his mother also taught him. And observable it is, that though Bathsheba had sinned so hainously as she had done; yet upon her repentance, she was so far honoured of God, as to be the mouth of his spirit for the uttering of part of the canonical Scripture.

Verf. 2. *What, my son! and what, the son of my womb! and what, the son of my vows!*]

now.] That is, for whose being & birth, for whose life & well-doing every way, for whose advancement to the crown, & praise-worthy carriage of thy self in that place of honour, & for whose eternall salvation, I have offered up so many prayers and sacrifices, and made so many vows and promises to God: so that all these patheticall expressions were but to imply, that he was her dearly-beloved son, and consequently, that what she now spake to him, proceeded from her tender affection to him; and that in these regards he was bound not to despise her counsell, but rather to hearken the more affectionately to her. As for that manner of speech which she here useth, *What, my son!* and *what, the son of my womb!* &c. it is an abrupt kind of speech, importing abundance of affection, even more then could be uttered, and that especially by the frequent repetition of that word *son*. Some conceive it is a form of speech tending to stirre up the party spoken to, to mind seriously what is spoken; as if she had only said, Ah, my dear son, hearken diligently to me. But rather some word is to be understood that is not expressed, *What, my son!* &c. as if she had said, What thinkest thou, my son? or, What affection dost thou bear towards me? or rather, What shall I say to thee, or desire and require from thee? what counsell or charge shall I give thee, rather then this which I shall now say to thee?

Verf. 3. Give not thy strength unto women, &c.] That is, the strength of thine estate, body and mind; see the Notes chap. 5. 9. 10. and 7. 26: *not thy wages which destroyeth kings;* that is, neither do thou imploy thy self in following that which doth commonly destroy, not men of ordinary rank only, but even princes and kings, to wit, the sin of uncleannesse, and haunting the company of whorish women; by whom and for whose sakes, not the persons only of kings, but their kingdoms also are many times destroyed.

Verf. 4. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings, to drink wine, &c.] That is, to drink it immoderately; not for refreshing and strength, but for drunkenness, and as taking delight in drinking: for otherwise there is no question to be made, but that the daintiest of drinks, as well as of meats, was lawfull for kings and princes, rather then for those of an inferiour rank and quality.

Verf. 5. Lest they drink, and forget the law, &c.] This is said, either 1. because magistrates, when their brains and wits are intoxicated with overmuch drinking, are not indeed able to tell what is law, nor to discern betwixt right and wrong in the parties contending; or 2. because by much drinking men frequently become stupid, and blockish at all times, Hof. 4. 11. *where wine and new wine take away the heart;* or 3. because men given to drunkenness are wont to be carried away with their corrupt affections, which maketh them partiall in passing sentence. As for the following clause, *and pervert the judgement of any of the afflicted,* we must know that *the afflicted* are particularly mentioned, because in judgement they are most frequently neglected and oppressed; or by *the afflicted* may be meant any that are wronged,

ged, and so fly to the magistrate to right themselves.

Verf. 6. *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, &c.*] To wit, through poverty or any other heart-breaking affliction; as Jacob in that regard is called, *A Syrian ready to perish*, Deut. 26. 5. And indeed so it is explained in the following clause, *and wine to those that be of heavy hearts*; but especially in the following verse, where a reason is given why wine and strong drink was fittest for such, *Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more*; that is, no more at that time, being cheared up with that refreshing drink he hath taken. I know that some understand by those *that are ready to perish*, such as through sickness are ready to faint, or malefactors condemned to die. And indeed that there was a custome amongst the Jews, to give wine to men that were condemned to die (which some think to be that which Amos 2. 8. is called *the wine of the condemned*) is methinks very probable by that which is said of our Saviour, as he was going to execution, Mark 15. 23. that *they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrhe*. But yet by the context it is evident, that those words must be understood here in a more general sense. However, either this must be taken as spoken comparatively, not absolutely, as if she had said, If it were lawfull for any to drink a little more than ordinary, it would be for those that are in great affliction, that they may thereby forget their sorrow; and not for kings and princes, that live in great prosperity and plenty, and are in danger thereby to forget the law: or else, the drift is, to shew that wine and strong drink, though moderately taken, is fitter for the afflicted, then for kings and princes; and withall to imply, that such a quantity of wine, as would no way hurt, but rather doe good to those that are in great distresse, would utterly overthrow princes, and make them unfit for their employments: for to be sure excesse in drinking is not here allowed to the afflicted; this would rather encrease then abate their sorrow.

Verf. 8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb, &c.*] That is, such as dare not, or through shamefacednesse or simplicity, or any impediment in their speech, are not able, or, through oppression are not suffered, to speak for themselves: *in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction*; that is, that in their estates, body or credit, are in danger to suffer greatly, through the injustice of men, even to their utter undoing. But see the Note Psal. 79. 11.

Verf. 10. *Who can find a virtuous woman? &c.*] To wit, that he may take her to wife? or, where can such a wife be found? From hence to the end of the chapter, in two and twenty verses, according to the number of the Hebrew letters, we have an elegant Poem, containing the description of a good wife, and in the beginning of these verses we have all the Hebrew letters, in order as they are in the Hebrew Alphabet; for which see the Note Psal. 25. 1. Whether it were composed by Solomon, as a character of his mother Bathsheba, and that upon occasion of those holy instructions of hers to him, which are here before recited, or by Bathsheba, for the direction of Solomon in the choice

choice of a good wife, it cannot be certainly determined.

Verf. 11. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, &c.*] That is, Her husband upon just grounds is from his heart confident of her faithfulness to him, not only in regard of her chastity and secrecy, but also (which is indeed here chiefly intended) in regard of her well-ordering his household affairs, which accordingly therefore he leaves wholly to her care: *so that he shall have need of spoils*; that is, he shall not need to go forth to war, to enrich himself with the spoils of vanquished enemies, nor to use any unlawfull waies to store himself with goods gotten by extortion and oppression, and that because she by her industry and huswifery will so abundantly furnish her house, as if she had shared in the spoils of some ranfacked city.

Verf. 12. *She will doe him good, and not evil, &c.*] That is, good without a mixture of evil; not being a good wife in some respects, but a very bad one in others: *all the daies of her life*; that is, constantly, all the time she lives with him, and in all conditions and changes, in youth and age, in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness, yea even after his death, if she surviveth him, by speaking honourably of him, and by doing good to his children and friends.

Verf. 13. *She seeketh wool and flax, &c.*] That is, That her self and family may not be idle for want of materials to work upon, she provides them before-hand at the best rate: *and worketh willingly with her hands*; that is, with her own hands; she doth not only set others on work. And observable it is, that the good huswife of whom this is spoken, is withall described to be a woman of that rank, that verf. 22. *her cloathing* is said to be *silk and purple*, and her husband verf. 23. *to be known in the gates*, that is, in the seat of magistracy.

Verf. 14. *She is like the merchants ships, she bringeth her food from afar.*] This expression may be used to imply severall things: as 1. that by her continuall labour and diligence, like the merchants ship that sails both night and day, she gets wealth apace; 2. that her house is furnished with as much variety and plenty of all things that are necessary, yea even of those things that are brought from forreign countries, as merchants ships are wont to be; and 3. that it is by the sending forth of her manufactures, that those forreign commodities are brought home by the merchants, whereof she gets a share.

Verf. 15. *She riseth also while it is yet night, &c.*] That is, before break of day, that so she and her family may have time to doe their work in: *and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens*; both which some understand of a set portion and quantity of meat which she is carefull to give to all in her family, not children only, but servants too; both those that are to work all day in the field, and so are to carry their meat along with them, and the rest also that are to work at home. But I rather conceive that by *the portion* mentioned in the last clause, which she is said to give *to her maidens*, that more especially belong to her charge, is meant the severall tasks that she sets them for their daies work. And thus her provident care is set forth in her early

providing both meat and work for her servants. *at* *shee been a to*
 Vers. 16. *She considereth a field, and buyeth it, &c.*] That is, So far is she enriched by her industry, that a field being proferred to be sold, she considers of the conveniency of it, whether it be a reasonable price for which it may be had, and whether the title be good, and whether she be able to buy it, and accordingly she goeth on in the purchase of it: *with the fruit of her hands*, that is, by her labour, or rather, with that she hath gotten by her labour, by her handy-work and trading; *she planteth a vineyard*, to wit, in the field she had lately purchased, or elsewhere. The meaning is, that she improveth her ground to the best advantage.

Vers. 17. *She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.*] That which is intended hereby is, 1. that she diligently and courageously prepares herself for her labours; 2. that she stoutly undertaketh and goeth on with her work, with confidence of going through with what she undertaketh; and 3. that by bestirring herself in her severall businesses she preserveth and encreaseth her strength: for as sloth weakens the strength of mans body, so moderate exercise and labour doth tend to the health and strengthening of it. But now in the expression here used there is doubtlesse an allusion to womens tucking up of their garments about their loins, and their sleeves about their arms, when they mean to buckle themselves lustily to their work, and to bestir themselves nimbly in it: as likewise to that which is known by experience, namely, that girding strengtheneth the loins.

Vers. 18. *She perceiveth that her merchandise is good, &c.*] That is, She tastes the sweet of her labour; besides the good it doeth her for her health, she finds that her diligence & good huswifery redounds much to her profit, as much as if she were imployed in some gainfull way of merchandise; & herein she takes great inward complacency, & contentment of mind; which adds much to her happiness. Or else it may be meant of the manufactures which are made by her self & her family, & then afterwards vers. 24. *sold to the merchants*, to wit, that she finds by experience that hereby much is gotten, & that thereupon she followeth her work the closer. *Her candle goeth not out by night*, to wit, seldome or never as she riseth up early, so she sits up late at her work.

Vers. 19. *She layeth her hands to the spindle, & her hands hold the distaffe.*] And thus she not only holds her maids to their work, but she also takes her turn amongst them her self in the very same work which they doe; which as it promotes the work in hand, so it greatly encourageth them. As rich & great as she is, she is not ashamed neither of the distaffe nor the spindle.

Vers. 20. *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yea she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*] To wit, not only in paying the poor that are set on work by her, but also in lending & giving cheerfully & bountifully, to those that are very needy, even with both hands where their necessity requires it, whether they be near hand or farther off; yea in performing any offices of love for them, according to the need they have of her help in any regard. Now this is here inserted, either

hitherto shew how her estate is improved by her industry & huswifery, in that she is able not only well to provide for her own, but also liberally to relieve the poor; or else, because giving to the poor is indeed one of the best pieces of good huswifery, in that through Gods blessing it brings in to the estates of those that use it a great encrease.

Verf. 21. *She is not afraid of the snow for her household, &c.*] To wit, for her children & servants: for all her household are clothed with scarlet; that is, with garments of the best, according to their degrees; such as are for comeliness and ornament, & much more then such as are warm to keep them from the cold. Indeed, considering that scarlet was far more common in those countries then it is amongst us, it is no way improper to say, that some servants & waiting-gentlewomen belonging to such great families were clothed with scarlet, especially her husband & children, who may be here meant by her household. But yet this clause may be read also, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *with double garments*; that is, many severall garments, to be put one upon another; or, garments for summer, and garments for winter, thick and well-lined garments that will keep out the cold.

Verf. 22. *She maketh her self coverings of tapestry, &c.*] To wit, for the bed & board, yea & for the walls too, coverlets & carpets & hangings: her cloathing is silk & purple; & indeed God disalloweth not rich attire in women, so that it be not above their degree, and that they continue to be of a lowly mind, and do not make that their chiefest ornament.

Verf. 23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.*] Some Expositours conceive that this is here inserted, to shew, that as she was so happy in regard of her own goodnesse, so also in her husband too; and that because he was also an honour to her, as being famous amongst his fellow-rulers for his rare gifts & eminent goodnesse. But I rather think that this also is mentioned by way of commending her, & that by this, that her husband is known in the gates, &c. (see the Notes Gen. 22. 17. & Ruth 4. 1.) is intended, either 1. that he might diligently at all times intend his publick affairs, being by his wives means freed from all care about all things at home; or 2. that there is speciall notice taken of him for the handsome & comely attire wherewith, through her care, he is alwaies clothed; or 3. that he is observed & much spoken of for his happinesse, in regard of the high praises that are every where given of his wife.

Verf. 24. *She maketh fine linnen, & selleth it, & delivereth girdles unto the merchants.*] To wit, girdles curiously wrought; for otherwise the merchant would not buy them, to carry them into foreign countries. And under this one particular all other curious ornaments of the like nature are comprehended. See Isa. 3. 24.

Verf. 25. *Strength & honour are her cloathing, &c.*] That is, In her life and outward behaviour she manifests her self to be strong & honourable. And by her strength may be meant that magnanimity whereby she was enabled cheer-

fully to undergoe all the labour and diligence that belonged to her place and employments; or more generally that strong measure of grace, whereby she was established and confirmed in all well-doing, and enabled to doe more and greater things then others in the waies of vertue and piety: And by her *honour*, that glory and fame and good report which thereby she hath attained; or that grace and vertue which is an honour to her; or that vertuous and sweet carriage of her self with all gravity, meeknesse, modesty and sobriety, which is comely and honourable in the eyes of those that behold it. So the drift of these words is, to shew, that though she is cloathed with silk and purple, as was before said ver. 22. yet she doth not set her affection on such outward bravery, as vain and foolish women do only delight in, but she hath other ornaments, to wit, these wherewith she is inwardly adorned, wherein she chiefly delights, and which are a greater glory to her, then any outward decking can possibly be. *And she shall rejoyce in time to come;* that is, say some, in her old age, because she may then take her rest, and live comfortably upon that which by her industry she had gotten in her younger years; or at the hour of her death, because she hath the testimony of her own conscience, that she hath not mis-spent her time, but hath in her place laboured to discharge a good conscience in every regard, and hath by her industry gotten a good estate to leave behind her for her children. But I conceive that the words must be taken more generally, that whatever happens in time to come, whether it be sicknesse, or death, or any great losses, or any other calamity whatsoever, she is not sollicitous nor troubled, but lives comfortably: she is not like those women, that having vainly wasted their estates and mis-spent their time, do weep & mourn when such changes come upon them; for whatever befalls her, for the reasons before-mentioned, the store she hath laid up before-hand, and the testimony of a good conscience, she enjoyeth much peace and chearfulness of spirit.

Verf. 26. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom, &c.*] As if we should say, She is not a woman talkative and given to much tatling, as too many women are, but when she doth open her mouth to speak, she doth it with much wisdom: her usual discourse is concerning matters of true wisdom, as when she is catechising and instructing her family, and so likewise at other times; being still ready upon all occasions to teach them, not only the precepts of providence and good huswifery, but also the mysteries of religion and godlinesse. Yea of whatever it be she speaks, she is wont alwaies to speak advisedly, discreetly, & graciously: *and the law of kindnesse is in her lips;* that is, say some Expositours, she is ever speaking of shewing kindnesse, and stirring up others thereunto; *the law*, that is, the doctrine of *kindnesse*, and the manner how men should be kind, is still in her mouth. But I rather conceive the meaning of this last clause to be, that she alwaies speaks lovingly and kindly to all with whom she converseth, her husband, children, servants and others, she is not harsh, pettish and froward in her language, as many women usually are. And the reason why this is set down by this kind of expression, *and the law of kindnesse is in her lips*, may be either

either 1. because in so speaking she followeth the directions of the word & law of God; or 2. because she layeth a law, as it were, upon her self, thus alwaies to speak, unlesse there be very just cause to the contrary; or 3. because kindnesse doth lay it as it were a law upon her thus to speak, and she obeyeth it; or 4. because this her kind speaking carrieth the force of a law or command, to make her husband and others ready to doe in a manner whatever she would have them.

Verf. 27. *She looketh well to the waies of her household, &c.*] To wit, whether they do well and diligently dispatch their household-affairs, and whether they behave themselves in all things as becomes Gods people.

Verf. 28. *Her children arise up and call her blessed, &c.*] That is, they goe forth in publick, & there they commend her, to wit, by their commendable carriage of themselves; or, being stirred up by the observation of those many good things for which she hath been here commended; they cannot contain themselves, but do carefully addresse themselves to sound forth her praise. And indeed this I conceive is the true meaning of this expression, *Her children arise up and call her blessed*. For because when men that are sitting would undertake to doe any thing, they must rise up to doe it, therefore mens buckling themselves to doe any thing is usually expressed in the Scripture by this phrase of rising up: see Gen. 37. 35. Exod. 2. 17. and Jos. 18. 4. I know that many Expositours do otherwise judge of those words, *Her children rise up, &c.* as namely that hereby is intended, that when her children grow up in age, bodily stature, wisdom and understanding, or that when they rise to honour and preferment by means of the good education which she hath given them, then they highly commend her both living and dead; or else that they rise up by way of reverence and respect, when they speak of her or to her. But because the following words seem plainly to imply, that her husband also doeth the same, *Her husband also*, to wit, riseth up, *and he praiseth her*, and it cannot be properly said, that the husband riseth up according to these later senses that are given of this phrase, therefore I take the former expositions to be far the best. However, observable it is, who they are that are here particularly said to have praised her, to wit, her husband and children. Because they have reaped most good by her, and because they have been most conversant with her, in regard that she is one that keeps much within doors, and there her businesse chiefly lyes, therefore their praises were most to be regarded.

Verf. 29. *Many daughters have done vertuously, but thou excellest them all.*] This is the commendation given her by her husband and children.

Verf. 30. *Favour is deceitfull, and beauty is vain, &c.*] Whether these words be to be taken as the words of Bathsheba or Solomon, or the good wives husband, mentioned before verf. 28. it cannot certainly be determined. However, by *favour* here is meant the comeliness of a womans person, and by *beauty* a good colour or a good complexion: and these things are said to be *deceitfull and vain*, 1. because beauty is many times artificiall and counterfeit; and 2. because beautifull and well-favoured women have many times divers base and ill-favoured

favoured qualities, and so husbands are usually deceived when they are guided thereby in chusing their wives; and 3. because they are subject many waies to decay and vanish away. And this censure of the vanity of beauty is here added, either to shew the reason why, amongst other commendable qualities of the good wife, this was not mentioned, that she was beautifull and well-favoured; or else by way of commending the good wife, in that whereas such vain things as these other women do most affect, and the common sort of people do most admire, she seeks that ornament that is far better. *But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised:* as if he should have said, That women are fair it is no praise at all to them, because it is born with them; but when they have learnt to fear the Lord, as this good wife doth, that is truly praise-worthy in them.

Vers. 31. *Give her of the fruit of her hands, &c.*] That is, Let her comfortably enjoy the benefit of all her care and labours; or, let her be used as all these commendable qualities do deserve: let her husband afford her bountifully, both whilst he lives and at his death, all the encouragement that so good a wife doth deserve; let her children and servants yield her all due respect, and let all extoll her. Yet it may be meant merely of commending her: *Give her of the fruit of her hands*, that is, Praise her according to her works; yea and that in publick, which is added in the next clause, *and let her own works praise her in the gates*; though she keeps at home, as becomes a good hufwife, yet let her praise be spread abroad in the publick assemblies of the people. Yea and the expression here used may also imply, that there would be no need of speaking of her country or parentage, or any such thing, nor of labouring by many words and by many rhetorical flourishes to set forth her worth; if they but tell what she had done, that would be abundantly enough to her praise: yea the very attire and ornaments worn by her husband, and other Rulers of the citie, which were of her making, would sufficiently advance her praise.



A N N O T A T I O N S

Upon the Book of *ECCLESIASTES*
Or the *PREACHER*.

CHAP. I.

Vers. 1.



He words of the Preacher, the son of David, King in Jerusalem] That is, Of Solomon. He was therefore not only the Author, but also the Pen-man of this book, as is also somewhat more clearly hinted, Chap. 12. 10. The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright: And hence it is that he usually speaks of himself in the first person, as ver. 12. I the Preacher was

*King over Israel, &c. and so in many other places. The reason why he terms himself the Preacher, (or, as the word in the Original signifieth, the Penitent convert, the soul or person congregated or gathered to the Church upon his repentance, from whence he was fallen off by his great sinnes) was not haply because he was wont to do the work of a Preacher in the assemblies of Gods people (though we find that sometimes Kings upon extraordinary occasions have spoken to the people gathered together in their Church-assemblies concerning matters of Religion, yea and that Solomon in particuler did so, 1 King. 8. 1, 12.) but rather, because he doth in this book, as a Preacher, or reconciled penitent, teach the whole Church of God the only way of true blessednesse, and makes known publickly to all Gods people, what by his own experience he had learnt concerning the vanity and folly of seeking content and happinesse in any thing, save only in the knowledge and fear and service of God. I know it is questioned by many, whether ever Solomon repented after that his grosse fall by means of his Idolatrous wives, 1 King. 11. 4. and that because it was in his old age that he fell, and because he never pulled down those Idolatrous Temples, which he had built for his wives, which if he had repented, say they, he would surely have done. But I conceive these reasons are too weak to prove that Solomon died in an impenitent condition, for he might repent towards his latter end, and though he sincerely repented, yet might he not immediatly pull down the high places he had built, no more then other good Kings afterwards did; and that as being over-awed with fear of displeasing his wives and the people: and see also the Note 2 King. 23. 13. Much more may be said for his Repentance, for which see the Note 1 King. 11. 41. God called him Jedidiah, that is, *beloved of the Lord*; And whom the Lord loveth, he loveth to the end, Joh. 13. 1. Now if Solomon did repent, it cannot be well questioned but that he wrote this Book as his publick Recantation of his former folly and madnesse, and that purposely that he might hereby testify his Repentance to the whole people of God, and might recover those by his*

returning to the Church whom he had scandalized by his fall: and that hence it is that he doth so often call himself *The Preacher*, as counting this his solemn publishing of his repentance a greater honour to him then his regal dignity, or the most glorious works that ever he did, even his building of the Temple. As for those late words, *the sonne of David, King in Jerusalem*, besides what is noted Pro. 1. 1. where he gave himself the same Titles, we may well conceive that here he mentions them as aggravations of his former sinnes, to wit, that he that was the sonne of so pious a father, and so tenderly carefull of his education, and that had been exalted by Gods special appointment to so high an honour, as to be King of Israel Gods peculiar people, should yet notwithstanding fall into such grosse sinnes as he had done.

Verf. 2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* The drift of Solomon in this Book being to shew, that true happinesse here in this life cannot be attained by the enjoyment of any thing in the world, or of all that is desirable in the world joyntly together, but only by the enjoyment of Gods love and favour, and consequently by the knowledge and fear and service of God, which leade thereunto, accordingly, he first here undertakes to prove the Negative part, to wit, that no worldly thing, nor no endeavour about worldly things, can render a man truly happy, and that because they are all extreemly vain, and therefore altogether ineffectuall to make a man happy, which is laid down in this Proposition, *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, that is, they are all most vain, vanity it self in the abstract; yea extreem vanity, (for thus the superlative degree in the Hebrew is usually expressed, as where the basest of servants is called *a servant of servants*, Gen. 9. 25. and the highest heaven, *the heaven of heavens*, 1 King 8. 27. and the most excellent Song, *The Song of Songs*, Cant. 1. 1, &c.) Now all the creatures, though very good in themselves, and in their kind, are said to be thus extreemly vain, either comparatively in regard of God, or else in order unto happinesse, in that neither the possession nor fruition of them can ever make men truly blessed, and that because, 1. there is no stability nor permanency in them, they are subject to change and corruption; if those that seek after them do obtain them, they cannot long enjoy them; 2. they can never yield full satisfaction to the souls of those that do enjoy them, and in that regard may well be deemed empty, worthless things, imperfect, and from which no solid profit can be gotten: and 3. they are deceitfull and lying vanities, they seem to promise much content and happinesse to men, but are so farre from yielding them that content and good which they expect from them, that often they bring upon them much grief and trouble, yea are the occasion of their eternall destruction; And this truth concerning the vanity of all earthly things is here repeated again and again, not only to imply the unquestionable certainty and the great importance of it, but also because men are prone naturally to dote so exceedingly on the things here below, and are so hardly wonne either to beleieve or to mind the vanity of them, and because Solomon, being upon his repentance wondrously affected with this truth, was the more earnest to presse it upon others, and to take them off from resting in any thing but in God only.

Verf. 3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?* That is, here below; or under the heaven? Only the Sun is mentioned, 1. Because it

it is by the light of the sunne principally that we are inabled to follow our labours; as the Psalmist saith, *Psal. 104. 22, 23. The sun ariseth — man goeth forth unto his work and so his labour untill the evening*, and comfortaby to enjoy the fruit of our labours, *Chap. 11. 7.* And secondly, Because it is of all the heavenly lights the most conspicuous and best knowne, and seemes to be in the eye of common people the highest of all visible things. And the meaning of this question here propounded is, that when men have toyled and moyled themselves for any worldly thing, they get nothing thereby which truly deserves the name of profit; that they have their labour for their paines, or that *they weary themselves for very vanity*, as the Prophet speakes, *Hab. 2. 13.* All worldly things being no better; as was said in the foregoing verse; It is true indeed that in regard of worldly advantages, as *Solomon* himselfe tells us elsewhere, *Pro. 14. 23. In all labour there is profit.* But now because all such profit is wholly unprofitable in order unto happinesse, (which is the only thing worth the minding) in regard amongst other reasons they do a man no good after he is dead, (and dye all men must, as it followeth in the next verse, *One generation passeth away and another cometh*,) neither can they quiet and satisfie the soules of men whilst they do enjoy them, therefore *Solomon* concludes that there is no true profit to be gotten by them. When men labour for those things that are above the Sunne, to wit, the favour of God, and life eternall in Gods kingdome of glory, there's true profit to be gotten thereby: But it is not so in that labour which is spent about worldly things.

Verse 4. *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, &c.*] Some conceive that *Solomon* in these words begins to prove that, which in the sequel of the Chapter is more fully expresse, to wit, that all the labour of mens minds in the study of naturall things is vanity, and can never make a man happy, and that because by reason of the brevity of mans life; first, it is but a very small measure of knowledge in these things that any man can attaine; and secondly, that knowledge, which he doth attaine must within a while perish together with himselfe. But the drift of these words is rather to shew, either that as all other things are meere vanity, so is man also, in that he is mortall, yea is alwayes fitting and passing away, and thereupon also in continuall feare and danger of death; or else that all earthly things and all mens labour about them must needs be vanity, because let a man get never so much of these things, being mortall, he cannot hope long to enjoy them: Neither can any earthly thing lengthen out a mans dayes beyond one generation, and consequently, eternity being the inseparable adjunct of happinesse, it is not possible that such things should make any man happy. But why is that next clause added, *But the earth abideth for ever*, that is, till the end of all things, as long as the world continueth? I answer; It is added the more to set forth the vanity of man in regard of his mortality, by shewing that man is so farre from being made happy by any of his enjoyments here in this world, that his condition here is worse and more vaine then is the condition of other creatures, that were made for his use: he is more vaine then the earth that he treads upon, which is as the stage, whereon every man in his generation acteth his part, and then passeth away never to be seen again, whilst that continueth still unto the end of the world; yea he is more vain then those creatures that seeme most inconstant, as is shown in the three following verses.

Verf. 5. *The Sun also ariseth, and the Sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose.*] It is in the original, *and panteth to the place where he arose*, that is, it maketh hast, as if it panted with running. See the Notes Psalm 19. 5, 6. The opinions of Expositors concerning *Solomons* aim in adding this which he saith here concerning the Sun, as likewise that which followeth in the two next verses concerning the Wind and the Rivers, do somewhat differ: 1. Some conceive that *Solomon* mentions these things onely as pictures and resemblances, which do represent and set forth unto men, the changeableness of their own condition, to wit, that look as these things have their continuall revolutions, and are ever in continuall motion, so is it with men and their affairs: or particularly that the getting of wisdom makes men labour and toyl continually, and so to be in as restless a condition as the Sun, and Wind, and Waters are: yea, and that the mutability and mortality of man, being as naturall to man as these perpetuall motions are to these Creatures, that can no more be avoided in man to make him happy, than the constant motions of these creatures can be hindered or changed. Again 2. Others hold, that the drift of these passages is by shewing the instable condition of the creatures to prove their vanity, especially in regard of making men happy. And hereupon it is, that having said, That all things under the Sun are vanity, he first begins here with the Sun it self, the rather because if the Sun, which is under God the first cause of the generation and corruption of things below, be subject to vanity, it is no marvel though other things be so too. Now by the Sunnes continuall wheeling about the earth, *Solomon* proves the vanity thereof, especially in regard of making man happy, and that because, 1. If it could bring any happinesse to man in its rising, when it sets at night it would be lost again. And 2. notwithstanding any benefit that it yeelds to men by its heat and light, moving thus year after year in one constant way, no man can expect any further advantage by it, than others have had in their generation, who have onely enjoyed it for a time, and never received any durable happinesse from it. But thirdly, others say (and that to me seems the most probable) that the drift of *Solomon* in this place, is further to shew, That man is more vain than other creatures, that seem to be in the most restless condition, and that because they keep stedfastly their set course according to the Law of their creation, whereas men one generation after another, do continually passe away. And this he first sheweth in the Sun, which observeth its constant course in its rising and setting, and being set doth still rise again in equal glory, whereas man dieth, and is gone, and never returneth again, which is just what the Heathen Poet said,

*Soles occidere & redire possunt;
Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.*

Verf. 6. *The Wind goeth toward the South, and turneth about unto the North, &c.*] Because in the originall the *Wind* is not expressed in the beginning of this verse, therefore some translate it, *He goeth toward the South, &c.* and so understand it, as with reference to the foregoing verse, of the Sun, to wit, that one halfe of the year, namely in Summer and Autumn, it goeth toward the South, and the other halfe of

of the year, namely in the Winter & Spring, it turneth about into the North. But now our Translators take it as spoken with respect to the last clause of the verse, where *the Wind* is mentioned, and accordingly do understand this also of *the Wind*, that it sometimes bloweth from the South, and then it goeth about into the opposite part of the heaven, and bloweth from the North; *It whirleth about continually* that is, it suddenly passeth about the heavens, sometimes being in one point of the heaven, and presently again in another; *and the Wind returneth again according to his circuits*, that is, it whirls about from one quarter of the heaven to another again and again, as it hath formerly done. As for the drift of *Solomon* in these words, it is the same as before in the foregoing verse; for which see the Note there.

Vers. 7. *All the Rivers run into the Sea, yet the Sea is not full, &c.*] That is, so as to swell above the earth, and to over-flow the Banks and Bounds which God hath set to it: *Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.* Where I conceive the order of *Solomon's* words makes it clear, that the Fountains and Springs from whence the waters of the Rivers do flow, are said here to be the place whither they return again. For first he speaks of the Rivers running down from thence into the Sea, and notes this as observable, that notwithstanding, the Sea is not full: and then to shew the reason why the Sea doth not over-flow its banks by this means, he adds, that *unto the place from whence the Rivers come, thither they return again*, to wit, because from the Sea they go through certain pores and veins and secret passages of the earth (by which means also being strained, they lose the saltneffe they had contracted in the Sea, and become sweet and fresh again) and so return back to the fountains from whence they came. As for the drift and scope of these words, it is the same with that which is said before concerning the revolutions of the Sun, vers. 5. for which see the Note there. Onely the vanity of the creatures in their not satisfying the desires of men, either in point of knowledge, or otherwise, is here more fully set forth by the Seas not being full, notwithstanding so many Rivers do continually flow into it.

Vers. 8. *All things are full of labour, &c.*] Some Expositors understand this, as that which went before, of the restless motions of the Creatures; as if *Solomon* had said, As these particulars before mentioned, so indeed all things in this world generally, do as it were weary themselves with continual restless labours, never abiding long in one settled condition, but being all in their kinds some way or other inconstant, transitory and fleeting; and accordingly they conceive the drift of these words is likewise, either 1. To shew, that therefore all things here below are representations of mans vanity and inconstancy, so that where ever we turn our eyes, we may behold our own vanity, or, 2. to prove that men can never enjoy any stable happineffe by things that are so mutable and unstable. But the generality of Expositors do otherwise understand these words, to wit, that *all things* are said to be *full of labour*, because mens endeavours about them, either in seeking to attain them, or in the enjoying and making use of them, or in searching to find out the nature, the causes and reasons of them (which some think is principally here intended) do weary them with continuall toyl and labour: so that this may be taken as another argument whereby *Solomon* proves the vanity of all worldly things, to wit,

because all things here below, yea even those things wherein men take most delight, do weary them with continuall toil and labour, and that which bringeth so much trouble to men, and is so far from yeelding them perpetuall contentment, that they become weary of it, can never make a man happy, and therefore must needs be vain as to such a purpose. As for the following words, *Man cannot utter it*, (That is, no man whatsoever, no not the wisest of men, the tongue of man is not able to express it) that must needs be meant, either of the continuall restlesnesse & changeablenesse of the creatures, (of which some understand the foregoing words,) that this cannot by any words be set forth, or else rather of the toil and labour wherewith all earthly things do weary men, to wit, that this is so great, that it is unutterable; both because the creatures are so innumerable about which they are exercised, and because there are so many severall wayes whereby men are wearied with them. And so this may imply also why in the next words he instanceth onely in mens seeing and hearing, because it is not possible to speak of all things particularly, *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*, whereby may be meant either, 1. That they can never hear or see enough of those things wherewith they are delighted, but that still they would see and hear them more and more, and are vexed when it cannot be: Or else 2. that when they have seen or heard some things even to wearinesse, yet then they are not satisfied, but would see or hear something more to give them further content. And hereby Solomon would imply that it is thus also in all other things; men are continually wearying themselves about them, as having an unwearied desire to enjoy them, and yet when they have them, they are not satisfied neither with their enjoying of them: So that the only way for men to be happy, is to look after spiritual blessings in heavenly places, those things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, which though they yield true and full contentment to men, yet they are never weary of them, but still desire to partake of them more and more.

Verf. 9. *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be, &c.*] As if he should have said, As no man hitherto could attain happinesse in any earthly things, so neither shall any man attain it in time to come, and that because all naturall things continue still the same that they have formerly been, (according to that unquestionable axiome in Philosophy; *Natura nihil molitur novi*, Nature produceth no other but the same effects it hath formerly done) and so likewise it is for all humane and voluntary actions, they are still the same for substance, as formerly, as it followeth in the next words, *and that which is done is that which shall be done*; and thereupon he concludes, *and there is no new thing under the sunne*. Now the drift of these words is to prove the vanity of all things, in regard of making men happy, from the perpetuall impossibility there is, that ever any man should attain to a better condition of worldly felicity, then others in former times have attained, and that because all things and all the actions and endeavours of men have been, are and shall alwaies be the same for substance; former ages have gone as farre for the searching after, and attaining of happinesse, in the things of this world, as the later can do; nor shall the generations following find more, then others have done before them. It is not therefore to be questioned but that many things have been done, and may be done in the world,

in regard of particular individuall circumstances, which have not been done formerly: We reade that Lamech's sons found out several inventions, that had not been known in former daies, Gen. 4. 21, 22. And we know that in later times some discoveries of new things have been made, as of the Mariners card, the Art of Printing, Gun-powder, &c. To be sure the works of God have been many times strange and new, such as never were done before, as when the earth swallowed up Korah, Dathan and Abiram, that was *a new thing*, Numb. 16. 30. and when the only begotten Son of God was incarnate and made man, *The Lord*, saith the Prophet Jer. 31. 22 *hath created a new thing, A woman shall compass a man.* But, I say, this is not that which the Prophet here intends; His meaning is that there is no new thing to be found or discovered, so farre exceeding the discoveries of former times, as that the knowledge of it, or the enjoyment of it can satisfie the heart of man, and make him truly blessed. As in order to happinesse there is no more content to be found in the creature then formerly there hath been; the whole state of the world and all things therein are as subject to changes and revolutions as formerly they have been; And so the condition of mans life, his affections and endeavours are still the same, they yield no more satisfaction, but full as much vexation to men as formerly they have done. And therefore no new foundation or means of happinesse can ever be found in the things here below. If we desire to find out those new things, which will make us happy, we must seek them in the Word of God, where new and wonderfull things are still and still to be found, Psa. 119. 18. 1 Cor. 2. 9. and where God hath discovered to us that *new and living way*, Heb. 10. 20. which can only bring us into the new Jerusalem, where there will be still new delights, and that without the least wearinesse unto all eternity.

Verf. 11. *There is no remembrance of former things, &c.*] That is, we know little or nothing to speak of concerning those things that have been done in former times, neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come, with those that shall come after, that is, of those things that shall be done hereafter, the succeeding posterity will know as little as we do of those things, that were done in the ages before us. Now this is here added, either 1. To imply that the knowledge which men have of things doth perish with them, and that it is at the best but weak, and imperfect, and therefore cannot make them happy; If some new things be found out, as many old things are forgotten, and so through the brevity of mans life, and the narrowness of his experience, the stock of his knowledge must needs be very defective: Or 2. to intimate one reason amongst many others, why men do earnestly seek for happinesse in earthly things, namely because we know not the things of old, and so do not take notice how they of former ages have been deceived in seeking happinesse in those things; which if we did, it would caution us, and we would not suffer the flattering vanity of earthly things to deceive us, as it hath done so many before us. Or rather 3. with reference to the foregoing verse, to give a reason why many men think those things new, which indeed are not so, and so will think hereafter, to wit, because men do not know what hath been done in former times, which if they did exactly know, they would find that there is nothing done which hath not had its pattern and parallell, at least something as excellent as it in foregoing ages.

Verf.

Verf. 12. *I the preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.*] See the Note above, ver. 1. Having spoken concerning the vanity of all things in generall, here Solomon addressees himselfe to shew the vanity of some speciall and principall things, wherein most men do seek felicity, and that from his own experience. And to shew that his testimony herein was worthy of all credit, he prefixeth this which he saith here concerning himselfe, to wit, that as for the present he was a true convert, and desirous to make known the right way of happinesse to the people of God, so also before, when he made that search and enquiry into things, whereof he speakes in the following verse, he lived not a private life in his fathers house, but was actually king, and that *over Israel*, who were a *wise and understanding people*, Deut. 4. 6. Amongst whom were many holy men, Prophets and teachers of the Law; and *in Jerusalem*, Gods dwelling place, and which was in those times farre and neere esteemed the great Oracle of wisdom and truth; from whence it must needs follow, that he could not want any help requisite for the attaining of that which he sought after: for in regard of his great power and authority, and withall that great measure of wisdom and riches, which he had at that time obtained from God above all that were before him, he might have what books, and records money or men could bring him in, and what help could be had by conference with others, and in a word, what ever could be desired to promote his endeavours herein: as himselfe afterwards acknowledgeth, Chap. 2. 12. And therefore his testimony in this businesse must needs be of great importance.

Verf. 13. *And I gave my heart, &c.*] Here Solomon begins with shewing the vanity he had found in all humane knowledge. Nothing seemes more likely to make a man happy and to yeeld him full content then this doth, not only because it often makes way to great riches and honours, but also especially because knowledge in it selfe is such an excellent endowment, and yeelds so great delight. And therefore in the first place he undertakes from his own experience to shew the vanity thereof. *I gave my heart* (saith he) that is, I did cheerfully and resolvedly set my mind upon this, and determined to make it my only great businesse, *to seek and search out by wisdom, concerning all things that are done under heaven*, that is, wisely, and with all the skill I had, according to that extraordinary measure of wisdom that God had given me, to search out by study observation and tryall, the knowledge of all things that are, and are done in the world by God or the creature, all the secrets of nature, the principles, and properties, the causes and effects, the uses and reasons of all naturall things, as likewise of all humane endeavours and events. As I wanted not all requisite means and helps for the effecting of such a designe, so neither was I wanting in my desires and endeavours after it; and therefore even in this regard also what I testifie, after such a diligent and eager enquiry, deserves to be received with all credit. And then for the following words, *This sore labour hath God given to the sons of man, to be exercised therewith*; The drift thereof is to shew that it was agreeable to the will of God that he should seek thus to know things, and that because God hath decreed that all the children of Adam should take paines herein, as is evident in that he hath given them the creatures that they may study them, and in that he hath implanted in mens hearts a desire to know them, and hath enjoyned us in his word to study them, and

and to meditate on them, and to seek by all lawfull means to increase our knowledge as much as we may, and that to the end that men may be *exercised therewith*, that is, that herein they might have continual imployment, and might not live idly. And whereas this cannot be attained without *fore labour*, even this also God hath imposed upon men, as a punishment for their first Apostacy from God; for had it not been for that, there would have been no need of any such toil for the getting of knowledge: Only now God hath laid this *fore labour* upon all men in their seeking after knowledge, *to be exercised therewith*, or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *to afflict them*, to wit, that hereby they may see the misery that man hath brought upon himself, and that by discovering their own weaknesse, they may be kept humble, and in a constant dependance upon God. However, by calling the labour that is undergone in seeking after knowledge, *fore labour*, Solomon doth at present imply, what in the following verse is more fully expressed, namely, that natural knowledge being accompanied with so much toil and labour, can never make a man happy.

Verf. 14. *I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, &c.*] As if he should have said, By this mine exact search into all natural and humane things, I observed what was to be observed, and obtained the knowledge I sought after, even as much understanding in these things, as by humane industry could be attained, *and behold*, as if he should have said, Mark what I say, for it is a wonderfull thing, and almost incredible to be spoken, and that which I never expected, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*; that is, I found that the knowledge of all these things, as well as the things themselves, was not only vain, unable to make me happy, or to yield me full contentation and rest, (I had my labour for my travell, and that was all) but also the means of much *vexation of spirit to me*, and that because 1 It cannot be gotten without much afflicting toil: 2. Men are vexed with fear of losing what they have gotten: 3. The knowledge men get, the more ignorance still they discover in themselves; and 4. Impossible it is ever to gain perfection of knowledge, or fully to satisfie the desire men have of it.

Verf. 15. *That which is crooked, cannot be made strait, and that which is wanting, cannot be numbred, &c.*] This is added to prove the vanity of all natural knowledge, to wit, because men cannot thereby rectifie that which is amisse in any regard: that which is naturally naught, or contrary to what we desire, cannot be amended, but by the mighty power of God; and that which is wanting to make a man happy, cannot be supplied: See the Note, chap. 7. 13. But for the thorough and clear understanding hereof, it will conduce much to take notice of the truth of this in the several heads of things that are comprehended herein: For 1. It is true in point of knowledge it self; for let men attain never so great an excellency in all humane learning, there are many things, even in the great book the Creatures, as well as in the book of the Scriptures, which are as the Apostle speaks, 2 Pet 3. 16. *hard to be understood*; so that the wisest men that are, can never make such a clear discovery of them, as shall clearly and fully satisfie the minds of men therein. And then again, the defects that are in the knowledge of the most learned men, are innumerable; and if they cannot be numbred, much lesse can they be remedied: there are many thousand things in nature, which are still unknown, to them that know most; yea, the things which men know not,

are infinitely more then those are which they know. 2. It is true also in regard of the disposition and manners of men; The nature and life of man is, as long as he continues in that corrupt estate wherein he is born, wholly sinfull, perverse and crooked, Psal. 125. 5. And so likewise, the sinfull defects of mens lives are innumerable, *Who can understand his errors?* saith David, Psal. 19. 12. Yea the very nature of man is many waies defective, both for principles and power to do well, *We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves.* 2 Cor. 3. 5. See also Rom. 3. 9, 10, 22. Now all the knowledge in natural things, that can possibly be attained, can never rectifie these things that are thus perverse and out of frame, in the nature and lives of men, and so remove the causes of their infelicity, and make them happy; it can neither restore man to his original integrity, nor supply his manifold defects; as is most evident, in that the greatest Philosophers, and the most eminent Schollers that ever were amongst the Heathens, have been as vitious as other men, *professing themselves wise, they became fools.* Rom. 1. 22. yea such have been found most averse from learning that true saving knowledge that is taught in the Gospel. See 1 Cor. 1. 20. 26. Indeed by and through Christ all this may be remedied; it was that which the Baptist foretold concerning him, Luk. 3. 5. *Every valley shall be filled, and the crooked shall be made streight;* he will by degrees perfectly reform all the crookednesse of our nature and lives, Eph. 4. 13. and out of his fulnesse all our wants shall be supplied, Psal. 84. 11. But no natural or acquired knowledge can ever do it. 3. It is true also in regard of mans outward estate, and of all the businesses and actions of men, their success and events; mens bodies are subject to manifold diseases; and if an eye or a toe be wanting in a child that is born, it cannot be supplied: there are many miscarriages, casualties, crosse and crooked events in the best waies that the wisest of men take in any thing that they set themselves to do; some thing or other they shall find was wanting of what they should have done, and in many things they still come short of what they hoped and laboured for; all which likewise no natural knowledge of men can possibly prevent: and 4. It is true in regard of all the creatures, for though God made them all very good, and they are all litrait and right and perfect in themselves, yet the sin of man hath brought much vanity, confusion, corruption and disorder upon the whole creation, Rom. 8. 20. the creatures are frail and changeable, there is an enmity amongst them, and they are subject to many casualties; and these crookednesses and defects in them, man with all his knowledge, is no way able to help, but so they will continue, *untill the times of restitution of all things.* Act 3. 21. when God hath promised to make *a new heaven and a new earth.* 2 Pet. 2. 13. and to deliver the creature from the bondage of corruption; into a glorious liberty, Rom. 8. 21.

Verf. 16. *I communed with mine own heart, &c.*] Lest it should be objected that happinesse might be attained by knowledge, though Solomon had not attained it, here he professeth, that upon an impartial conferring with his own heart about this, he found that he had attained an incomparable measure of knowledge, farre above all others that had been before him, so that if any man could have attained happinesse by knowledge, he should certainly have done it: *I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom, than all they that have been*

been before me in Jerusalem, that is, by my studies and endeavours I have much increased that stock of wisdom, which was at first given me of God; See the Note 1 King. 3. 12. *Yea my heart had great experience*, (or, *had seen much*, as it is in the Hebrew) of wisdom and knowledge, that is, I had got a clear insight into all kind of knowledge and learning: Or by *wisdom* may be meant speculative knowledge, and by *knowledge*, what he had found by practical experience; or by *wisdom*, the ability of men to understand things; and by *knowledge*, the acquired insight into things that is gotten thereby.

Verf. 17. *And I gave my heart, &c.*] See the Note above, ver. 13. *To know wisdom, and to know madness and folly*, that is, say some Expositors, to know the worth of wisdom by experience, and experimentally also to know the worth and benefit of sensual things, which indeed to do, in a way of seeking happiness thereby, is no better than madness and folly. But because in the following verse Solomon concludes with a censure concerning the vanity and vexation of wisdom and knowledge, I do not think that as yet he is speaking of his seeking content in sensual things. And again some understand this as well as that which went before, of Solomons seeking to attain all kind of knowledge, even that of natural Philosophy; and so accordingly as by *wisdom* they understand truth, so by *madness and folly* they understand the mad erroneous opinions of men, the manifold jarring and repugnant tenets of contentious men, who proudly affecting to be admired, do intrude themselves into things above their reach, and will however oppose others, that they may seeme to know more then others, and so thereby discover great ignorance, folly and madness. But the most and best Expositors hold that having before spoken of the vanity of the knowledge of natural Philosophy, and how this was altogether ineffectual for the reforming of mens lives, here he sheweth how he betook himselfe to the study of moral Philosophy; *And I gave my heart to know wisdom*, that is, the wisdom of moral, political, and practical knowledge, or the wisdom of vertue; *And* (because every thing is best known by knowing its contrary) *to know madness and folly*, that is, to know what vice is, and to observe and understand the wayes of those that lived wickedly, foolishly and madly; *I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit*, to wit, because he found that all men come short of this wisdom, neither can the greatest perfection of moral wisdom, so farre as it is attainable by humane endeavours, ever yield any full rest or satisfaction to men; and because he found on the other side, how generally men gave themselves up to sinfull, mad and foolish courses, the pleasures and delights whereof did rather encrease mens misery, than any way tend to their happiness. And indeed the same censure may be passed concerning all kind of natural knowledge, as appears by that general conclusion wherewith Solomon shuts up this discourse in the next verse.

Verf. 18. *For in much wisdom is much griefe, &c.*] To wit, 1. Because it cannot be attained without much labour and toile, both of body and mind; which often impaires such mens health, and waists their spirits, and endangers their lives; and makes them melancholy, and of a sowe and peevish temper. 2. Because their knowledge will still be found to be imperfect and uncertain, the more they know, the more they will discover their own ignorance, and how little that is they know in comparison of that

that which they know not, and so still they will be the more eager to search into hidden things, and so put themselves upon more and more toile and labour. 3. Because the more knowledge a man hath, the more he will discover the corruption of mans nature, his own and other mens vanity, folly, madnes, and misery. 4. Because he will find that with no knowledge he hath attained, he can reforme this folly and perversnes of his own or other mens nature and wayes. 5. Because the more knowing men are, the more toilsome busineses in the way of teaching and government they shall be put upon. 6. Because they shall find that the most learned men are most envied, and many times most injuriously dealt with, the silliest fooles being usually preferred before them. 7. Because the most able men for wisdom and learning, do many times erre when they think to do best, and are usually disappointed in those desigs they have best contrived. 8. Because all such learning and knowledge is of a perishing nature; when old age comes it usually decayes, and to be sure when death seisseth upon men, it passeth away, is lost and comes to nothing: and lastly, and especially, because he shall certainly find at length that true happiness hereby can never be attained.

C H A P. II.

Verf. 1. **I** *Said in my heart, &c.*] Having found that happiness was not to be attained by any knowledge of the creature, he resolved in the next place to make tryall whether it might be attained by the plentiful fruition and enjoyment of the creature; *I said in mine heart, Goe to now, I will proove thee with mirth*, as if he should have said, I did not do this, as being transported by the power of suddaine corrupt passions, but upon mature advising with my self, I deliberately resolved to give my selfe to delights and pleasures, to wit, by way of tryall, whether that would yield me true content and happinesse or no; *I will prove thee with mirth*, saith Solomon to himselfe, that is, with a merry and voluptuous life; *therefore enjoy pleasure*, as if he should have said, Afflict not thy selfe any longer with the toilsome study and endeavour for learning and knowledge, but take thy fill of all lawfull pleasure and delight in earthly things. So that for the understanding of this we must consider that surely Solomon, being so wise and good man as he was, did not intend hereby that he would give up himselfe to brutish sensual pleasure, without any regard of reason, religion or honesty, but only that he would endeavour to give himselfe all content in all such delights as might be seemly for a man. It cannot indeed be denied but that even these might carry him too farre, and make him too much forget both God and himselfe. But yet by the sequelle of the Chapter it is evident, that he meant to goe no further in these things, then might stand with wisdom and piety. And yet we see that even upon this course of his, he at last passeth this censure, *and behold this also is vanity*, that is, there is no true tranquility nor happinesse to be found in these things, and that because such delights do never satisfie men: usually men are cloyed with them, or at least there is some mixture of sorrow in them; and besides they are commonly the cause of much sin and misery, and so are of short continuance and end in sorrow: see Pro. 14. 13. and then a little misery and sorrow makes men forget all their former pleasures.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *I said of laughter, It is mad, &c.*] That is, I said of all excessive pleasure, when a man gives up himselfe to it, and makes it his businesse to live a merry and voluptuous life, that it made men frantick, or that it is no better then madnesse, or that it argues a man to be mad; to wit, 1 because in such excesse of mirth, men are usually transported beyond all bounds of moderation, even to the doing of those things which are unreasonable, and which argue much vanity, levity and incompoundednesse of judgement in those that do them: 2 because it is no better then madnesse, for men to seeke for happinesse in such base, such light and foolish things, as carnal pleasures are, things of such short continuance, and that do so usually end in sin and sorrow: and 3 Because for men to be so merry and joviall, considering the misery of all men by nature, and the many dangers they are alwayes subject to, may well be deemed madnesse. And indeed it is likely that the ground of Solomons using this expression was, because distracted men are oft given to much laughter; yea even then when they are in burning fevers, and other dangerous sicknesses. And then for the next clause, *And of mirth, What doth it?* I conceive it is another way of expressing the same thing, to wit, that such a merry voluptuous life did bring to a man no true profit at all; *What doth it?* saith Solomon, as if he should have said, It doth a man no good in the world; Or, It doth a man hurt rather then any good; they that live such a kind of life, they doe but make fooles of themselves. But now some hold, that the first clause is meant of immoderate rejoycing, expressed outwardly in laughter and such like jollity, and the second of a free and frolick temper of heart and spirit.

Ver. 3. *I sought in mine heart to give my selfe unto wine, &c.*] Some of our best Expositors, as farre as I can discern their meaning, doe hold that in the two foregoing verses Solomon related, how at first from the study of wisdom he betook himselfe to live wholly in jollity and pleasure, without minding any thing else, and how he found that to be meere vanity, folly, and madnesse: and that now in this and the following verses he relates how hereupon he resolved upon another course, which was, that seeing neither the alone austere search after wisdom, nor the alone giving up himselfe to a voluptuous life, would yield him that happinesse and full contentation in this life which he sought after; he would now try a middle course, prudentially to temper wisdom and pleasure together, so to mind the study of wisdom, as withall to allay the bitterness thereof with a free use of all worldly delights and pleasures, and so to order himselfe in the way of his delights and pleasures, according to the directions of wisdom, as not to be dissolute and excessive therein, but to keep within the bounds of reason and piety: But I conceive that Solomon doth here only farther amplifie what he had begun to say ver. 1. concerning the tryall he had resolved to make, whether that happinesse which he sought after might be attained by taking his fill of worldly pleasures; which he doth, not only by expressing how farre he meant to goe in the enjoying of such delights and pleasures, to wit, no farther then might stand with the dictates of wisdom, but also by reckoning up many of those particular delights, wherewith he sought to please himselfe, and accordingly he first here begins with that of feasting; *I sought in mine heart* (saith he) that is, after long deliberation within my selfe about the way of living happily and contentedly in this world, I did at last determine, to give my selfe unto wine, that is, to all kind

kind of delicacies in eating and drinking, in banqueting and feasting : It is in the Original, *To draw my flesh with wine*, that is, to allure himselfe to live pleasantly in regard of eating and drinking liberally and daintily ; Or, to draw out, and enlarge his flesh, to make it more full, and plump, and tender and fresh ; (for sparing diet and course food doth contract the flesh, whereas plentiful and delicate feeding doth loosen and enlarge it.) Having contracted leanenesse by hard study, he meant to draw it forth againe into fatnesse and fullnesse by faring deliciously every day. Or, to draw forth, and carry on himselfe in a way of continual feasting day after day, and so to spend much time in it ; as upon the same ground, the same phrase is used in another businesse, Psal. 85. 5. *Wilt thou draw out thine anger unto all generations ?* As for the following words (*yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom*) the drift thereof is to shew, that in this resolution of his to give himselfe to feasting and merriment, it was still with this settled reservation of mind, that he meant not wholly to abandon the study of wisdom, but to intermix the one with the other, or rather that he would not in his jollity and feasting suffer himselfe to be transported beyond the bounds of wisdom and piety, nor suffer himselfe to be made a slave to his pleasures, his aime being only to make tryall what happinesse was to be found therein : *And to lay hold on folly*, that is, to embrace and use those pleasures, which afterward by experience he found to be no better then folly, *Till I might see what was that good for the sonnes of men, which they should doe under the heaven, all the dayes of their life*, that is, that he might by experience discover what it was that would bring men to live most happily and contentedly, and that not for a while only, but all the time of their abode here in this world. This Solomon professeth was his aime in giving of himselfe up to the pleasures of this life ; He did it not vitiously, to drown himselfe in sensuality, but only by way of experiment, to see how farre a life spent in such pleasures would yield a man content and comfort here in this world. And yet probable it is that this proved at last the occasion of his Apostacy from God in his old age. But however observable it is still, that Solomons aime was not to search what was the chiefe happinesse of man (for that he knew consisted in his living for ever with God in heaven) but to try what it was that would bring men to live contentedly all their dayes *under heaven*, that is, here in this world.

Verf. 4. *I made me great works &c.*] That is, magnificent works ; and though this may be principally meant of those works that are here immediatly mentioned, his houses, vineyards, gardens and orchards, &c. yet I see not but that under this general expresseion, all other the stately works that were made by him, may be comprehended, such as were his golden targets, and his ivory throne, 1 King. 10. 16, 17, 18, &c. and his princely bed, mentioned, Cant. 3. 7. *I builded me houses*, to wit, not only those expresseed in the Scripture, his own house, his Queens house, and the house of Lebanon, for which see the Notes 1 King. 7. 1, 2, 8, &c. & 2 Chron. 8. 11. but also several other houses besides, as appears by that which is said, 1 King. 9. 19. that Solomon built whatever he desired to build in *Jerusalem*, and in *Lebanon*, and in *all the land of his dominion* : *I planted me vineyards*, to wit, of the rarest and choicest vines that could be gotten, one whereof we find mentioned, Cant. 8. 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Bant-hamon*, &c.

Verf.

Verf. 6. *I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*] Hereby may be meant his parks and groves that yielded him other trees, besides fruit trees, as Okes and Cedars; or else his orchards that were for the spaciousness of them like little woods; or rather nurseries of trees, whether fruit trees or others, which usually indeed have most need of watering.

Verf. 7. *I got me servants and maidens, &c.*] That is, a great number of both sorts, as became so great a King. See the Note 1 King. 10. 1. & 1 King. 4. 22, 23. *and had servants born in my house;* or, as it is in the Original, *Sons of my house*, that is, such as were the children of my bond-servants. As for the servants of Solomon mentioned, Ezra 2. 55. See the Note there: And then for the last clause, *also I had great possessions of great and small cattel, &c.* there by *great cattel* may be meant, not oxen only, but also deer and camels, and horses, and mules; for of horses particularly we find that he had great abundance. See the Note 1 King 4. 26.

Verf. 8. *I gathered me also silver and gold, &c.*] To wit, in great abundance; partly by the revenues of the Crown, and the taxes he imposed upon his own people; See the Note 1 King. 12. 4. partly by the tributes he received from other Nations round about him, that were become tributary to him, 1 King. 10. 25. partly by the presents that were sent him by other Princes farre and near, by way of honouring him for his wisdom and greatness, 2 Chron. 9. 9, 14. and partly by the return of his navies, which he sent forth into remote countries. See the Notes 1 King. 9. 28. & 10. 14, 22. by means whereof *the King made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones*, ver. 27. *and the peculiar treasure of Kings and of the Provinces*, that is, the choicest rarities which the Kingdoms and Countries about him did afford, and whatever those Kings and the Governours of those Provinces had, which they did most highly esteem, and lay up most charily amongst their treasures, for these they sent to me for presents; as haply curious pieces of plate, chains and bracelets, jewels and precious stones, precious ointments, and spices, and perfumes, &c. *I gat me men-fingers and women-fingers, and the delights of the sons of men*, that is, say some Expositors, whatever else can be named, wherein men are wont to delight. But I rather conceive it is meant particularly of that which follows, *as namely muscull instruments, and that of all sorts*; which is farre more probable, then that which others say, that it is meant of the fair women that were taken captives in the warre, which in those times all sorts of men did much delight in, according to that, Judg. 5. 30. *Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey, to every man a damsell or two?*

Verf. 9. *So I was great, &c.*] To wit, in wealth, power, glory, and renown; and accordingly lived in great plenty and magnificent pomp and state; *and increased more then then all that were before me in Jerusalem*, to wit, not only private men, but Kings also; not only the Canaanitish kings, but also those that formerly reigned over Israel, to wit, Saul and David: yea 1 King. 10. 23. it is said, that *King Solomon exceeded all the Kings of the earth for riches, and for wisdom*; And then it follows, *also my wisdom remained with me*, that is, I lost not that wisdom which God had bestowed upon me in natural things, nor did I either in the getting or using of these things transgresse the Rules of wisdom, that so I might without check of conscience take full delight in them: So that I failed not of doing what I propounded to my self;

selfe; (for which see the Note above, vers. 3.) Now this he mentions, not only as a rare and unusual thing, (because pleasures doe usually besot men) but also hereby to manifest, that whilst he gave himselfe thus to the pleasures of this life, he did notwithstanding seriously mind the end which therein he propounded to himselfe, namely, by wisdom to observe, what real good and satisfaction these things would yield to the heart of man, and that therefore the judgement that he passeth here concerning such things was worthy of all credit.

Vers. 10. *And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, &c.]* That is, So farre as might stand with wisdom and piety, he laboured to give himselfe full content in whatever might delight his eyes (and under the eyes, as the sense which men chiefly desire to satisfie; see Chap. 11. 9. & 1 John 2. 16. all the other senses are comprehended) he spared for no cost nor labour herein; *I withheld not my heart from any joy*: The meaning is, that whereas his heart was eagerly bent upon jollity and pleasure, he did not restraints it from any delight, that he might lawfully take, no not so much as by delaying to satisfie its desires; *For my heart rejoiced in all my labour*, that is, he was really and inwardly delighted and pleased with the workes that with much labour he had caused to be made (as indeed men doe usually take most content in those things which they have gotten by their own labour, or which themselves have caused to be made) and the rather because he was not hindered by warre, sicknesse, or any other notable affliction or sorrow; *And this was my portion of all my labour*; that is, the use of these things, or the delight I took in them, I resolved was the only fruit I was to reape of my labours, because when I came to dye, I was sure to leave them; and accordingly I set my selfe to enjoy them, which many covetous wretches never do; And thus a little transitory enjoyment of them was all the fruit I had of these painful pleasures. That which Solomon saith here of his not denying himselfe any pleasure he desired, some understand of his sinful excesses beyond his first intentions. But this doth not agree with that which he said in the foregoing verse, that *his wisdom remained with him*.

Vers. 11. *Then I looked on all the works, that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to doe, &c.]* That is, I took an impartial survey of all the workes which by my labour I had made, and of all the labour undergone in the making of them; *And behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit*, that is, the pleasure that was taken in the enjoying of them, was not answerable to the toile that was undergone about them, but all was meere vanity and vexation of spirit, not only because the things themselves wherein men take pleasure, have no permanency in them, but are vaine in every regard, see the Note, Chap. 1. 2. but also because such joyes are not attained without much labour and anguish of spirit, and in the enjoying of them there is still a mixture of sorrow, by reason of many seares, jealousies, interruptions, and discontentments. Neither is there any permanency in them (even old age it selfe will make the most delightful things wearisome) nor can they quiet or satisfie the mind of man; yea and if there be sin in the enjoying them, the sting of conscience will certainly follow. *And there was no profit under the Sonne*; see the Note, Chap. 1. 3.

Vers. 12. *And I turned my selfe to behold wisdom, and madnesse, and folly, &c.]* That

That is, Having thus discovered the vanity of pleasures, I turned my self back to take a review of that *wisdom, and madnesse, and folly*, whereinto I had before made enquiry, (See the Note, chap. 1. 17.) as determining upon this review yet once more to consider and see, whether in this wisdom happinesse might be attained or no; and that because second thoughts are many times the wisest, and upon a serious review of things men do often discover that which they saw not before. As for the following words, *for what can the man do that cometh after the King? even that which hath been already done*, therein there is a reason given why Solomon gave over the pursuit of pleasures, and betook himself again to make enquiry, whether happinesse might be attained by wisdom or no, namely because he had made such a full and exact trial of all the good that could be found in pleasures, that no man that should after him attempt to search what content could be found in pleasures, would ever be able to do more then he had done in that time: *What can the man do*, that is, any man whatsoever, *that cometh after the King?* The meaning is, that whosoever should try to find any more happinesse in pleasures then Solomon had done, that was a King, and so glorious a King in every regard, he would but lose his labour; he could try nothing, but what Solomon had tried before him, he could do nothing, but *even that which hath been already done*, to wit, by him and others. The last clause may be read as it is in the margin, *What can the man do that cometh after the King, in those things which have been already done?* But then also the sense is almost fully the same, to wit, that when any man should after Solomon attempt to finde happinesse in pleasure, as he would be able to do nothing but what had been done before him, so neither would he be able, in doing over those things which had been done before, to discover any new thing tending to mans happinesse, that had not been discovered before.

Vers. 13. *Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as farre as light excelleth darknesse.*] As if he should have said, Though I found wisdom and knowledge to be vanity, as to the making of a man happy, yet I do not thence conclude that wisdom is no more to be regarded then folly; for this I found withall, that wisdom doth farre surpasse folly, even as farre as light surpasseth darknesse. And indeed well is wisdom and knowledge compared to light, and folly and ignorance to darknesse; because, 1. As light discovers things to men, (Eph. 5. 13. *All things are made manifest by the light*) and inables men to distinguish one thing from another, whereas in the dark all things are hidden from men, and therefore there can no difference appear of one thing from another, so doth wisdom make men understand things, and discern betwixt good and evil, truth and errour; whereas folly makes men to be as blind men that see nothing. 2. As light is very comfortable, chap. 1. 7. *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing is it for the eyes to behold the Sun*; whereas darknesse is dreadfull and full of terror, so is knowledge very delightfull, chap. 8. 1. *A mans wisdom maketh his face to shine*, but folly yields a man no comfort at all. 3. Wisdom, as light, directs men in their way, and shewes them dangers that they may avoid them; whereas folly and ignorance misleade men, and expose them continually to manifold dangers.

And 4. As light wakens men, whereas darknesse lulls men asleep, so wisdom and knowledge wakens those that sleep securely in a sensual estate, and makes them think of their danger; whereas ignorance makes men in such an estate to sleep securely without any feare.

Verf. 14. *The wise mans eyes are in his head, &c.*] As if he should have said, He is not blind; Or rather; As men by their eyes, being placed as watchmen in the watch-tower of the head, do discern things a farre off, and round about them, so the wise man by his wisdom is circumspect and provident, judicious and wary in all his undertakings, he marketh all circumstances for the right ordering of all his undertakings, he forecasts what the issue of things will be a long time after, and so foreseeeth things to come, and minds not only present things, yea he compares things past, present, and to come, and so is the better able to judge of things; and by this meanes he ordereth his wayes aright, he keeps himselfe from wandring or stumbling, avoydeth that which is evil, and followeth that which is good, see the Note, Pro. 4. 25. *But the foole walketh in darknesse*; that is, He is blind, or, He seeth no more then a man that is in the dark, or, His eyes are in his heeles, he minds only things present, and seeth not any evill till it is upon him. The meaning is, that the foole is ignorant, rash, inconsiderate, inobservant of circumstances, that he foreseeeth not either conveniences or mischiefs, and so he goeth stumbling on in a confused blind manner in all that he doth, not knowing which way to choose, and which to refuse, and so doth usually fall into many mischiefs. Some Expositors doe adde, that these expressions of a wise mans eyes being in his head, and a fooles walking in darknesse, do also imply, 1. That as the sight is an ornament to the body, and blindnesse a great deformity, making the body to be to the soule as a dungeon that hath no windows in it, so is wisdom a very great ornament to the soule, and folly a fore blemish. And 2. That as a man by his eye-sight can discern light, which a blind man cannot doe, so by wisdom a man is enabled to discern the power of reason propounded to him, whereas folly renders men incapable of receiving counsel. But that which is before given for the meaning of the words was I conceive chiefly intended. And then that which followeth, *And I my selfe perceived also, that one event happeneth to them all*, is as if he had said, As I perceived the excellency of wisdom above folly, so I perceived also that notwithstanding the wisest of men are subject to the same event in regard of their outward estate here in this world that fooles are, to wit, that which is afterwards expressed, ver. 16. that both dye, and both are at last forgotten, or more generally, the same calamities and sorrowes.

Verf. 15. *Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the foole, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? &c.*] That is, why did I labour to get more wisdom then the foole hath? Or, What advantage have I of being wise above the foole? *Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity*; that is, I determined that in regard the same events befall the wise man that befall the foole, for the making of a man happy here in this world, and for the giving of full content to the soule, even wisdom it selfe is no better then vanity. I know that many take this last clause to be a censure passed upon that hasty & angry inference of his in the foregoing words, *And why was I then more wise?* namely, that it was vanity in him, and so would be in any

any other thus to determine, thus to undervalue wisdom, because the wise man and the fool are subject to the same outward events. But the first exposition seems to me the best.

Verf. 16. *For there is no remembrance of the wise more then of the fool for ever, &c.*] That is, The remembrance of the wise man shall no more remaine for ever, then the remembrance of the fool; though they may be remembered by some few, yet not by others, though for a time, yet not for ever, *seeing that which now is, in the dayes to come shall be forgotten*, that is, both the men themselves and all their wisdom and glorious works will be forgotten and buried in eternal oblivion; New wise men that arise will eclipse the glory of those that were before them, and time will devour all the monuments which they leave of themselves behind them; *And how dyeth the wise man? as the fool.* This may be taken as the reason, why there is no more remembrance of the one then of the other, namely, because they are both at last cut off by death: Or rather it is another instance, wherein Solomon sheweth how the same event happeneth to them all, as he had said before, ver. 14. to wit, because they fare alike here in this world in regard of death. And this is expressed by an interrogation, to intimate that it is in reason a matter of wonder, griefe and indignation, that it should be so, and how dyeth the wise man? as the fool. But still we must remember that Solomon did not question but that a different event would befall the good and the bad after death, *God* (saith he, Chap. 12. 14.) *shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

Verf. 17. *Therefore I hated life, &c.*] That is, though I lived in peace and honour, and in great abundance of all things that are desireable in this world, yet I was weary of my life, and looked upon it as having no loveliness nor desireableness in it; and judged thus not in a way of murmuring, out of some private discontent, but judiciously; *Because the work that is wrought under the Sunne*, that is, all that is done by men, or that befalls men here in this world, *is grievous unto me*, that is, full of griefe and disquiet, and that especially because of this vanity that the wisest doe alwayes dye at last as well as the basest of men; and naturally every man would rather not be, then be alwayes miserable; *For all is vanity and vexation of spirit*; see the Note, Chap. 1. 14.

Verf. 18. *Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the Sunne, &c.*] That is, Here in this life, or in these sublunary things; As if he had said, I began to be wholly out of love with those glorious and magnificent works, which with so much labour I had made, even those things, which I had formerly loved & given my self to delight in them, I then began not to regard, yea to repent that ever I had taken so much paines for them; *Because I should leave it unto the man that should be after me*; As if he should have said, Not only for the reasons before mentioned, but also because, 1. I must at last part with them all, and all the comfort I had taken in them, and leave that to another about which I had taken so much paines, Psal. 49. 10, 17. (and indeed naturally men are loathest to part with those things which are their own work) and 2. I cannot know who that man is to whom I shall leave them; see Psal. 39. 6. Because it might be objected, that though there could be no solid comfort gotten in earthly things by the wisest of men, in regard that the wise man must dye and part with

all he hath as well as the fool, yet there would be much content in this, that he should have plenty to leave to his child after him, this objection is covertly prevented, in that Solomon intimates, that no man can tell whether his estate shall be enjoyed by his child or no: *Some man after him shall enjoy it, but who that man shall be no man can tell.*

Verf. 19. *And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? &c.*] As if he had said, Be it a stranger, or be it a mans own Child, that shall come to enjoy what he leaves behind him, no man can tell but that he may be a fool, that may not be able to judge of the wisdom of his works, nor know how to use what falls into his hands, but may profusely waste and squander all away, or by neglect, or some other way of folly, bring all to nothing that is left him. And some conceive that Solomon might speak this out of some jealousy that he began to have, that thus it would be with his son Rehoboam, who was indeed one and forty years old when his Father died; *Yet (saith he) shall he have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed my self wise under the Sun,* That is, All the estate I had gotten, and the works that I had made with so much labour and wisdom; He shall enjoy and dispose of it as he pleaseth, and Lord it as he lists in scattering that estate, which I had as it were made my self a servant to gather, *this is also vanity,* to wit, that a man hath not power to leave his goods to those to whom he would desire to leave them, by means whereof many times a wise man makes himself a drudge to a fool, and a fool becomes master of that which was gotten with much labour and wisdom, and it may be soon brings it all to nothing.

Verf. 20. *Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the Sun.*] That is, after many deliberations, and several wayes taken to seek for content here in the things of this world, I came about at last to this resolution, to which I did set my self with all my power, and with all possible diligence, even that I would endeavour to cast off all hope of attaining happiness by any such wayes wherein I had hitherto laboured to attain it, and so to give over that anxious toyl wherewith I had so long afflicted my self in seeking to make my self happy in those outward Comforts, which are so uncertain and unsatisfactory.

Verf. 21. *For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity, &c.*] That is, that hath taken pains to get an estate by wise and skilful and just courses, (though he managed his businesse with all possible providence and industry, yet was he withal careful not to hazard his estate by getting any thing in any unjust wayes:) *yet to a man that hath not laboured therein, shall he leave it for his portion,* that is, to one that never took the least pains in the getting of it; an idle Drone that never knew what belonged to the managing of his businesse in any such prudent or conscionable way. *This also is vanity, and a great evil,* that is, a sore misery and vexation not to be avoided by any care or circumspection, to wit, that a man should thus toyl himself to purchase rest and idlenesse for another man; or that one man by sitting still and doing nothing, shall get as much, and enjoy as much content, as another by all his skil, providence, and lawful labours.

Verf.

Verf. 22. *For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun?*] This may be referred to all that hath been here said in the foregoing verses; as 1. That when a man is dead (as dye every man must) he hath then no profit at all of all his labour and vexing cares, both for the getting and preserving his estate; and 2. That a man hath no profit by such labour, the benefit whereof goeth to others he shall leave behind him. But I rather take it more generally, That no man can take true contentment in any thing he can get by his labours, according to that Chap. 1. 3. For which see the Note there.

Verf. 23. *For all his dayes are sorrowes, &c.*] That is, full of vanity, of bitter sorrowes, both in body and minde, nothing in a manner but sorrow, and his travail, grief, that is, he meets with much discontent and vexation many wayes in all his labours. Now this Solomon here alledgeth, because if this be generally true of all mens labours, it must needs be more eminently true of carnal and worldly covetous men, that toy themselves excessively to get wealth, and are continually unsatisfied with what they have, and disquieted with the fear of parting with it; *yet his heart taketh not rest in the night*, that is, either he cannot sleep, or he is perplexed with unquiet thoughts and cares in his sleep, and in his dreams: For the heart of a man may wake when his body sleeps. See Cant. 5. 2.

Verf. 24. *There is nothing better for a man, then that he should eat and drink, &c.*] In this and that which followeth to the end of the Chapter, Solomon undertakes to shew that which is the main drift of this whole Book, namely, wherein the happiness of man in this life doth consist, and how far onely the enjoyment of the things below can yield a man full satisfaction and content, to wit, when a man being good in Gods sight, as it is expressed, verse 26. (which they onely are that fear God and walk in his wayes) can thereupon with freedom, quietly, contentedly, and cheerfully enjoy and use that portion of outward blessings, which God hath afforded him, without that anxiety and vexation of spirit, wherewith the most of men do perplex themselves. *There is nothing better for a man, then that he should eat and drink*; As if he should have said, Seeing there is in all things, and in all the labours and endeavours of men, so much vanity and vexation of spirit, whereby it is evident, that from these things happiness and full contentment cannot be attained, the best remedy therefore that can be prescribed against this vanity, and the best way that can be taken to become master of the utmost comfort that worldly things can afford, is for a man contentedly to enjoy the portion which God hath allotted him, and liberally to make use of what he hath, not only for the support of his life, but also for his pleasure and delight; and not to afflict himself as many do, not daring to enjoy what they have gotten, though withall they know not to whom they shall leave it: Even these outward things might thus be used, as conducing to mens comfortable living here in this world, if they would expect no more from them, then that for which they were created, and for which they were conferred upon them, (which is not that they should depend upon them for happiness, and seek for full content in such uncertain things, which makes some excessive in taking delight in them, and others to afflict themselves with toiling excessively to get them, and covetous

tous locking them up, when they have them) but would only, with thankfulness to God, betake themselves to live freely and comfortably upon those good things which God hath given them. *And that he should make his soul enjoy good of his labour; that is, that he should take as much comfort and content in what he hath gotten by his honest labours, as such outward blessings can afford him. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God, that is, I plainly perceived that thus to be able to use and enjoy what God hath given men, and to enjoy them contentedly and cheerfully without any such superfluous and vexing cares as many doe afflict themselves with, is the gift of God, and a special favour it is from God; though it may seeme a very easie thing for a man to make use of what he hath in his power, to eate the fruit of his own labour, yet this no man is able to doe without Gods blessing; (through covetousnesse men may not have hearts to doe it, and through sickness, griefe, and many other wayes they may be hindred from doing it) and much lesse is any man able of himselfe to enjoy what he hath with a contented cheerful mind; because this cannot be unless God plants his feare in mens hearts, and takes off their love from earthly things, and pitcheth it upon himselfe.*

Verf. 25. *For who can eat? &c.*] This may be added, as a proof from his own experience, Either 1. of that which he had said in the first clause of the foregoing verse, to wit, that there was no better course could be taken for these outward things, then for a man contentedly and cheerfully, and liberally to make use of what God hath given him for his portion; for, saith he, *who can eat? or who else can hasten hereunto more then I?* As if he should have said, I have learnt by full proof from mine own experience, how desirable a thing it is thus to enjoy these outward things: No man could more freely, nor with more cheerfulness and readinesse of mind make use of these outward things, than I did, because I enjoyed so great abundance, and might speedily command whatever I desired; and as I knew that no man was fitter to take the comfort of my estate, than I my self that had laboured for it, so I was also most forward and willing to do it, and therefore did enjoy what God had bestowed upon me in as liberal and magnificent a manner as might be. Or 2. of the last clause of the foregoing verse, *This also I saw that it was from the hand of God;* for accordingly the meaning of these words, *for who can eat, &c.* may be, that if it had depended upon mens own will to eat and to drink, and to enjoy good of his labour, Solomon had the means to do this more then any other, as being so wise and so wealthy a Prince, and so should have been the happiest of men; But seeing he could not do it, hereby it is manifest, that it is meerly from the hand of God.

Verf. 26. *For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, &c.*] That is, that is sincerely good, the man with whom God is well pleased, and who is acceptable in his sight: *wisdom and knowledge*, that is, such natural gifts of understanding, whereby he is enabled well to manage his affairs, and both to get a competent and comfortable estate, and to use it when he hath it, as likewise such spiritual gifts and graces of the mind, whereby he is enabled to seek happiness only in God, and in the knowledge and service of God, and taught to be contented with what God allots him for his portion: *and joy*; as if he should have said, And by this means he lives joyfully and comfortably in the cheerfull use of the outward blessings which God in his love hath conferred

conferred upon him; according to that, *He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness*, Act. 14. 17. But to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap, that is, As for wicked men he gives them over, or leaves them to their insatiable desires, and so like fools they vex and toil themselves with immoderate cares and restless labours in heaping up wealth together, esteeming that their happiness, which God layeth upon them for their punishment and vexation: that he may give to him that is good before God, that is, that God may dispose of it, not to those for whom the wicked intended it, but to the man to whom God is pleased to afford it, or to some good righteous man. See Job 27. 16. Prov. 13. 22. & 28. 8. *This also is vanity and vexation of spirit*, to wit, for men to toil, and care and care for others they never thought of, it may be those they hated, to whom they were farre from intending the least good. Now the drift of all this is, hereby either to prove, that this power, thus freely, and contentedly, and comfortably to use the good blessings of God, is the gift of God; or else, to set forth the excellency of this gift, because he gives it to those he loves, and laies the contrary as a punishment upon wicked, ungodly men.

CHAP. III.

Verf. 1. **T**O every thing there is a season, &c.] That is, A set appointed time, a time determined by the fore-appointment and decree of God, both for their beginning, continuance and end: And that this is to be extended to all things that are, and are done in the world, not only natural and contingent, but also voluntary, which seeme to be most in the power of men, is evident by the following clause, *And a time to every purpose under the heaven*, that is, to every thing which men purpose or performe. It cannot be questioned but that Solomon doth still here prosecute his former discourse, because ver. 9. of this Chapter, he returns again to what he had said before, Chap. 1. 3. concerning the unprofitableness of all mens endeavours. So that the drift of that which is said here concerning the divine determination of the time wherein all things are done, may seeme to be; 1. to prove the vanity of all worldly things, and all the labour and endeavours of men about them; He proves all things to be vaine from their transitoriness, because they have all but their time, and then passe away, and so there is a continual vicissitude and change of things, and that by the sure and unchangeable decree of God: as is shewne in the following instances, that must needs be vain, that is born and presently dyeth, that is planted, and is eie soone plucked up againe, &c. And then he proves the vanity of all mens endeavours about these things, from the absolute uncertainty of future events, which do wholly depend upon the predeterminate counsel and decree of God, and not at all on the purposes and endeavours of men. 2. To presse upon men from hence that counsel formerly given Chap. 2. 24. of enjoying freely and contentedly what God hath allotted to men for their portion in these outward things, and not to vex themselves with solicitous and anxious cares, hopes, feares, designs and endeavours about future events, nor to be disquieted with any thing that befalls them, and that because, if God have fore-appointed all things that come to passe in their several

ral times and seasons, and consequently all the changes and vicissitude of things that are in the world, as it were a folly and madnesse in men, any way to afflict themselves about things to come, which must be as God hath determined, and it is not in their power to prevent or alter it; so likewise it must needs be a vaine thing to be troubled when things come not to passe according to their desires and endeavours, seeing they may be sure that all things are as God hath appointed; That which men have to do is in all their wayes to seek for counsel and direction from God, and then having used all lawful meanes for the effecting of what they desire, to referre the event to Gods providence, and thereon quietly to waite and depend, and then to submit their wills to Gods, and to be content with whatsoever he shall be pleased to doe. And 3. To warne men, even whilst they doe comfortably enjoy their present blessings, not to set their hearts too much upon them, nor to promise themselves much content in them, or that they shall alwayes enjoy them; and that because they are variable and subject to variety of changes and uncertainties, and so may be gone in an instant, yea that which is quite contrary may come in the roome of them. However evident it is, that Solomon doth not speake here of what may lawfully be done, so it be done in a fit season, as some Expositors would have it, (for how could this tend to prove the vanity or unprofitablenesse of mens labours about the creatures?) but only teacheth us, that all things, and all the changes of things that are in the world, are ordered in their severall times by the all-ruling providence of God, yea not only the lawfull and serious actions of men, but even their sinnes, and those things they doe which have most lightnesse and vanity in them, as may be seene in the following particulars.

Verf. 2. *A time to be borne, and a time to dye, &c.*] To wit, When men dye according to Gods appointment by a natural death, thorough sicknesse, or old age, &c. (for of dying by a way of violence Solomon speaks in the following verse.) Here he undertakes to prove the fore-going general Proposition concerning Gods fore-appointing all the severall changes and vicissitudes that are in the world by an Induction of many particulars in fourteen paire of contraries. And observable it is, that whereas in some of these he sets that which is desireable and delightful in the first place, and that which is grievous and sad in the last, and so on the contrary in others of them he begins with that which is sad and irksome, and ends with that which is delightful and pleasing; this may be to intimate the Lords different dealing with men, to wit, that sometimes he gives them their sweet, their good dayes first, and afterwards their dayes of sorrow and afflictions, and that sometimes on the contrary he gives them their sowre, their dayes of adversity first, and afterwards their sweet, their dayes of prosperity.

Verf. 3. *A time to kill, and time to heale, &c.*] That is, There is a time when according to the ordering of divine Providence men are slaine, sometimes by the sword of justice, or warre, or private revenge, and sometimes by casual events, see *Exod. 25. 13.* and that sometimes too when the wounds at first seemed not mortal, (for even evil and casual actions of men are directed by God;) and there is a time againe when though men be wounded never so dangerously, yet their wounds shall be healed.

Verf. 4. *A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance.*] That is, God sometimes gives men occasions of sorrow, yea of bitter lamentation; and some-

sometimes againe of joy, yea of leaping and dancing, and of great triumphing; see 2 Sam. 6. 14. & Act. 3. 8.

Verf. 5. *A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together, &c.*] This may be meant of men casting away stones out of their pastures and other grounds, and of gathering them together againe for building; or of pulling down fences of stones, houses, or fortresses, and building them up againe; all these things being ordered by the providence of God. And so likewise the next clause, *A time to embrace, and a time to refraine from* (or, as it is in the Hebrew, *to be far from*) *embracing*, may be meant of making up or breaking off marriages, or of the different seasons that God sends, to wit, such wherein married persons and other deare friends may mutually rejoyce together, and embrace one another; and others againe when through alienation of affection, sicknesse, or other great sorrowes men are *farre from embracing*: See 1 Cor. 7. 5. & Joel 2. 16.

Verf. 6. *A time to keep, and a time to cast away.*] To wit, either through necessity, as when men in a storme cast their goods overboard to save their lives; see Jon. 1. 5. or out of voluntary choice, as when men do chearfully and bountifully give what they have for the reliefe of the poore: see Psal 112. 9. & Eccles. 11. 2. or when men doe readily abandon any thing they enjoy, rather then not keep faith and a good conscience: see Heb. 10. 34.

Verf. 7. *A time to rent, and a time to sew, &c.*] This may be understood as spoken figuratively of the Rents and Divisions that are often made in Kingdoms, States and Churches, and of making up such breaches againe, or of rending men from the Church by Ecclesiastical censures, and of reuniting them to the Church againe. But I rather take it to be meant, of mens rending their garments in times of great sorrow, (for which see the Note, Gen. 37. 29.) and so of mending those garments againe. And that the rather, because the following clause, *A time to keep silence, and a time to speake*, may very probably be taken in the same sense, because in times of joy men are wont to use great freedome of speech, and in times of great sorrow to keep silence, according to those passages, Lam. 2. 10. *The Elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence*; and Amos 5. 13. *Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time*; See the Note also, Job 2. 13.

Verf. 8. *A time to love, and a time to hate.*] That is, A time to manifest our love and charity to men, and a time to doe those things that proceed from the just hatred of sin and wickednesse: see the Note, Psal. 139. 21. Or rather; A time wherein God doth those things, which cause and encrease love and friendship amongst men, and a time wherein those things are done which occasion great variance and hatred amongst men.

Verf. 9. *What profit hath he that worketh, in that wherein he laboureth?*] See the Note, Chap. 1. 3. It is as if he had said, Seeing when men have done what they can, all things must depend upon the determinate counsel of God, and therefore they cannot help or hinder the vanity and volubility that is in the things of this world, nor work out any happinesse to themselves therein, therefore all anxious cares about these things are to no purpose, they may keep men from reaping any comfort in those things God hath bestowed upon them, but they can never frustrate what God hath

determined; and therefore they may endeavour that, which they shall never be able to effect, and seek after those things which they shall never come to enjoy, or which, if they doe come to enjoy them, they shall quickly leave to others.

Verf. 10. *I have seen the travel, which God hath given to the sonnes of men to be exercised in it.*] Some would have this to be understood meerly of the labour of seeking the knowledge of all things, as before, Chap. 1. 13. where we have in a manner the same words; for which see the Note in that place. But doubtlesse that which Solomon saith here, is rather meant of the various and contrary imployments, passions and events that are in the world. Whereas it might be thought, that it is meerly casual that things doe thus come to passe, Solomon here assures us, that all these things are of God, it is God that hath given this travel unto men, to wit, of being imployed in different and contrary works and imployments, and that with different and contrary events, according as he hath fore-decreed: And whereas againe it might be thought, that if all labour be unprofitable, and that because let men doe what they will, they shall be able to effect nothing, but according to what God hath foredetermined, then men had as good sit still and doe nothing, as to labour and travel to no purpose: to this likewise Solomon answers, that Gods will is, that men should use all lawful endeavours in all things they desire to accomplish, (though Gods providence should work contrary to mens endeavours, yet man in obedience to Gods command must doe what belongs to him to doe) *to be exercised in it*, that is, that they may be exercised thereby, and kept from idlenesse and pride, &c. and all the evil effects thereof; or that they may imploy themselves in observing the providence of God in that variety of changes that is in all worldly things.

Verf. 11. *He hath made every thing beautifull in his time, &c.*] As if he should have said, Though in regard of the great uncertainty of all humane endeavours, and the various and contrary events of things, there may seeme to be a great deale of disorder and confusion in those things that are done in the world, at which men are apt to stumble and take offence, yet this is because we are ignorant of the ends that God propounds to himselfe, and are not able to put together all the pieces of his Providence, nor to foresee the effects that he will at last produce, and so cannot comprehend the wise contrivances of all his works; for the truth is, that if we once discover Gods ends, and how he brings about that which he determined, whether in regard of judgements that he executeth upon wicked men, or the tryal that he makes of the faith and patience of his people, or other such like holy designes, we shall find that every thing, even these things that seeme so full of confusion, are in their season admirably beautiful and done in the most exact and comely order; and that as in the first Creation there was nothing that God made that was not very good, Gen. 1. 31. so in the works of his providence in governing the world, there is nothing that God doth, but it is exceeding beautiful in its season. Though things seeme to happen never so unexpectedly, and crossely, yet *when the Lord hath performed his whole work*, as the Prophet speaketh, Isa. 10. 12. and that we come to compare one thing with another, we shall find that God hath ordered all things for the best, even to admiration. As the beauty of pictures and curious hangings, and so likewise of the bodies of men ariseth from the orderly mixing of divers and contrary colours, so doth the beauty of

of Gods works of providence arise from his wise causing even of crosse and contrary events to work together for the glory of his name, and for the good of his chosen people. Now the drift of Solomons asserting this here, is not only to justifie God, by shewing that if there be any vanity and confusion in the things that are done in the world, the fault is not in the providence of God, but especially also to make it cleare that there is reason why men should be quiet and contented with their state and condition, whatever it is that befalls them, because all circumstances duely considered, nothing can be better then as God orders it? Though men have sometimes occasion of joy, and sometimes of sorrow, these are as necessary and as comely in their season, as cold and frost is in the winter, and heate and flowers and fruits are in the summer, God still allowing men to conforme themselves to the various motions of his providence, so they be kept within the bounds of moderation; As for the following words, *Also he hath set the world in their hearts, &c.* By Gods setting the world in their hearts may be meant, either 1. that God hath implanted in the hearts of men a desire to delight themselves with the enjoying and using of the things of this world; or 2. that God hath so clearely revealed, both in his works of creation and providence, his wise and beautiful ordering of them all, and hath withall wrought in the hearts of men such an earnest desire, and so much ability withall thorough the natural light, reason, and knowledge that he hath given them, to search out the wisdom of God therein, and the beauty that is in his government of the world, that if men would set themselves to the exact observation of things, they might in a great measure discover the wise and beautifull contrivance of them. And so accordingly for the last words; *So that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end;* the meaning may be, either that man cannot find out all that God doth, there being many things, which God reserves as secrets to himselfe, and which are above the reach of mans understanding, or that man cannot perfectly and thoroughly understand any work of God, so that nothing from the beginning to the end of it should be concealed from him, or that many things they can never search out so long as they live. Laying therefore both these last clauses thus understood together, *Also he hath set the world in their hearts, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.* The drift of Solomon therein must needs be, either to shew that men might discover so much of the beauty of Gods works of providence in the governing of the world, though some things indeed they cannot comprehend, that they might thereby be brought with quiet and chearfull hearts to rest in the Lords so wise disposing of things, without that anxiety and disquieting care, wherewith men doe usually afflict themselves; or else rather to shew the reason why men are not contented, and patient and chearfull in all conditions, though all things that God doth are so beautifull in their time, to wit, either because men are naturally so taken up with the desires, and thoughts, and cares of worldly things, and are so exercised with the sore travell belonging thereto, that they seldome or never mind the Lords wise disposing of things, so as thereby to quiet their hearts, or else because men are not able fully to comprehend the wisdom of God in his works: Though God hath given men an earnest desire to know them, and good measure of understanding whereby to search into them, yet many times they cannot

find out the end which God intends, it may not be accomplished in their daies, neither can they behold the whole frame of things together; and so the beauty of Gods works proves to them unsearchable and past finding out.

Verf. 12. *I know that there is no good in them, &c.*] That is, I know by proof and experience, that there is no good in or for men, or that there is no good in the creatures; *but for a man to rejoyce*, that is, to live chearfully and contentedly in every estate wherein God is pleased to dispose of him: See the Note, chap. 2. 24. *and to do good in his life*, that is, to live piously and righteously, according to that, Psal. 34. 14. *Depart from evil and do good*; (and indeed such as do so may well rejoyce, though the things that befall them seem never so crosse and contrary) Or, to be beneficial to others, and to relieve others, as good men ought to do in the times of their rejoycing, Neh 8. 10, 12. Or, to do good to himself by a chearfull enjoying the good blessings which God hath allotted him for his portion, according to that, Psal. 49. 18. *And men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thy self.* It is in a word, as if Solomon had said, Since things by Gods determinate counsel are thus liable to unavoidable changes, and yet all things are most sweetly ordered by God, the best way for men is resting upon Gods providence, to live comfortably in every estate; or thus, Though men cannot know the counsel of God, yet this to be sure I know is unquestionable, that the only way for men is without anxious cares, to live comfortably in their present condition, and to leave all care about future events to Gods disposing.

Verf. 13. *And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.*] See the Note again, chap. 2. 24. As God giveth the blessings themselves, so also the power to use them; neither can any man merit either the one or the other at Gods hands.

Verf. 14. *I know that whatsoever God doth it shall be for ever, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it, &c.*] That is, Gods decrees, and works of providence are all certain, and unchangeable and perfect: It is as if he had said, Though mens affections are mutable and changeable, and so are their works, now they love, and by and by they hate, they build and pull down, &c. yet still Gods counsel is accomplished, and there is no resisting of what he pleaseth to do: Or, though we cannot comprehend all the works of God, and the changes that are in the world may seem to imply some imperfection in the providence of God; yet to be sure, as whatever God hath decreed and wils to be done, is alwaies done, and that exactly in regard of every circumstance, as he hath appointed it, men cannot in the least hinder what he will have done; so also whatever God doth is perfect, there is nothing can be added that is defective, nor is there any thing superfluous that may be taken away; God ordereth all things for the best, both for the good of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked; neither can any thing be better then as God doth it. And the drift of this is again from this inevitable course of Gods providence, to perswade men to be content with whatever God doth, and with chearfulnesse to enjoy that which God allots them for their portion. As for the last clause, *And God doth it that men should fear before him*, therein Solomon sheweth what Gods end is in disposing all things that concern the children of men, by his own unresistable providence, according to his eternal unchangeable decrees (which doth further also discover the perfection thereof) namely, *that men*

men should fear before him, that is, that men considering that all things are swayed by the over-ruling power and providence of God, and that they cannot know what will be, nor are able to do any thing of themselves, they might be brought hereby to stand in awe of God, and to be afraid to offend him; not to think to carry on any designments of theirs proudly and presumptuously by their own wisdom and power, wherein they see men usually crossed, nor yet to grow idle in the neglect of means, which God hath appointed men to use, and wherein he doth usually blesse mens endeavours; but to do what God hath appointed herein to be done, and then to fly to God by prayer, as depending wholly upon him, and afterwards quietly to submit to God in all events whatsoever, being patient in adversity, as submitting to Gods will, and thankfull in prosperity, as acknowledging his bounty in all the good that befalls them. This is not indeed the use which men are wont to make of Gods unchangeable and irresistible providence; for they quite contrary are wont to argue, If all must be as God hath decreed, and so all shall be surely beautifull in its season, what need we then care how we live, or what we do? But herein men pervert this truth concerning Gods providence, which tends in its own nature, and according to Gods intention, to teach men to fear the Almighty and all over-ruling power of God.

Verf. 15. *That which hath been is now; and that which is to be, hath already been, &c.* See the Note, ch. 1. 9. This is added here by way of explaining that which was said in the foregoing verse, that *whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever*; for to this end he sheweth, that in all ages past, present, & to come, he hath and will still carry on all the affairs of men with great stability, and correspondency, and sutablenesse one to another; he hath not of late begun to observe that course in the governing the world, which he observes for the present; nor will he deal with future ages otherwise then he hath dealt with those that are past, and that which is at present. And this implies, 1. That in all ages all things are constantly done according to Gods decree. 2. That there is no withstanding or altering in the least that which God hath decreed: and 3. That all things are done successively, according to what hath been done in former times, even from the beginning. As in Gods disposing of all other creatures, the revolutions of the heavens, the changes of the winds, &c. all things are carried on in the same course and order; they have in all ages the same courses and recourses, so God hath provided in his wise administration of humane affairs, that the same things that have formerly been should return again, and so according to the instability & change of times, there should be still the same revolution of things in their several circuits and seasons. And God requireth that which is past; that is, This tenour and manner of his unchangeable providence God alwaies observeth, he restoreth and brings back again that which hath formerly been; those things that passe away, and are as it were thrust forward successively the one by the other (for it is in the Hebrew, *and God requireth that which is driven away*) do often come to passe again & again in after times. And this likewise is alleadged to perswade men to be contented with that which God allots for their portion, whatever it is: and that because it implyeth, 1. That God deals no otherwise with us then he hath dealt with others in former daies, and that which is our condition for the present, will be the condition of others when we are dead & laid in our graves. 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, saith the Apostle, but such*

as is common to man. And 2. That God doth not alwaies keep men in the same estate, but doth usually give them a mixture of adversity and prosperity: After sad times of affliction and sorrow, he many times restores comforts again to them and to their mourners. And on the other side, when men have been raised from a low condition, and have lived a time in so great prosperity, as if there were then no fear of a change, he hath often brought back their sorrows again: All which should teach men to walk humbly with God, to fear him, and quietly to submit to his fatherly providence in all things that befall them.

Verf. 16. *And moreover, I saw under the Sun, the place of judgement, that wickednesse was there, &c.* This Solomon mentions as another vanity, further thereby to prove that happinesse and true contentment is not to be found in any condition here below. Having hitherto shown the vanity of seeking happinesse and full content, either in knowledge, or in worldly pleasures and delights, here he adds, I say, another vanity, and that is the injustice and oppression which was usually found in places of Magistracy, and Courts of Justice, and that not only in the land of Israel, but all the world over. As for the order of Solomons proceeding in this place, some conceive, that intending now to fall upon many particular passages in the lives of men, whereby it may be evidently seen how impossible it is to find full satisfaction in any condition here below; he begins first in this place with the hard and unjust dealing that men usually meet even in Courts of Justice, which should be a means of refuge for those that are wronged. And again others conceive that here he enters upon another general Head, to wit, the vanity of Honours; undertaking to shew that these are so farre from making men happy, that it proves, through the corruption of men, an occasion of much wickednesse, and consequently of much misery, both to themselves and others. But however, the dependance of this upon that which went before, seems to be thus: Having shewn in the foregoing verses, that the only way to enjoy content here in this world, was to depend upon Gods providence in all things whatsoever, and so enjoy comfortably what God allots for their portion; whereas it might be objected, that there seems to be no such providence, because the wicked in power do usually at their pleasure oppress the righteous, he prevents here this objection, by shewing, that though this be indeed a vanity whereto men are subject, yet even in these things there is an over-ruling hand of divine providence, as appears more clearly in the following verse.

Verf. 17. *I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, &c.* This is the censure which Solomon passeth on that vanity of oppression that is amongst those that are in place of power, mentioned in the foregoing verse, to wit, that God will one day judge both good and bad, the oppressor and the oppressed most righteously; and that therefore the righteous should not be discouraged, but patiently wait upon Gods providence, nor should wicked men embolden themselves in their tyranny and oppression, but think before-hand of the judgement that will be hereafter: *for there is a time there*, that is, with God, in the judgement to come; or, before Gods judgement seat, *for every purpose, and for every work*, that is, for every thing men have done, or have designed or intended to do; every thing shall then and there be discovered and judged, and receive its due recompence. It is as if he had said,

As there is a time here, when men doe what they list themselves, so there will be a time hereafter, when God will judge men for all they have done; Or, Though here Magistrates neglect to doe justice, yet there every good and evill action of men shall by the Lord be justly judged. But though this be meant chiefly of the day of the generall Judgement; (as indeed the confusion of things here, a cleare prooffe that there will be a day of Judgement hereafter) yet I conceive even Gods cutting wicked men off here is also included, to wit, that God hath appointed a time, when such men having filled up the measure of their wickednesse, shall receive their just reward from God.

Verf. 18. *I said in mine heart, concerning the estate of the sonnes of men, &c.*] That is, Concerning the order of men, the distinction of the severall ranks and degrees of superiors and inferiors; or, Concerning the condition and manner of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts; As if he had said, I concluded with my selfe, that God suffers that oppression in seats of Justice, mentioned before, ver. 16. that hereby it might evidently appeare, that men in their natural condition are no better then beasts, namely, in that they tear and devoure one another, and never mind any future estate; Or rather thus, I thought with my selfe, that however men in power doe not, and indeed cannot, seriously consider the frailty of their condition, but are as Gods in their own eyes, and do cause men to humble themselves before them, as if they were more then men, yet God can by his word or judgements make it manifest to them, that they are, as to their outward estate, no better then beasts; Or, God will certainly judge them, as is said in the foregoing verse, to the end he might make it manifest, and cause them to see, that they are but beasts, as in regard of their brutish and beastly lives, and their sensual minding of earthly things, so also in regard of their mortality. But now some read this last clause thus, *That they might cleare God, and see that they themselves are beasts*, and then the meaning must be, that when God judgeth wicked men, they might by the light of nature see, that in regard of the brutishnesse of their lives they are no better then beasts, and so might justifie God in his proceedings against them.

Verf. 19. *For that which befalleth the sonnes of men, befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them, &c.*] To wit, hunger, thirst, cold, diseases, the same outward casualties, and at last death; *As the one dieth, so dieth the other*, that is, they are both sure to dye, and in outward regards after the same manner; death is terrible and painfull to both; neither of them know the houre of death, nor what will be outwardly after death; *Yea, they have all one breath*; to wit, in that they breath the same ayre, which is drawne in and breathed out by the same vital organs, the breath both of man and beast is in their nostrils, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast, to wit, in outward respects; men are taken away from all that is in the world, even the greatest of men, as well as beasts, so that in regard of their outward estate they have no preeminence; yea in many outward things there are some beasts excell men, as in the quicknesse of their senses, their strength and agility, &c. *for all is vanity*, that is, fading and nothing, even man as well as beasts; and therefore there is no happinesse to be found here below.

Verf. 21. *Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, &c.*] To wit, to God

God above, to be judged by him, Chap. 12. 7. or that abideth after death, and is immortal, and capable of being taken up to live for ever with God in heaven; *and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?* that is, that falleth and dyeth and perisheth with the body? It is as if he had said, It will be objected, and it is indeed true, that whereas the soule of the beast perisheth, the soules of men are immortal, and may come to enjoy eternal happinesse in heaven, which the soule of the beast is no way capable of; But who knoweth this? that is, How few are there that doe seriously consider or acknowledge this? Men seek to maintaine this life, and follow their sensual appetites, as the beast doth, but their precious soules they generally neglect. Or rather; No man can know this by any natural inquisition, or by arguing from the outward events that befall men and beasts: Or, No man can know it by any sensual experimental knowledge; whoever saw the ascent of the one, or the descent of the other?

Verf. 22. *Therefore I perceive that there is nothing better, then that a man should rejoyce in his own works, &c.*] That is, in those things which a man hath gotten by his labour: He concludes againe as he had done before, that since for outward things there was so little difference betwixt the condition of a man and a beast, therefore the best way was for a man to rejoyce in his own works. See the Notes above, ver. 12, 13. & Chap. 2. 24. *For that is his portion;* See the Note, Chap. 2. 10. *For who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?* That is, who can make him to understand what shall be done here in this world when he is dead? If a man hoard up what he hath, it will be for others, he shall have no benefit by it; neither can he know who shall have it, or what use shall be made of it.

CHAP. IV.

Verf. 1. **S**O *I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sunne,* &c.] Some conceive, that by these words, *I returned and considered*, Solomon intended to shew, that withdrawing his mind from all other things, he set himselfe seriously to consider of those things which are here now added. But I rather conceive, that the drift of this expression is only to shew, that having spoken before of several vanities whereto men in this life are subject, and having in the close thereof shewed how men should remedy this by living comfortably and contentedly in all conditions; he now betook himselfe to consider of other vanities; Or, that having spoken before of oppression and injustice, Chap. 3. 16. he now returned againe to consider of this vanity, yet further thereby to shew how hard a thing it is to live contentedly, as was advised in the close of the foregoing Chapter: And the difference may be conceived to be this, that before he spake only of the oppression that he found in seats of Justice, but here now he speaks more generally of *all the oppressions that are done*, not only amongst Magistrates, but also amongst all other sorts of people: *And behold the teares of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter*, that is, no body that did either afford them any help, or that did so much as speak comfortably to them, to wit, either because they durst not doe it, or because through hard-heartednesse and inhumanity they would not doe it; *And on the side of their oppressors*

for there was power; to wit, in that they were men of might themselves, and had many potent friends to side with them, *but they had no comforter*, which is againe repeated, thereby to imply how great an aggravation of their misery this was; or else with reference to the foregoing clause, to shew how sad their condition was in regard of this circumstance, that though they were altogether unable to defend themselves against their oppressors, yet no body did compassionate their condition, and afford them any comfort. But however the drift of Solomon in mentioning this is to shew the vanity and misery that men in this life are subject to, not only in regard of such as are thus oppressed, but also in regard of others, that must needs be troubled and afflicted, at least if they be men that love Justice and feare God, to see so much injustice and confusion in the world; as we may more plainly see by that which followeth.

Verf. 2. *Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more then the living which are yet alive.*] Either this must be taken as spoken by Solomon according to the judgement of flesh and blood, because great miseries and oppressions make men weary of life, and desirous to dye; Or else as spoken with reference only to the sufferings of this life, to wit, that the dead are in a better condition then the living in this regard, that the dead are out of danger of the misery and sorrow, to which those that live here are continually subject; for otherwise there is no question to be made, but that life, considered simply in it selfe, is better then death, and that to live, though under great oppressions and miseries, may be in many regards better then death, seeing so living men may both by patient suffering, and wel-doing, bring much glory to God and doe much good to their brethren. But what is intended by these expressions, *The dead which are already dead*, and *the living which are yet alive*? I answer, that the drift of these expressions may be only to imply the cause of this assertion, to wit, that the dead are in a better condition then the living, because they are dead, and so are not lyable to such oppressions and sorrowes, and the living are in a worse estate, because living they must needs be subject to these miseries; Or rather by *the dead which are already dead*, may be meant those that are quite dead, and are thereby distinguished from those, that may be said to be dead men only in regard of mortality, or in regard of their being in any desperate condition, out of which there seems to be no hope of recovery, (whence is that of the Prophet concerning the Jewes in Babylon, Isa. 26. 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise*) Or, that are continually dying under the hands of cruel oppressors, that are still devouring them, and as it were, eating them alive; according to that, Mic. 3. 3. *They eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and they break their bones and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the Caldron.* And by *the living which are yet alive*, are meant those that by reason of their oppressors, live in such a languishing condition, that all that can be said of them is, that they are yet alive, and are not quite dead. And so that which Solomon aims at in the Emphasis of these expressions seemes to be this, that those that are quite dead, are happier then those that alwayes live a dying life, because of the cruelty of their oppressors.

Verf. 3. *Yea, better is he then both they, which hath not yet been, &c.*] To wit, in regard

gard of this, that he neither doth feele, nor ever hath felt any misery: But this also must be taken as spoken according to the judgement of sense, and meerly with relation to the miseries, that men in this life are liable to; Doubtlesse not to have been, cannot simply be preferred before a mans being in this life, though herein he undergoe many fore afflictions and sorrowes, and that because if men live in the feare of God, their advancing Gods glory hereby; their enjoying Gods favour, and the hope they have of eternall happinesse, may well overbalance all their misery. But now if we compare the man yet unborne, with him that lives, meerly with respect to a suffering condition, then unquestionably it is not so ill not to be at all, as to live miserably; especially to be miserable as wicked men are, sometimes here, but alwayes when they come to be cast into hell; which is that our Saviour said of Judas that betrayed him, Matth. 26. 24. *It had been good for that man, if he had not been borne.* As for the following words, *Who hath not seen the evill work that is done under the Sunne*, therein the reason is given why the man that never was in the world, is better then both he that lives under oppression and he that is dead, and so is freed from all such miseries, namely, because such a one hath never seen the evill work that is done under the Sunne, which may be meant not only of never undergoing the evill of any such oppressions (for to see evill is often put in the Scripture phrase for suffering evill) but also of never being afflicted with seeing such confusion and oppression in the world.

Vers. 4. *Again I considered all travel and every right work, &c.*] That is, all that is done by men with much industry and labour, and with much exactnesse of skill and cunning and ingenuous invention, all vertuous and commendable enterprizes, all noble endeavours after eminency in any kind whatsoever, *that for this a man is envied of his neighbour*; that is, of others whom herein he excels. Now this is mentioned as another piece of vanity which men in this life are liable to, that as men are often oppressed by the greater sort, so they are also usually envied by the meaner, yea indeed by all sorts of people. And some conceive that this is added here, as an effect of misgovernment, because then those that became eminent through any excellency in them, or for any praise-worthy enterprizes they undertake, are usually through the jealousie of superiors, and the malignant eye of others, exposed to much danger; and so all generous motions are easily nipped. But however this is mentioned as another vanity, as is expressed in the following words, *This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.* And though it is true that envy makes the envious man miserable (see the Notes, Job 3. 2. & Pro, 15. 30.) yet here questionlesse Solomon intends the vanity and vexation of those that are envied, in that it must needs be a great vexation to a man, to find himselfe envied, and hated, and indangered for that, for which he could not but expect to have been highly praised and esteemed; yea it often beats men off from endeavouring to doe well, because such endeavours prove so fruitlesse and vaine.

Vers. 5. *The foole foldeth his hands together, &c.*] To wit, the sloathfull foole; see Pro. 6. 10. *And eateth his own flesh*; which he may be said to doe by way of an hyperbolicall expression, noting that he is brought to such extremity of want, that he is ready to eate his own flesh; or else because he doth indeed bring himselfe to be nothing but skin and bones, partly through diseases he falls into for want of stirring and

and exercising himselfe, like standing waters that are wont to corrupt and putrifie for want of motion; but especially through his wasting of his estate, he comes at last to such extremity of want, that wanting due nourishment and other necessities, he pines away; which is increased by his inward vexing and fretting to see himselfe brought into such streights and miseries, and by his envying the plenty and prosperity which he seeth others enjoy. Yea it may be said also that *he eateth his own flesh*, in that he destroyeth his own children and family, by his not providing for them, or his wasting that which should maintaine them. Now this Solomon mentions as another vanity, and that as it were opposite to the former; As the laborious and industrious man is subject to the vanity of being envied; so the sloathfull man is also subject to other miseries, as grievous as that. And therefore though the sluggard may think it a point of great wisdom, that he by his sloath declines the envy that others undergoe, yet indeed he sheweth himselfe herein to be no better then a foole, because he rebelleth against the Law of God, which enjoynes men to labour, and doth wilfully bring himselfe into a great deale of misery. To all which may be added, that some conceive that Solomon begins here to give some instances of vanities, and evils whereto men are subject, that proceed from themselves, and are not brought upon them by others, as those before mentioned are.

Verf. 6. *Better is an handfull with quietnesse, then both the hands full with travell and vexation of spirit.*] Most Expositors take this to be the sluggards Apology for himselfe, wherein he seeks to excuse his idlenesse, by alledging that a little with quietnesse, that is, with ease, sitting still and doing nothing, a little without that care and toile and labour, that others take, is better then a farre greater estate that is gotten with much roile and travell, and that doth usually expose men to much envy and danger. But I rather take them to be the words of Solomon, inserted here purposely to shew the vanity of all excessive cares and labours for the gathering of great treasures of wealth; whereof he hath formerly spoken, and of which he intended now to speake againe in the following verse: and withall to imply what is the best remedy for this vanity, to wit, sweet contentment with his estate, though it be never so little. See the Notes, Pro. 15. 16. & 17. 1.

Verf. 7. *Then I returned and I saw vanity under the Sunne.*] That is, Another vanity, and quite contrary to the former; for having spoken before of the vanity of sloathfulnesse, ver. 15. in the following verse he speakes againe of the vanity of mens toiling themselves needlessly to heap up riches. As for that transition, *So I returned*, See the Note above, ver. 1. and likewise, Chap. 2. 12.

Verf. 8. *There is one alone, &c.*] That is, one that lives alone by himselfe, and so hath no family to provide for, nor is haply willing that any body should see what he hath, or enjoy any share with him therein; Or rather, *One alone*, that is, one that hath no known heire to succeed him. And indeed both these may be included also in that which is added by way of amplification; *And there is not a second, yea he hath neither child nor brother; yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches*; that is, he is not satisfied; though he should have whatever he seeth with his eyes, yet it would not content him; See the Note, Pro. 27. 20. *Neither saith he, for whom doe I labour, and bereave my soule of good?* to wit, of the benefit and comfort I

might enjoy by living comfortably on that which God hath bestowed on me, and by a chearfull and sociable imparting what I have for the good of others.

Verf. 9. *Two are better then one, &c.*] The better to set forth the vanity of the loneliness of the covetous drudge (mentioned in the foregoing verse) here Solomon undertakes to speak in the commendation of society, and to shew the benefit of that mutual helpfulness which thereby one man may afford to another; *Two are better then one*, as we see in marriage, Gen. 2. 18. and in all other wayes of mens conversing together. *Luk. 10. 1. Because they have a good reward for their labour*; that is, first they reap much benefit mutually one from another in any labour, which they joyntly or severally undertake, to wit, in that their very being together makes them goe on the more chearfully, and they are apt to strive who shall doe best; and in that they are wont by mutuall comforting, and chearing, and exhorting one another, to stirre up each other; and when there is need the one can assist and help the other. Two eyes we use to say see more then one, and many hands make light work. Two may do that which one dares not undertake, and cannot effect; yea two weaker ones thus joyning together, may doe that, which one that is stronger then either of them singly apart by themselves cannot accomplish. And secondly, they have a good reward for that labour of love which they shew one to another, in that they live the more comfortably together, and doe more comfortably enjoy that which they have gotten by their labours by others friendly partaking with them therein; as likewise in that they that are helpfull to others, are the liker in a time of need to have help afforded them by others.

Verf. 10. *For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow.*] That is, if either of them fall, or be ready to fall, the other may stay or beare him up from falling, or raise him up when he is fallen: And this must not only be understood of corporall falls, but also of those that fall into any mistake, or freight, or danger, into any affliction or sorrow, into any error or sinne.

Verf. 12. *And if one prevaile against him, &c.*] That is, against one of the two; then *two shall withstand him*; that is, he that was put to the worst, with the help of his friend or companion, shall be able to resist him: and much more if there be more then one to help him; which may be implied in the following Proverb, *And a three-fold cord is not quickly broken.*

Verf. 13. *Better is a poore and a wise child, then an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.*] Here Solomon proceeds to another Instance of vanity, and that is the vanity of those that are commonly esteemed the happiest of men, to wit, Princes and Kings, in that they are many times foolish and wilfull, and so by that meanes are often deposed from their Kingdomes, yea and that in their old age, when they had been many yeares, even from their childhood, established in their Kingdomes, as is implied in the following verse, *For out of prison he cometh to reigne*, to wit, the wise and poore child, *whereas also he that is borne in his kingdome, becometh poore.* And hereby also is discovered the vanity of all ambitious men, in seeking to climb up to high places.

Verf. 15. *I considered all the living which walk under the Sunne, &c.*] Here another vanity is added, to which Kings are subject; to wit, that though they be never so prudent.

dent and willing to be admonished, yet the people meerly out of ficklenesse and inconstancy, and affection of novelty and change, are wont to grow weary of them, and to slight them, and to adore and worship the rising Sunne, the young Prince that is to succeed them; *I considered all the living which walk under the Sunne*, that is, all the present generation of men living under a present king or government, *with the second child that shall stand up in his stead*, that is, his son and heire, that is to succeed him in the throne; according to that, Dan. 11. 2. *Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia.* It is as if he should have said, I have taken notice that the generality of the common people doe still side with the Prince that is to succeed their old King; If they doe not make defection from him, and set up his son in his stead; yet at least they all close with the heire, their hearts are set upon him, they run after him, and seek his favour; whilst the father is laid by and disregarded, as an uselesse thing. This I conceive is the meaning of this hard passage. But yet for the more thorough understanding hereof we may note, 1. that the present generation of a people under their present king is expressed by these words, *all the living*; either only to set forth that this is the humour of all the people; (because he speaks of the generality of men, therefore he expresseth them under this generall notion of living men) or else to imply that thus it is in all nations living upon the face of the earth; or else, lastly, to intimate the reason of their siding with the young heire, namely, because the father is grown old, and hath not long to live, whereas his sonne is now growing up into the world; and so knowing they must live and be preserved by the living and not by the dead, therefore it is that they all worship him, who must be to them, as they hope, the breath of their nostrils: and 2. that those words, *which walk under the Sunne*, may either be another expression whereby Solomon would set forth that this is the humour of the generality of the people; or else may have respect to that which follows, and so are intended to shew, that the generality of the people do *walk with the second child that shall stand up in his stead*, that is, that they so joyne themselves to him, that they favour, flatter, applaud, and honour him, wholly in a manner neglecting his father.

Verf. 16. *There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them, &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, before the men of the present age; Or before the father and the sonne or other heire that succeeds him in the throne, mentioned in the foregoing verse. Now that which is said here, that *there is no end of all the people that have been before them*, may be understood three severall wayes; either 1. that there is no end of the common peoples ficklenesse and inconstancy, of their contents against the present Governours, of their restless desires after change, and ambitious endeavour to creep into the favour of him that is to succeed the present Prince: the people never put an end or a stop to this vanity, but it is an hereditary disease that passeth from one generation to another; the Prince whom they honoured and adored when he was to reigne, the same they dislike and cannot endure when he comes to reigne. Thus it hath been in all foregoing ages, thus it is for the present, and thus it will be in all succeeding generations: Or 2. That there is no end, that is, no rest or satisfaction to the desires of people concerning their Prince, no thorough stay or acquiescency of the hearts of the people in any of their Princes; be they ne-

ver so wise or well-deserving, they will not rest satisfied in them, but will grow weary of them, and joyne themselves to those that are to succeed them: Or 3. that there hath been an infinite number of people in all foregoing generations that have dealt thus with their Princes. It hath not been an error whereinto some few have fallen, or the error of some one age, but it hath been the generall distemper of the common people in all ages, that how obsequiously soever they have carried themselves to their Kings at their first rising, yet afterwards by degrees they have growne weary of them, and have been still for the new Kings that were to succeed them: *They also that come after shall not rejoyce in him*, that is, the new King that is now so doated on shall be cast off and rejected in future times, as his predecessors have been; as now they cast off the father to side with the sonne, so in the following age, they will for some reason or other cast off the sonne to side with the grand child. *Surely, this also is vanity and vexation of spirit*; that is this, that people are so unstable in their affections to their Princes, that by this meanes the state of Kings and Princes rests upon such uncertaine grounds, and that they are usually thus causelessly cast off by the people, and live to see another preferred so before them, is a vanity on every side, and must needs be a trouble, grieve and vexation to Princes.

C H A P. V.

Verf. 1. **K** *Keep thy foote when thou goest to the house of God, &c.*] Two severall wayes we may conceive of Solomons inserting that which here followes concerning the worship of God; for, 1. His aime might be by teaching men how to worship God in a right manner; to imply a higher and stranger vanity then any he had yet spoken of, namely, the vanity that may be in the manner of mens worshipping God. So true it is, that all things under the Sunne are vanity, that if they look not the more narrowly to themselves, even in their Religion and worshipping of God, there may be much vanity found: And this Solomon doth here covertly intimate, by giving men this caveat, that they should beware of this vanity; Or 2. His aime here may be to prescribe the only true remedy for all the foregoing vanities; Having shown that all things under the Sunne are meere vanity and vexation of spirit, by declaring that neither knowledge, nor pleasures, nor honours can make a man truly blessed, or yield a man compleat tranquility of mind, no not the royalty of Kings and Princes, which is the highest he could goe for worldly felicity, he makes here a digression to shew, wherein notwithstanding we may attaine happinesse and tranquility of mind, not only hereafter, but also in this life, and that is by the true feare of God, one chiefe part whereof is Gods worship. Only we must then be carefull that we worship God in a right manner; least otherwise our very worshipping of God proves no better then vanity: To which end he gives us this Caveat, *Keep thy foote when thou goest to the house of God*, that is, either to the Temple, or the Synagogues, and by keeping the foote is meant, that because men are apt to erre and offend in duties of Gods worship, therefore when they goe to the house of God, they should watch carefully over themselves, to observe in what manner they enter upon and performe holy duties; and to look to it that they doe no way offend therein; even as

men that goe in dangerous wayes, are wont to look very warily to their steps that they doe not stumble and fall, so they that undertake to worship God in the holy assemblies of his people, must be very carefull that they goe thither with due preparation of heart, that they behave themselves there with all reverence, modesty and sobriety, that they refraine all worldly and sinfull thoughts, and take care that their senses and outward behaviour, their hearts, thoughts, intentions, and affections, be ordered in a right manner: yea and there may be also in this expression an allusion to that custome of the Priests washing their feete when they went into the Tabernacle or Temple, Exod. 30. 19, 20. Whereby was signified with what pure hearts and undefiled consciences, purged from the pollution of sinne by faith and repentance, men should enter upon the holy duties of Gods worship; men of uncleane spirits being as unfit to enter into Gods house, as men with uncleane dirty feete are fit to goe into the neatest roomes of a Princes Palace: *And be more ready to heare*, that is, to heare and learne and obey the word of God, *then to offer the sacrifice of fooles*, that is, of wicked men, voyd of grace and true understanding; who are said to offer the sacrifices of fooles, because there can be no greater folly, then to think so sillily of God, as that he minds sacrifices in themselves, or is pleased at any time with the hypocritical sacrifices of those whose hearts and lives are wicked; yet some understand this also of those that are not carefull to learne from the word of God, how they ought to worship him, and then to keep close thereto, but think to please God with their own inventions; *for they consider not that they doe evill*, to wit, in giving God sacrifices without obedience; so that indeed they doe they know not what, they never think how they displease God with such hypocritical services, yea think that they doe very much please God with their sacrifices, whereas indeed he loaths and abhorres them.

Vers. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, &c.*] To wit, In praying to God in his house and Sanctuary (for having spoken in the foregoing verse, of hearing and obeying Gods word, here he gives direction for another part of Gods worship, which is prayer) Let not thy tongue run before thy wit in praying, doe not speake cursorily and unadvisedly, but prepare thy selfe before hand, *and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God*, that is, doe not only avoyd uttering any thing rashly, which you never thought of before you spake it, but beware also of blurting out any thing in prayer so soone as ever it comes into your thoughts, but with serious and mature deliberation think well before hand of what you meane to say to God, and so set your thoughts in order with trembling and feare; All which is enjoyned that men may not beg any thing of God thorough rashnesse and unadvisednesse, that is unlawfull, inconvenient or hurtfull, nothing but what is according to his will, and in such a manner as he requires, with faith and fervency of spirit, with all humility, modesty, sobriety and reverence; *For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth*, that is, there is an infinite distance and disproportion between God and thee; God is the most high God, the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, Isa. 57. 15. whereas thou art a poor, earthly, vild wretch, a weak fraile creature, made of the dust, and dwelling on the dust. This I say is the chiefe thing that is intended in this expression. But yet God being in heaven, may also imply, 1. that God is omniscient, from above behold-
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ing all things that are done here below, Psal. 11. 4. and therefore see how all men behave themselves in his presence. 2. that he is Almighty, ruling and governing the whole world and the fulnesse thereof, 2 Chron. 20. 6. and therefore able to punish at his pleasure all that behave not themselves in his service, as they ought to doe; and 3. that he is infinitely Holy, therefore one that will be served in a pure and holy manner, Isa. 57. 15. In all which respects it is fit therefore that men should avoyd all rashnesse and unadvisednesse in calling upon God, *therefore let thy words be few*; As if he had said, That thou mayest the better avoyd all rash uttering of any thing that may be offensive to God in thy prayers, be carefull to avoyd all tedious prolixity, and all heartlesse and unnecessary repetitions in praying; Neither often nor long praying, nor yet frequent repetitions in prayer, so they come from a holy & fervent spirit, are here forbidden; for we are expressly commanded to pray without ceasing, 1 Thes. 5. 17. And we find that our Saviour did sometimes spend whole nights in prayer; and we find that the holy servants of God have sometimes pressed the same request againe and againe in prayer, as we may see, Dan. 9. 18, 19. Even our Saviour himselfe did so, when he prayed before his passion, that if it were possible that cup might passe from him, three severall times, *saying the same words*, as the Evangelist hath expressly noted, Matth. 26. 44. See also, Joh 17. 14, 16. That which is here forbidden therefore is only this, that men should not lengthen out their prayers with a great deale of vaine babling, and with a clamorous and vaine ingeminating of the same thing, as thinking that God is pleased meerely with the length of our prayers, or is moved with the meere pressing of our requests with many words, which is that our Saviour also saith, Matth. 6. 7. *When ye pray use not vaine repetitions, as the heathen; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.*

Verf. 3. *For a dreame cometh through the multitude of businesse, and a fooles vain is known by multitude of words.*] As if he had said, As multitude of businesse produceth usually many vaine and foolish dreames, so multitude of words doth as usually produce and discover much folly: see the Note, Pro. 10. 19. whereby is implied, that if men endeavour to lengthen out their prayers, as thinking therewith to please God, being the while ignorant and heartlesse hypocrites, that pray without understanding and sanctified affections, there will be much foolish and vaine babling in such prayers.

Verf. 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, deferre not to pay it, &c.*] See the Notes, Deut. 23. 21. & Numb. 30. 2. *For he hath no pleasure in fooles*, that is, he is highly offended with such men, as thus neglect to make good their promises to God. And these he termeth fooles, because it is egregious folly in men, to be of such a vaine fickle spirit, as to be very forward in making vowes to God, and then afterwards to be altogether carelesse of performing what they have vowed: 2. Because such men doe no lesse then mock and deceive God, and it is therefore most grosse folly by doing thus to hazard Gods displeasure, who is able every moment to destroy them for it, especially to think to please God with that which will so highly provoke him; and 3. Because it is sinfull and wicked; their rashnesse in vowing discovereth, that they never thought reverently enough of God; if they be slack in paying their vowes, this sheweth their dead-heartedness and cold affections; and if they pay them not at all,

all, this is an evidence of their deep hypocrisie and contempt of God. Even the great men of the world will not endure thus to be mocked.

Verf. 5. *Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow, and not pay.*] To wit, Because men are before they have vowed free whether they will vow or no, and therefore not to vow will be no sin, whereas to vow and not to pay, will be a great sin. As for that which is said, Psal. 76. 11. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God* (which may seeme to imply that vows are enjoined) the meaning of that is no more then if he had said, If you make any vowes to God, be sure to pay them: even as that of the Apostle, Eph. 4. 26. *Be ye angry, and sin not*, may be understood thus, If ye be angry, be sure that you sin not in your anger.

Verf. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, &c.*] That is, Restrain thy mouth, which of it selfe is so apt to overflow, and suffer it not to bring the guilt of sin upon thee, to wit, by rash vowing, or by excusing the breaking of the vowes, which thou hadst rashly made; for as in the foregoing verses Solomon urged the carefull performance of vowes made, so here he presseth the care of avoyding all rashnesse in vowing, whereby men doe often make unlawfull vowes, and often repent of what they have vowed, and then think by some shifts or other, to evade the obligation of the vow, and to excuse themselves: *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin*; As if he should have said, Suffer not so little a member of thy body to bring sin (and so ruine) upon thy whole man, both body and soule: for *flesh* is here taken for the whole man by a Synecdoche; as in that, Rom. 3. 20. *By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*. And this expression may seeme to be used to intimate, either 1. that men should not be over-hasty to vow, because men thorough the weaknesse of their nature are over-apt to breake their vowes, though the spirit be ready yet the flesh is weake, and so their vowes prove no better then snares to them; or else that when they have broken their vowes, they must not think to excuse their sin herein by alledging the strength and prevalency of their fleshly corruptions: or 3. that rash vowes are usually made, not upon serious and spirituall grounds, but for carnall and fleshly reasons, not that men may advance the glory of God, or that they promote their own spirituall good, but that they may gratifie themselves in some carnall interest, and carry on some sinfull designe. As for the following words, *Neither say thou before the Angel, that it was an error*, that may be understood severall wayes; for 1. By *the Angel*, may be meant the holy Angels (the singular number being put for the plural) that are appointed to attend Gods people, and so observe all our behaviour in Gods worship. And then we may conceive thus of this clause, that as in 1 Cor. 11. 10. women are enjoined to have their heads covered in the publick Assemblies, least they should otherwise give offence to the Angels, so here all are enjoined to take heed of thinking to excuse the breaking of the vowes they have made, by pretending that they erred in making those vowes, least the holy Angels should be grieved at this their folly. Or 2. by *the Angel*, may be meant the Lord Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, Mal. 3. 1. See the Note, Exod. 23. 20. and then the meaning is this, Say not before Christ, who is present in all the Assemblies of his people, and who understands fully what thy intention in vowing was, *that it was an error*, that is, think not to excuse the not performing of thy vow, by saying,

saying, I made this vow unadvisedly, or ignorantly, it was a mistake, I did not think it would have been so hard a matter to have kept it. Or 3. by the Angel may be meant the Priest, who is called the Angel, or the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts, Mal. 2. 7. towards the people; And then we must understand it thus; Because the Priests were to require of the people the performance of their vows, and because when men had sworn rashly and unadvisedly, they were by the law of God to carry a peace offering to the Priest, which for their atonement was to be offered to the Lord, (for which see the Notes, Lev. 5. 4, 5.) therefore men are here enjoined that when they have made a vow, and then afterwards begin to repent and to grudge at what they have vowed, they should not then think to save up the matter by going to the Priest, and confessing that it was an error that they had so vowed, and so save somewhat by giving a peace-offering instead of some greater matter they had vowed, expecting thereby to be absolved from their vow; and that because it would be most egregious folly and wickedness thus to think to delude God, and to abuse his Messenger and Minister. See the Note also, Pro. 20. 25. *Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice; that is, at these thy vaine excuses, and destroy the work of thine hands; that is, all that thou hast gotten with the labour of thy hands; and so by withholding a little thou shouldest bring ruine upon thy whole estate: Or it may be meant of Gods crossing and disappointing him in all his enterprizes and affaires; or particularly in those his endeavours, for the prospering whereof he had made those inconsiderate vows.*

Verf. 7. *For in the multitude of dreams and many words, there are also divers vanities, &c.*] See the Note before, verf. 3. For as there we are advised to avoyd rashnesse and forwardness in speaking, lest that produce in prayer much vaine babling, so here also, that thereby we may avoyd rashnesse in vowing: and that because in rash vows there is usually much vanity, as that mens vows are many times sinful, foolish and unprofitable, and that they often repent of what they have vowed, and keep not faith with God; and so by that meanes, the Lord is offended, men are scandalized, and some calamity befalls those that have thus vowed. As for the last clause, *But feare thou God,* (which some also conceive is spoken with reference to the Angel mentioned before, ver. 6. to wit, the Lord Christ,) this is prescribed as the means whereby men may be brought rightly to performe all religious worship, and so particularly that of making vows; for they that truly feare God, will neither vow rashly, nor be carelesse of performing what they have so solemnly promised to the Lord.

Verf. 8. *If thou seeest the oppression of the poore, &c.*] Two wayes I find given by Expositors for the connexion of these words with that which went before; and they are both very probable: The first is this, that having in the foregoing part of the Chapter pressed men to feare God, and to worship God in a right manner, as the only remedy of that vanity, to which men are subject here in this world, and the only way wherein true happiness is to be found, because against this it might be objected, that a mans tranquility may seeme hereby to be little mended, in regard the poore, especially those that are religious, are so usually wronged and oppressed by those that are too mighty for them; and if they fly to the Magistrates and Courts of Justice for remedy,

medy, there they shall find Justice perverted, and their oppressions rather encreased then eased, this objection is here answered, by shewing that God doth take notice of this, and therefore will undoubtedly right them in his own due time. The second is this, that having hitherto in this Chapter taught men to prevent the vanities that are frequently found in mens performing the duties of Gods worship, so here now he teacheth them to avoyd the vanity of being discontented and discouraged with the oppressions and injustice that are found in the world. *If thou seest the oppression of the poore, and violent perverting of judgement and justice in a Province, marvell not at the matter;* that is, be not amazed or astonished, as if it were a strange thing that this should be, or that God should suffer or order it to be so; marvell not at it, so as to think hardly of God, to be discontented and discouraged, to distrust his providence, or to grow weary of his service; *For he that is higher then the highest, regardeth that is, God, who is higher then all the Potentates of the world, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Higher then the Kings of the earth, Psal. 89. 27.* doth from heaven, his high and holy place, take speciall notice of all such things, and will in due time right the poore against their oppressors; *And there be higher then they,* to wit, the holy Angels, whom God sets as his subordinate Ministers over Kings and Kingdomes, to defend the righteous, and to execute his judgements upon tyrants and oppressors.

Verf. 9. *Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all, &c*] That is, That which ariseth out of the earth by the labours of the husbandman in the tillage and planting of his grounds, and the breeding of cattell, is for the supply of all sorts of men, and all things that are necessary for the subsistence of men. Many nations have been without money, but the fruits of the earth they could never be without; *The King himselfe is served by the field,* that is, he and his are supported and maintainted by such provisions as arise from the labours of the husbandman: For the right understanding of Solomons aime in these words, we must know, 1. that he doth here returne to his former discourse concerning the vanity of all things under the Sonne. Having in the foregoing part of the Chapter inserted a passage concerning the fear and worship of God, as that which can only render men happy, and remedy the vanities whereto the life of man is incident; after this Digression he returnes againe to what he was before speaking of, and falls upon discovering the vanity of all kind of riches, wherewith very many doe look for happinesse: Only first by way of transition, he sheweth here the excellency of husbandry above all other wayes of gain whatsoever, by shewing the benefit that redounds to men by the fruits of the earth, above all pecuniary possessions whatsoever: and then afterwards he discovereth the vanity of both: and 2. that withall there may be in these words some respect also to that which was said in the foregoing verse, concerning the oppression and injustice of those that are in high places: this which is said here in the commendation of husbandry, tending to shew, that the greatest that are, stand in need of the meanest amongst the people; as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 12. 21. *The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you,* so that when great ones oppresse the poore, by whom the earth is tilled, they doe they know not what, because both King and Nobles too must needs want bread, and other necessities, if husbandry be destroyed.

Verf. 10. *He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, &c.*] Divers learned Expositors hold, that the drift of these words is to prove the excellency of the fruits of the earth above money, in that these yield a real benefit to those that take paines for them, whereas silver and gold can never fill a mans belly nor cloath his back, &c. And accordingly they understand also the following clause, *nor he that loveth abundance with increase*, that he that loveth abundance of money, can never be satisfied with the increase thereof; he may starve for hunger and dye for cold in the midst of all his heaps of gold and silver: But I rather understand this of the insatiablenesse of covetous mens desires; *He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver*; that is, he will never think he hath enough of it, (that sheweth the vanity of that kind of wealth) *nor he that loveth abundance, with increase*; that is, he that loveth abundance of all other things wherein consists the wealth of rich men, will never be satisfied, though his estate be never so exceedingly encreased: which may also be intended more peculiarly to imply the vanity of mens seeking to increase their estate by the oppression of others.

Verf. 11. *When goods increase, they are increased that eat them, &c.*] To wit, because the greater estates men have in their hands, the more servants, and the greater families they must needs have, the greater resort there will be to their houses of friends and others that will hang upon them; and indeed no man had greater experience of this then Solomon had, concerning whose numerous family and huge expences, see 1 King. 4. 22, 23, 26, 27, 28. *And what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?* Which may be understood two severall wayes; either first that the owners thereof have no other benefit by their estates, but the seeing of them spent by others; himselfe enjoyeth the least part of them, only he seeth others consume them; which as it may be some comfort to him, if he be of a free and generous spirit, it being a more blessed thing to give then to receive, Act. 20. 35. so on the other side, if he be of a base and sordid spirit, it must needs be a vexation to him, to see his goods so wasted and consumed; Or secondly, that they enjoy no other good by their abundance, but only the beholding of them, to wit, as their own, that they can look upon their houses, and lands, and goods, and say in their hearts, All this is mine; for otherwise a servant or stranger may please himselfe with looking on his houses and gardens, and all other his possessions as well as he.

Verf. 12. *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much, &c.*] To wit, Because if he eat little, yet being wearied with hard labour, that will make him sleep soundly, and if he eat much, by reason of his healthfulnesse and labour his stomach will digest it, and so his sleep will not be broken with crude and hurtfull humours, fuming up from his stomach into his braine. And besides, his labour doth so take up his thoughts, that by this meanes his mind is much freed from those carking thoughts and coveting desires, which render other mens sleep lesse sweet unto them, as it followes in the next words, *But the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep*; to wit, the abundance of his wealth, which, through much businesse, anxious cares and feares, and gripes of conscience, when they have been gotten unjustly, doth break his sleep; or, as may seeme by the former clause, to which this is opposed, the abun-

abundance that he eats, wherewith overcharging his stomach, he is much disordered thereby, and either cannot sleep at all, or at least sleepest very unquietly.

Verf. 13. *There is a sore evil, which I have seen under the Sun, &c.*] As if he should have said, Amongst the many evils and miseries incident to men in regard of their riches, this is above others *an evil disease, or a sore evil*, a very grievous and bitter evil, namely *riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*, to wit, either because they prove an occasion of much sin to them, making them proud, idle, luxurious, &c. or, because they are much vexed and afflicted with cares and fears concerning their riches; or because they expose them to envie and violence and rapine, insomuch that many times they lose their lives by reason of their riches, to wit, by thieves and robbers, by tyrants, and sometime by the treacherous violence of their own children and servants. Now when a man shall hoard up and with much care keep his riches, as expecting much happinesse thereby, and to live joyfully without any fear of want for himself, or for his children, and quite contrary to his expectation they shall prove the occasion of his ruine, this must needs be esteemed a sore evil.

Verf. 14. *But those riches perish by evil travel, &c.*] As if he had said, But besides this forementioned evil, that riches are usually kept to the owners hurt, there is another vanity whereto riches are subject, and that is, that many times too they cannot be kept, but they perish *by evil travel*; the meaning whereof is, either that they perish and come to nothing, though a man doth extreamly afflict himself with sore travel and toil both to encrease and advance his estate and to preserve what he hath gotten; or else that they perish by his own folly and improvident courses, or by his successles travels, and the losses that befall him in his trading and dealing in the world, when nothing that he undertakes thrives in his hands, or by the fraud and violence of others: *And he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand*, that is, the father when he dieth hath nothing to leave his son, (and this must needs be very grievous to him, fathers being usually more sollicitous for their children then for themselves) or, the son hath nothing to live upon, when his father is dead, which indeed is most grievous to the sons of rich men, because they are seldom brought up to labour, or to any way or trade of living, whereby they may know how to sustain themselves.

Verf. 15. *As he came forth of his mothers womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, &c.*] This is added as another vanity in riches, to wit, that though men do not lose their wealth whilst they live, yet to be sure they must part withall they have when they die: they shall carry nothing with them of that which they have gotten by their hard labour.

Verf. 16. *And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go; &c.*] As if he had said, Though those before mentioned verf. 13, 14 be the greater evils, to wit, when a mans riches are kept for his hurt, or when he lives to see them all lost and gone, yet it is a sore evil also, (to wit to a covetous man, that loveth and trusteth in his riches) that when he dieth he must part with all he hath, that his riches will not keep him from death, nor can be any advantage to him in death: *And what profit*

for that which is nothing, or that which soon comes to nothing; As he that catcheth at the wind, he grasps the air that will be found to be nothing, so he that laboureth for riches, wearieth himself for that which hath no substance of true felicity in it; And as it is not possible for a man to keep or hold the wind, so neither can a man keep his riches, when he hath gotten them: Or he that heapeth up riches may be said to have laboured for the wind, because he hath laboured for those things, that will be gone in an instant, as if they were blown away with the wind. See the Notes Prov. 11. 29. and Job. 15. 2.

Vers. 17. *All his dayes also he eateth in darkness, &c.*] That is, even whilst he lives he doth not enjoy himself or his state with any comfort, but lives sordidly and miserably in the midst of his abundance, basely and wretchedly, like one that is a true prisoner and slave to his riches: insomuch that whereas at meat men love however to be chearful, it is not so with him, but even then *he eateth in darkness*, that is, in secret, alone by himself, as being ashamed that any body should see how mean and miserable his provision is, and loath that any body should have any share with him; and so lives like a poor man, that he may die a rich man; Or, he eateth with continuall solicitous care, vexation and fretting; grudging at the very meat which himself is forced to eat, though it be as course and little as may be, and many ways disquieting himself about his estate; And he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness, where if by his sickness we understand, as some do, onely his covetousness, then the meaning is onely this, that this spiritual distemper doth bring upon him a great deal of sorrow and anguish of spirit, a great deal of wrath and anger, fretting and discontent, as namely at his losses and crosses, his expenses and miscarriage of businesses; But if by his sickness be meant bodily sickness, then we must thus understand this clause, either that his covetousness doth not onely work in him much grief and anger and vexation, but also by this means much weakness and sickness; or else, that when he comes to be sick, he is grieved, and angered and disquieted with himself, because he cannot toil to encrease his wealth, as he used to do; or rather, because he seeth he must die, and part with his wealth which he so dearly loveth, and it even vexeth him to see his children and friends stand gaping for what he must leave behind him, and it may be to think how he hath punished himself to encrease that, which now will be lavished away by others.

Vers. 18. *It is good and comely for one to eat, &c.*] For this and the next verse, See the Notes, Chap. 2. 24. and 3. 12, 13, 22.

Vers. 20. *For he shall not much remember the dayes of his life, &c.*] This may be read, according as it is in the Margin of our Bibles, *Though he giveth not much, yet he remembreth the dayes of his life, because God answereth him in the joy of his heart*; and the meaning then is, that though God giveth the man before mentioned in the foregoing verse, that makes use of what he hath, but a small portion of these outward things yet he remembreth that he hath but a few dayes to live, and so a little will serve his turn, and that, as he finds by experience, God can give gladness with a little food, as well as with a great deal, Act. 14. 17. and so he chearfully takes his part of that little he hath; Or, he remembreth that all his dayes God giveth him

comfort and joy in that little he hath; which sweeteneth his small pittance to him, Psal. 57. 15. and Prov. 17. 1. and so he with a glad and contented mind makes use of that which God hath given him. But if we read it, as it is in our Translation, then we must understand it thus, for he shall not much remember the dayes of his life; that is, He that doth in this manner cheerfully enjoy the estate that God hath conferred upon him, he shall not be overmuch troubled; first with remembering the labours, and sorrows, and afflictions of his life, either what he hath gone through in the time past, or what he doth for the present endure, or what may befall him hereafter; it cannot be but he must needs be in some degree sensible of these things, but he shall not be much perplexed nor disquieted with these things, not so far as to make the dayes of his life seem tedious and irksome, and wearisome to him; Or secondly, with remembering the shortness of his dayes, and consequently with the fear of his approaching end; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart; that is, because God fully satisfieth his desires in the joy and cheerfulness that he affords him, in making use of what he hath to his own and others good, and to Gods glory; or, because God answereth all his labours with contentment and joy proportionable thereunto, and which are a full compensation of all the pains he hath taken, and sorrows he hath gone through; So that the meaning of this passage is briefly this, that the man to whom God gives power to make use of his estate, as occasion requires, is so intent upon the delight he takes in his present enjoyments, that this expels all such sorrow thoughts, as are before mentioned, out of his mind; His joy and hearty contentment in his present estate makes him forget the trouble of his travels past or present, and freeeth him from all vexations, cares and fears about what is to come.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. **T**here is an evil which I have seen under the sun, &c.] Some Expositors conceive that Solomon here proceeds to speak of another vanity, besides what he hath spoken of before, that doth commonly attend riches to wit, that rich men many times do not onely make no use of what they have, but besides that they gather their estates, as it proves in the conclusion, for those that are meer strangers to them, as is expressed in the following verse. But I rather think that he doth here further declare what he had said before chap. 5. 19. to wit, that it is not in mans power with comfort to enjoy what God hath given him, but that this also is the free gift of God, namely by shewing that it is a common ordinary thing in the world for men to have abundance of these outward things, and never to take any comfort in them, as is largely set forth in the following words.

Ver. 2. **A** man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, &c.] That is, substance and goods of all sorts, together with honour and great place in the world; so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth; that is, he hath abundantly enough of all things that his soul can desire; though through covetousness he may never think he hath enough, yet the truth is he hath store of all things that he can reasonably and justly desire, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof; that

that is, God in his just wrath and displeasure against him gives him not a heart to enjoy any part of what he hath for his comfort and delight, but out of a base nig-gardly mind, incessant cares and labours, and jealousies and fears, and disquiet in his family, he cannot eat his bread in quiet, or at least he will not take any pleasure in any thing he hath; *but a stranger eateth it*, that is, whereas he hath not power comfortably to make use of some part of what he hath, a stranger comes and de-vours, and wastes and swalloweth it up all; which may be meant of some enemy or man of violence that spoileth him of his estate, or rather of one that was no way allyed to him, nor ever known by him, and so one that never laboured for it, that after his death cometh by some means to possesse all his wealth, which he with so much penuriousness had scraped together. *This is vanity and it is an evil disease*, that is, thus to do is not onely a vain and fruitless thing, but it also brings upon a man much wo and misery. See the Notes also chap. 5. 17.

Verf. 3. *If a man beget an hundred children, &c.* Having spoken of covetous men, that having no children leave their estates to strangers, here he sheweth that in case such men have never so many children and live never so long, yet this renders their condition never a whit the better, but rather the worse. Some indeed conceive that Solomons aime here is to shew the vanity of many children, and long life; when men are so poor, that they have not wherewith to sustain them and theirs whilst they live, nor to provide for a decent buriall when they are dead. But I think it is clear that Solomon goeth still on in setting forth the misery of the covetous miser, that hath enough, but cannot find in his heart to spend any thing in a manner of it. *If a man beget an hundred children*, that is, if he have never so many chil-dren; In those dayes when men had many wives, they had oftentimes exceeding many children; as we read that Ahab had threescore and ten Sons. 2 King. 10. 1. and Gideon as many, besides Abimelech. Judg. 8. 30, 31. and that Rehoboam had four-score and eight Sons and daughters. 2 Chro. 11. 21. But here a definite number is put for an indefinite, as Pro. 17. 10. *A reproof entrench more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool.* A covetous mans having many children yields him no com-fort, but onely encreaseth his cares; *and living many years, so that the dayes of his years be many*, that is, suppose also that such a man live to be a very old man (in the expression that Solomon here useth, he seems by way of correcting himself to call long life many dayes rather than many years;) *and his soul be not filled with good*, that is, if notwithstanding such a man out of the insatiableness of his covetousness thinks he hath never enough, or by reason of his penurious pinching of himself or some curse of God upon his estate, he never enjoyeth any comfortable satisfying portion of what he hath; *and also that he have no burial*, that is, no decent burial; to wit, either because out of base covetousness he neither living nor dying provided for it, and being a hated man, his heirs, that onely gaped after his goods, do whol-ly neglect it; or because falling into the hands of thieves and robbers he is by them drowned, or slain and cast into a ditch, as was foretold concerning Jehoiakim, that in regard his eyes and his heart were not but for his covetousness, he should there-fore be buried *with the burial of an asse*, See Jer. 22. 17, 18, 19. or because for some crime he is sentenced thereto, or it may be through covetousness doth make away him-

himself, or some other such like reason; I say, that an untimely birth, that is dead born or dieth as soon as ever it is born, is better then he, that is, in a better condition to wit, in regard of outwards respects, and that because such a man enjoyeth not the comforts of this life any more then the abortive, but then on the other side he endureth a great deal of misery in the world which the other doth not, and it is better to be born and die at once, then to live long in vexation and misery, and to die without an honourable burial, as is more fully explained in the following verses.

Verf. 4. *For he cometh in with vanity, &c.*] Here the reason is shown why an untimely birth is in a better condition, then a covetous muck-worm that taketh no comfort in what he enjoyeth, and is obscurely buried, yea though he have many children and live many years, namely because the abortive untimely birth, though he enjoyeth not the benefit of this life, yet he is not withall troubled with the miseries of this life, and so as Solomon concludes in the end of the next verse, he enjoyeth more rest then the other doth, for he, that is, the abortive, cometh in with vanity, to wit, in that he seems in mans judgement to have been conceived and born in vain and to no purpose, because he reapes no good of his being conceived and born, but it is nothing, and as if he had never been, See the Note, Job 3. 16 and departeth in darkness, to wit, as dying in the womb, or presently after it is born, and so passing from the darknesse of the womb to the darknesse of the grave, is privately put into the earth and buried, no body in a manner taking any notice of it, and his name shall be covered with darknesse, that is, he is presently quite forgotten, as if he had never been.

Verf. 5. *Moreover, he hath not seen the Sun, &c.*] This also is spoken of the abortive, to wit, that never living to behold the light, he never felt in himself, nor saw in others the corruptions and miseries, that all men under the Sun are liable to; as he never enjoyed any good in the world, so neither did he endure any evil, at least his misery began and ended together; nor known any thing, to wit, in that he never had use either of sense or reason, and so as he never experimentally knew what was good, so neither likewise what was evil; and as he never enjoyed good, so he never desired it, and consequently was never afflicted because he had not what he desired. See the Notes, Chap. 4. 2, 3. *this hath more rest then the other*, as if he had said, In these regards, the untimely birth is in a better condition then the covetous man before mentioned verf. 3. to wit, because the untimely birth hath more rest then he: seeing he is at rest from the very womb, whereas the covetous man lives a toilsome, unquiet life all his dayes.

Verf. 6. *Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, &c.*] Because it might be objected, that long life is in it self a blessing, and that therefore the covetous man is at least in this regard in a better condition then the abortive child, because he out-lives him so many years, to this Solomon answers here; yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, that is, suppose a man could live so long; yet hath he seen no good, that is, such a man doth never live one chearful hour in all that time, nor never taketh any true delight or content in any thing, but his whole life is spent in continuall vexation and misery; and consequently therefore his life is no advantage to him, but the lengthening of his dayes doth onely lengthen out his misery; do not all

go to one place? as if he should have said, And besides to the grave he must at last come as well as the abortive, and then, considering that his riches cannot secure him from death, and that he can carry nothing with him of all that he hath gotten, there is no difference betwixt him and the abortive; or if there be any difference, the covetous man that lived so long is in the worst condition, because it is such a vexation to him, when he goes to the grave, that he must part with his wealth, upon which for so many years together his heart hath been set. And why then should men toil and pine themselves to heap up riches? were it not much better with content and comfort to make use of that estate which God hath bestowed upon them?

Verf. 7. *All the labour of man is for his mouth, &c.* [That is, All that man gets by his labour, or all that man aims at in his labour, is for his bodily sustenance and the support of his life by providing things necessary & convenient for him: For all things requisite for the necessary maintenance of mans life, which the Apostle distributed into those two particulars of food and raiment, 1 Tim. 6. 8. are here comprehended under this one expression, that *all is for his mouth*, and that because food convenient, meat and drink is of all things most necessary a man will sell the very house he dwells in and the clothes upon his back to get bread to eat. See the Note, Prov. 16. 26. *yet the appetite* (or, as it is in the Hebrew, *the soul*) *is not filled*, the meaning whereof is, either, 1. that mans appetite can never be so satisfied with meat and drink, but that within a while his hunger and thirst will return again, nor will it be so satisfied, but that still it will be affecting new variety of dainties. And then the drift of the words may be to imply the vanity of mans labor here in this world, or the vanity of riches even then when the owners thereof do make use of them, in that all being for the mouth, there is no end of mans labor, nor of mens seeking to satisfy their appetite with what they have, in that it will be only satisfied for a while: Or secondly, that mans covetous desire after the things of this world is insatiable, though he hath abundantly enough to supply all his necessities, yet his inordinate desire after riches is never satisfied, but that still he is toiling for more, and is so greedy to advance his estate that he cannot finde in his heart to spend any thing in a manner of what he hath. See the Note, Cha. 4. 8. And if we thus understand the words, then Solomons aim therein may be to shew the folly of man, in that all being for the mouth, for the support of mens present life, they should so eagerly toil for so much, where so little would serve; being still so greedy after abundance, that they even defraud their mouthes, for which they should labour, and the more they have, the more still they desire: Or thirdly, that however, the rational soul of man cannot be satisfied with such things: they may supply the body with food and clothing and other such like natural comforts, but they can never satisfy the soul; and a great vanity it is, that the divine and immortal soul should onely be intent upon sensuall and transitory things.

Verf. 8. *For what hath the wise more then the fool? &c.* [This is added as a proof of what he had said in the foregoing verse, that riches cannot satisfy the desires of man: because wise men, that are most likely to find it out if it were there to be had, do enjoy no more good by their wealth then fools do; *what hath the wise more then*

as if he should said, nothing at all; wisdom doth far excell folly in regard of internal worth, See the Note, Chap. 2, 13. But in regard of the outward use of riches, in regard of the common events of this life and the discommodities thereof, the wise man hath no priviledge above the fool: and that because the fool may have all sorts of riches as well as the wise man, and he may live as comfortably and plentifully, he may eat as good meat and wear as good clothes as the wise man can; and in all this he doth but provide for back and belly and such other necessities of nature, and so may the fool do that is rich as well as he: As the wise man is subject to hunger and thirst as well as the fool, so the fool may have wherewith to supply, and may as readily supply, these and other the like necessities of nature, as the wise man: The wise man cannot prevent death by his riches, nor carry any thing with him when he dies nor satisfie the desires of his immortal soul with his wealth, no more then the fool can: *What hath the poor that knoweth to walk before the living?* that is, that knoweth how to get a livelihood amongst men, as being industrious and prudent, and one that understands how to carry himself towards all men with whom he converseth both in publick and private fairly and discreetly, so as to be well esteemed amongst them, and to gain their favour, by all which means he makes a shift to gather some competency of estate, though it be but little, and so he is reputed still but a poor man; what hath this poor man? that is, say some Expositors, what hath he lesse then the rich man hath, whether wise or foolish? He hath as much profit by his little as the rich man hath by all his abundance, in that he hath wherewithall to preserve life and liveth comfortably thereon and the rich can do no more. But I rather think that the word *more*, which is in the first clause of the verse, must be again repeated here, thus, *What hath the poor man, that knoweth how to live amongst men, more then the rich covetous churl, that lives retired by himself, and enjoyeth not the society of men?* as if he should have said, Both do but live and both must die, the one as well as the other. Or rather thus, *What hath this poor man, that by his industry and discreet carriage of himself amongst men gets a competent livelihood, more then a poor simple man that hath not so good abilities to provide for himself, seeing even this man also doth some way get bread to eat, and makes a shift to rub through and to live in the world, and the other can do no more.*

[Vers. 9. *Better is the sight of the eyes, then the wandring of the desire, &c.*] Divers of our best Expositors doe take this to be the covetous churles answer to that Question before propounded by Solomon, *What hath the wise more then the fool, &c.* Yes, saith the covetous man, It is better for a man to have an estate in his possession, in his eye, (see the Note, Chap. 5. 11.) as the rich man alwayes hath, then to be in continuall want of those necessaries, which the body naturally calls for, and so to be alwayes wishing and craving this and that for the supply of his necessities. And then they take the following words to be the censure which Solomon passeth concerning this answer; *This is also vanity and vexation of spirit*; that is, to have riches, only to look upon them, and not to use them; to wit, because this yields the owner no profit, neither can it settle or satisfie the desires of the soule, but must needs be accompanied with great cares and disquiet of mind; see the Note, Chap. 2. 11. But I rather

ther conceive that this is likewise added to shew the folly of the covetous mans eager pursuit after earthly things: *Better is the sight of the eyes, then the wandring of the desire*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *then the walking of the soule*, that is, Better it is comfortably and contentedly to enjoy and make use of what a man hath in his possession, then to be still desiring and seeking after more and more; sometimes one thing and sometimes another which he hath not. Since the poore man enjoyeth as much substantial benefit by his small portion of these outward things, as the rich man doth by his abundance, in that he hath food convenient, and thereby lives and enjoyeth health, and since the wisest can fetch no more reall good from their riches then fooles, it is therefore doubtesse farre more comfortable with contentation of mind to enjoy the estate a man hath, then when a mans mind is still going out and wandring this way and that, in the pursuit of that which he hath not, when he is still longing, and wishing and plotting for severall things which he hath not, and still hopes to attaine, which if he doe not attaine, he is discontented, and if he doe attaine them, he is for all that unsatisfied, and still desires more and more: *This is also vanity and vexation of spirit*; that is, this neglecting to make use of what a man enjoyeth, and to have his soule still wandring in the affecting and seeking after greater things, is to no purpose in the world, but doth rather encrease his labour and misery.

Vers. 10. *That which hath been, is named already, &c.*] This is added to make good the foregoing censure, namely, to prove the vanity of the endlesse wandring of mens desires and endeavours after greater things then what at present God hath afforded them; which is done by shewing, that nothing that men can attaine, in regard of these outward things, can exempt or secure them from those manifold miseries whereto the humane nature is generally subject; and that by the unresistable decree of God; and likewise (as many of our best Expositors conceive) that every mans condition is pre-assigned him by the eternall decree of God, and that therefore all sollicitousness about their future estate is needlesse and vaine. *That which hath been, is named already*; that is, Whatever the condition of any man hath been, or is, whether he be rich or poore, honourable or base, it is that which God hath purposed and decreed concerning him; As that which belongs to his nature and being, so that which concerns his outward estate, even every thing that therein befalls him, hath been determined by Gods immutable and unresistable counsell; and therefore he cannot change his condition, he cannot make himselfe rich, when God hath determined he shall be poore, he cannot adde the least to that which God hath determined shall be his portion; so that it were farre better for every man contentedly to enjoy what God hath given him, resting upon his providence, who from eternity hath known him by name, then anxiously and greedily to strive for that, which if it be contrary to what God hath decreed, he shall never attaine: Or rather thus; *That which hath been, is named already*; As if he should have said, Whatever the man be that hath been, or is, whether he be wise or foolish, rich and honourable, or of a meane and low condition, and however it hath been with him both in regard of the possession and making use of riches, yet the name that God hath already given him, even from his first creation, *Adam*, sheweth what he is, a lump of clay, made of the earth, and therefore a poore frail creature, that must returne to the earth out of which he was taken, and that

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from his birth to his death is subject to many and manifold miseries; *And it is known that it is man*; that is, What ever he be in other respects it matters not much, this to be sure is knowne by prooffe and experience, that what ever he is, he is but a man, a poore, fraile, mortall creature, subject to variety of vanities, as hath been shewed already; every man may feelee this in himselfe, and observe it in others; and though therefore in other respects, there is a great deal of difference betwixt the rich and the poore, the wise man that makes use of his wealth, and the foole that pincheth himselfe in these things, yet in this they are alike, that they are but men, poore, weake, perishing creatures, that have their whole dependance upon God; Let men advance themselves to never so high and great an estate, yet as they were men before, so they are men still; their riches and honours cannot secure them from those evils and infirmities whereto the humane nature is subject; such as sicknesse and griefe, sinne, and the wrath of God as the punishment of sinne; from the earth they came, and to the earth they must goe: *Neither may he contend with him that is mightier then he*; that is, with God. And the meaning is either 1. that it is not for man to murmur against God, or to argue with and implead God for subjecting man to so much misery; and that both because God is blamelesse herein; he made man happy, and it is man that by his sin hath brought these miseries upon himselfe, and likewise because when God undertakes to punish men for this their boldnesse in contending with him, he will be found too strong for the proudest and stoutest of men; or rather, 2. that it is in vaine for men by labouring to heap up wealth in abundance, to think to free themselves from that vanity and misery whereto God hath adjudged man; all mens endeavours this way will be but lost labour, and a striving against the streame; by such greedy covetousnesse they will but provoke God to punish them, who will be then found too strong for them, and will soone make them feelee they are but mortall creatures; but to free themselves in the least from the vanities and miseries of man, they will never be able.

Verf. 11. *Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?* This may be taken as a further prosecution of his former arguing against mens greedy pursuing after abundance of these earthly things, namely, by shewing that abundance of these things doth but encrease mens vanity; the more men have, the more trouble they have many severall wayes, the more are their feares of loosing them, the more their cares for keeping them, and for conveying them to their posterity, yea the more is their greedy desire still to be getting more and more, in that abundance doth not extinguish but encrease covetousnesse, even as the laying on of more and more wood, doth not quench but increase the fire; and therefore in true judgement men are nothing the better for them; when they dye they can carry nothing away with them of all their abundance, and whilst they live, they have no reall advantage by their riches more then they had before; then they had food and cloathing, and the greatest abundance they can get, can yield them no more. Yea and if men goe about to cast the blame upon God for subjecting them to such variety of vanities and miseries, to be sure, thereby they will no way better themselves, but rather provoke God to lay his hand the heavier upon them. But I rather conceive, as in the Annotations of our Divines the learned Author of those upon this Book hath

hath singularly well observed, that here Solomon gives us the conclusion of all that hitherto he hath said to prove the vanity of all things under the Sunne, which was the proposition he undertook to demonstrate in the beginning of this Book, Chap. 1. 2, 3. namely, that seeing there are so many things that doe increase vanity, knowledge, wisdom, and folly, pleasures, honours, and riches, as hath been severally shewne, in regard of real happinesse and true contentment man is never a whit the better, either for any of these severally, or for all of them joyntly together.

Verf 12. *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, &c. ?* Two reasons are added in this verse to prove that men are no whit the better, for those vaine things, wherein they are naturally prone to seek for happinesse ; The first is in this first clause ; *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life ?* The meaning whereof is, that no man knoweth by himselfe, nor can any man tell him, what of these outward things, which he desires may be for his good, when he doth possesse them, nor whether this or that which he doth, in the disposing of any thing he enjoyeth, or in the managing of any of his affaires, will prove advantageous or hurtfull to him : No man knoweth whether it will be best for him to be poore or rich, to be in place of publick employment, or to live a close or retired life, to have children or to dye childles, &c. Those things from which men have expected much benefit and comfort, and those undertakings and actions which they judged likely to produce much good to them, have often proved the occasion and meanes of much sorrow and vexation, and misery to them ; and on the other side, those things which men doe most feare and decline, doe many times prove blessings to them, and occasions of great rejoycing. As for those following words, *All the dayes of his vaine life, which he spendeth as a shadow ;* Either they are added, 1. to imply that one reason amongst many others why men doe not know what is good for them, is the shortnesse and the sicklenesse of mans life, by reason whereof they have not time enough experimentally to understand wherein their good consists, and how to order all they doe for the best : or 2. the folly and vanity of man, that having so little a while to live, knoweth not how to spend that little parcell of time for his own best advantage ; or 3. to imply, that though a man should enjoy what his heart could desire in these outward things, yet because of the many other vanities and miseries, whereto the poore life of man is subject, and particularly because of the mutability, the shortnesse and transitorinesse thereof, and that men are therefore so suddenly taken away from what they enjoy, it must needs be but a shadow of good, which he can reap by any of his enjoyments in this life, which is so vaine and which passeth away as a shadow ; for which last expression, see the Notes, Psal. 102. 11. & 109. 23. & 144. 4. The second Reason is in the last clause ; *For who can tell a man what shall be after him under the Sunne ?* The meaning whereof is, that as men have themselves little good by these outward things whilst they doe enjoy them, so they can take as little comfort in thinking of any good that they shall yield to those, to whom they shall leave them, and that because they cannot know what will be in after-times when they are gone ; which if they did they might the better know how to dispose of them. See the Notes, Chap. 2. 18, 19. & 3. 22.

CHAP. VII.

Verf. 1. **A** *Good name, &c.* Some learned Expositors conceive that Solomon having hitherto spoken of the vanity of sundry conditions of the creature, considered in themselves, doth here undertake further to discover their vanity by comparing them one with another; thereby withall intimating the vanity of mens minds and imaginations in that they doe so grossely mis-judge of things, esteeming those things better, that are indeed worse, and those things worse, that are indeed better: And againe others think, that having in the foregoing chapter shovne the vanity of riches in themselves, whether men make use of them or not, here now he proceeds to shew their vanity likewise by comparing them with other things, and shewing how much better other things are then they. But I rather conceive with others that the scope of the Wise man in this place is this, that having shown hitherto the vanity of all things here below, and how vaine it is for men to seek for happinesse and satisfaction there, where they are sure to meet with nothing but disappointment and vexation of spirit, here he undertakes to prescribe remedies against these vanities. Though in the foregoing discourse he had here and there inserted some generall remedies, as for men to feare God, and comfortably to enjoy that portion of these outward things, which God hath been pleased to bestow upon them; yet here now he prescribes more particularly severall meanes for the healing, at least for the allaying of the vanities and miseries whereto man is subject, and for the procuring of the happinesse of a peaceable and contented mind, so farre as it is attainable in this life. And it is not improbable that from that which he had said in the end of the foregoing chapter, he takes occasion here to insert these Rules of direction; for having said there, that no man knoweth what is good for him, here thereupon he undertakes to teach men what is good for them, and by what meanes they may come to live with as much content and comfort, as in this world can reasonably be expected; And the two first Directions he gives is concerning mens care for the procuring and preserving of a good name; and for learning not to feare death, which is the common end of all mankind. *A good name is better then precious ointment*; that is, then the choicest of all riches and outward delights. See the Notes, Pro. 15. 30. & 22. 1. for because precious aromatical ointments were very highly esteemed amongst the Israelites, (and thence it is that they are reckoned amongst Hezekiahs treasures. 2. King. 20. 13.) therefore *a precious ointment* may be figuratively put here for all kind of riches and bodily delights. But yet they may be preferred before *a precious ointment* particularly, with respect to the qualities of such precious oyntments, as 1. Because whereas sweet oyntments are very delightful, and do exceedingly chear and refresh the spirits of men, so the fragancy of a good name doth much revive and comfort the heart of those that are highly extolled for their goodnesse and piety, and of those that hear the good report that is given of them: yea the sweet savour of a mans good name will spread farther and continue longer, then the smell of the best ointment can do; this may fill the house, as it is said of the ointment wherewith Mary anointed the feet of Christ, Joh. 12. 3. but the other may fill both town and countrey. Rom. 1. 8.

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Your faith is spoken of thorswout the world; this may leave a sweet sent behind it for some few hours, but the other will continue fresh many years, yea even after the party himself is deceased; so that as oyntments by embalming do help to preserve for a time the dead bodies of men, so a good name doth in this regard make men live as it were after they are dead, Pro. 10. 7. *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.* 2. Because as oyntment doth cause a mans face to shine, and to appear the more beautiful in the eyes of others: so when men are renowned for their wisdom and pietie and good works, it makes their face to shine, chap. 8. 1. it causeth others highly to esteem and reverence and admire them. 3. Because as such oyntments do supple the flesh and sinewes, and make men nimble and fit for any exercise or service, so a good name doth much quicken and enliven men and makes men active and vigorous both for all publick and private imployments, and 4. Because as such oyntments are of a healing nature so a good name is very effectual to heal the venome of backbiting tongues, and the heart of a man when it is broken and wounded with divers other sorrowes. As for the following clause, some joyn it with the former thus; *As a good name is better then precious ointment, so the day of death is better then the day of ones birth.* And others also understand the second in a limited sense, with respect unto the former, to wit, that the day of death is in this regard better then the day of ones birth, because after death a good mans name doth especially flourish; whilst they live their name may be overclouded with envy, but when they die, the general applause of those that survive them doth dispel those clouds, and their name spreads abroad like the spices when they are broken, or the sweet perfume of some precions oyntment. But it is better to understand it more generally, that *the day of death is better then the day of ones birth*, because death freeth men from all the sinnes, miseries and vexations of this life, whereinto mens birth giveth them their first entrance; men are born to trouble, Job 5. 7. but death puts an end to all the troubles of this life. And so the drift of this clause may be either to discover the vanity of riches, by shewing that the day, whereon a man is taken from all his wealth, is better then that day whereon he first enters upon the enjoying of these outward things; or else to arm men against that great vanity of this life, the fear of death, by shewing that the day of death is, to good men especially, men of a good name, that have an entrance thereby to eternal glory, where all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, a far greater advantage then the day of their birth, whereon there useth to be so much rejoycing.

Verf. 2. *It is better to go to the house of mourning, then to go to the house of feasting: &c.* That is, to a house where there is mourning for some near relation that is there deceased, as appears by the following words; and so likewise by *the house of feasting* may be peculiarly meant the houses, where there are birth-day feasts kept, that so this clause may fully answer that in the close of the foregoing verse, *the day of death is better then the day of ones birth*; though I conceive it may well enough be extended to all houses of feasting whatsoever. It is true indeed that at feasts many occasions may be taken for holy and good Meditations; But yet because at feasts there are usually all sorts of vanity and provocations to vanity, and when mens spirits are disposed to chearfulnesse, they are then most exposed to lightnesse, and

and sad objects make deeper impression upon our spirits, and particularly because at feasts, men are apt, either to put farre away the evill day, as it is said of those prophane feasters, Amos 6. 3. to keep the thought of death out of their minds (the meditation whereof is most usefull for men) or else to slight it, and make a jeast of it, as those, Isa. 22. 13. *Let us eate and drink, for to morrow we shall dye*; therefore it is better to goe to the house of mourning, then to goe to the house of feasting. And this is indeed the reason that is here given, for that is the end of all men, to wit, death; and the living will lay it to heart; that is, in all probability, because the sight of a dead corpse, together with the lamentation and teares of the mourners, doe naturally soften the hearts of men, and fit them for holy meditation; they that are present at such meetings will be seriously and sadly affected with it, and will diligently ponder with themselves of the mighty power of God, and the frailty and vanity of man, that they also must dye, and give an account of their lives before Gods tribunall, and that therefore it behooves them to prepare themselves against their change comes.

Verf. 3. *Sorrow is better then laughter, &c.*] It may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Anger is better then laughter*; and then the meaning must be, that the anger of one that will frowne upon a man that doth evill, and freely reprove him for his faults, is better then the smiles and flatteries of clawbacks and parasites; and so likewise we must understand the following clause; *For by the sadnesse of the countenance, the heart is made better*; that is, by the austere and frowning look of such a re-prover, the heart of the reprov'd is made better; both in regard of amendment and the comfort that will afterwards follow thereupon. But both that which went before, and that which followeth in the next verse sheweth, that Solomon is here speaking of sorrow not of anger, and proves what he said before, that, *It is better to goe to the house of mourning, then to goe to the house of feasting*; because *sorrow is better then laughter*; that is, A sad, sober and composed frame of spirit, whether wrought in a man upon the remembrance of his sinnes, or some affliction that is befallen him, or by the serious meditation of death at funerals (whereto indeed the words may seeme to have particular respect.) is better then light, frolick and profuse mirth; when men swim in sensual delights, and never mind their sinnes, or their own approaching end, or other judgements of God; *For by the sadnesse of the countenance, the heart is made better*; that is, by sorrow, manifested in the countenance, the heart, the better part of a man is made better; to wit, because hereby men are weaned from the world, vaine, and light, and foolish lusts and affections in them are checked and suppressed, and they become seriously sensible of those things that concerne their peace and eternall good, whereby way is made also to true chearfulnesse and joy. This I conceive is the meaning of this divine Paradox. But yet it may be understood of sorrow in other; *Sorrow is better then laughter*; that is, It is better to be amongst those that mourne, then amongst those that laugh, and that because sad objects are to the heart of man like ballast to the Ship that makes it goe steady, the sad countenance of mourners keep those that behold it from those vanities whereinto at feasts men are prone to run out. In the Hebrew it is very elegantly expressed, *for by the badnesse of the countenance the heart is made better.*

Verf. 4. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fooler is in the*

the house of mirth.] This may be understood two severall wayes; either 1. that the thoughts of wise men are still upon those things that belong to the house of mourning, those things for which men are there afflicted and grieved, they are still thinking of death, and such mournfull things, of the hunger and thirst, the wants and miseries that others endure, as remembring that they also may come to be in the same condition, yea when their bodies are not in such places, even in the midst of their greatest joy and feasting, their hearts will be still musing on such things as these, and by that meanes are fore-armed against such calamities come to be their portion, and doe live alwayes as those that must presently dye; whereas on the other side, fooles cast off all such thoughts, and put farre away the evill day, Amos 6. 3. their minds run all together upon good cheare, and laughter, and revellings, yea though they are called to mourning, yet then they will be all for merriment, and so being wholly taken up with worldly pleasures, thorough unpreparednesse of heart they are overwhelmed when any miseries or sorrowes come upon them: or else secondly, that wise men desire to be amongst mourners, there they would be when they are by some occasions kept away; whereas fooles desire and seek to be only in frolick company, at feasts, and tavernes, and such like places; their heart is there, when they cannot be there, if they could they would have their share at every merry meeting. And thus doth Solomon prove, that *sorrow is better then laughter*; as he had said in the foregoing verse, because that which wise men choose is like to be better then that which fooles choose.

Verf. 5. *It is better to heare the rebuke of the wise, then for a man to heare the song of fooles.*] That is, the jeasts and merry discourses, or rather the flattering speeches of Claw-backs and Parasites, which as so many Syren songs, doe please and delight the corrupt and depraved nature of foolish men, as much as the sweetest and most pleasant musick and singing doth tickle and delight the eares of those that heare it. The meaning therefore of this sentence is, that one wise reprove is better then many flattering fooles, and that it is better to hearken to the sharp reproofes of a prudent friend, that will seasonably and wisely tell us of our faults, then to hearken to the flatteries of fooles, that will sooth us up in our vices. See the Notes, Psal. 141. 3. & Pro. 15. 31, 32. & 27. 6. And thus flatteries may be called *the song of fooles*, with respect to the folly both of the flatterer, and of those that delight to be flattered. But whence is this inserted in this place? I answer, Some conceive that this is spoken only by way of comparison, as if Solomon had said, As the severe reproofes of wise men are to be preferred before the jeasts and flatteries of fooles, so an humbling, re-proving and reforming sorrow is more desireable then alluring and bewitching pleasures. But others doe farre better give this account of the joyning of this sentence with that which went before, to wit, that because reproofes doe usually cause sorrow at first in the parties reprov'd, therefore this is also added to prove sorrow to be better then mirth.

Verf. 6. *For as the crackling of thornes under a pot, so is the laughter of the foole, &c.*] To wit, because as thornes being set on fire, doe make a great noise, (which yet is harsh and unpleasant to the eare) and are sodainly kindled and give a great blaze, but presently they are burnt out, and so they doe no good at all, there's much noise

but little fire, much light but little heate, and so the meate continues raw in the pot, yet the flanders by, though at first they may be scorched a little, yet are not thereby thoroughly warmed; see the Notes, Psal. 58. 9. & 118. 12. so the laughter of these fooles, that is, the light and profuse mirth, the base flatteries, the lewd jesting and sport, where with they seek to please men, though it make a loud noise (which yet is insome and distastfull in the eares of wise men) and carrieth with it a faire shew of yielding wonderfull delight and joy, and indeed for the time men may be mightily transported herewith (they that are flattered may be much raised and cheared with self-conceit and admiration of themselves, and such mirth and jollity may warme men hearts for the present) yet alas they are but light flashes of joy, which have no solidity nor permanency in them: as there is no just cause for their mirth, so there is little true comfort in it: see the Note, Pro. 14. 13. and the flatteries of fooles may destroy men, but they can doe them no good at all. I know that some understand this sentence of the mirth and jollity of wicked men in their prosperous estate, to wit, that though such men, when things goe well with them, are wont to talk bigly, and make a great deale of baffle, and boasting, and bragging of what they have done, and what they will doe, and to give up themselves to mirth and pleasure, yet all this is but as the crackling of thornes under the pot, all this their jollity, together with their prosperity, is gone in an instant, and leaves no solid benefit or comfort behind it. But in regard of the manifest dependance, which this verse hath upon that which went before, the former exposition is clearly the better. And then for the following words, *this also is vanity*, it is best to referre it to that which immediately goeth before it, to wit, that flattery, or all the delight which men take in flattery, all the mirth and joy of men in such things is meere vanity.

Verf. 7. *Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; &c.*] Expositors are much troubled to find out what respect these words can have to that which went before. Some hold that Solomon doth here prove what he had said before verf. 5. *that it is better to bear*, that is, quietly to hearken to, *the rebuke of the wise, then for a man to hear the song of fools*, to wit, because when a man that is reprov'd cannot bear a reproof but doth flie out against and oppresse him that wisely reprov'd him, this maketh a wise man mad; which may be understood, either of him that doth so oppresse his reprover; namely, that such an one will in his rage do those things, which one would think none but a mad man should do, as it was with Asa, when he imprisoned the Prophet that reprov'd him, &c. 2 Chro. 16. 10. or of him that is oppressed for his faithfull reprov'ing of those that did evil, who in such a case, though otherwise a wise man, is apt to be distemper'd with discontent and rage, and to speak and do what is not seemly, as we may see in the Prophet Jeremy, who hereupon was ready in rage to give over the work that God had set him about. See Jer. 20. 7, 8, 9. And accordingly also they understand the following clause, *and a gift destroyeth the heart*, to wit, that gifts do hinder men from reprov'ing those that do amiss, which wise men should impartially do. Again some conceive that this is added to prove what he had said verf. 1. that death is better then life, because in this life even wise men are subject to be made mad by oppression, and to be perverted by bribes, or to be wronged by the injustice of Judges, that are corrupted by bribes. But to me that

seems far more probable which others say, to wit, that Solomon intending here to prescribe some other remedies for the curing or allaying of the vanities and miseries, that men are subject to here in this life, as namely, Moderation of mind and patience, he first sets down the miseries and evils that men are subject to for want of these graces. And taking this to be the scope of the words, they may be two several wayes understood, to wit, first, that oppression, or wealth gotten by oppression, maketh not fools only but even wise men mad, because when wise men turn oppressors, finding how fast gain comes in thereby, this maketh them excessively covetous, and desperately wicked; not caring by what unjust wayes they encrease their store; like men void of all understanding, yea like brut beasts, they care not how they mischief those that are under their power; like frantick men they run the high way to ruine themselves and their posterity by their unjust courses, and yet think the whilst thereby to establish themselves and their families; *and a gift destroyeth the heart*, that is, corrupteth the heart, See Deut. 16. 19. or secondly, that when wise men see oppressors grow rich and great by oppression, when they see the innocent and well-deserving oppressed, especially when they themselves are unjustly overborn and crushed, this doth exceedingly discompose their spirits, at least till they have recollected themselves; it makes them murmur against God, and in their rage and discontent, to carry themselves many wayes very unseemly; But if we take it thus, then the following clause as it is in our Translation, can be no otherwise understood then of the faining of the heart of the oppressed, when they see justice perverted by bribery. But some would have the whole verse expressed by way of similitude; As oppression maketh the wise man mad, so a gift destroyeth the heart; and that so the intent of these words should be to shew, that men may receive as much hurt by fraudulent gifts, as by rapine and violence.

Verf. 8. *Better is the end of a thing, then the beginning thereof, &c.* The meaning is, that it is frequently so, and that therefore it is good to waite to see the issue of things; as 1. It is thus in regard of this life, the end thereof is better then the beginning of it; and therefore some would have this added with reference to what he had said verf. 1. that *the day of death is better then the day of ones birth*: And so taking in the next clause, *and the patient in spirit, is better then the proud in spirit*, they make the sense of the whole verse to be this, that to die a desired death is best, and the next to this is for men to bear patiently what ever befalls them here in this world: 2. It is thus also in regard of reproofes (of which Solomon had spoken before verf. 5, 6. and therefore divers learned Expositors conceive, that this is added with particular respect to the words there:) Reproofes may be at first harsh and displeasing to the parties reprov'd, and the faithfull reprov'er may for a while suffer much thereby; but in the end, like bitter Physick, they often prove wholesome and medicinable to those that are reprov'd, and yield a great deal of joy and comfort to the reprov'er. See Pro 28. 23. And indeed the following clause, *and the patient in spirit is better, then the proud in spirit*, if understood of patience in bearing reproofes, doth well suite with this Exposition. 3. It is thus also in regard of the commendable wayes and endeavours of men; The end there is better then the beginning both because perseverance is that which crownes every good action; It

is an easie matter to begin well, but all is to no purpose, except men hold out unto the end; and likewise because the beginnings in such cases may be difficult and painful, and encountered with many discouragements, as it is in the study of learning, in all noble and vertuous enterprizes, in the bearing of afflictions, and such like, but then the end is fruitful and pleasing, and makes abundant amends for all that was at first endured. But the main scope of Solomon in these words is to prescribe Moderation of minde and patience to men as the best remedies against those evils hinted in the foregoing verse. As namely 1. the madnesse of oppressors; and 2. the rage and fury of those that are oppressed: for 1. whereas men that cannot contentedly rely upon Gods provision, but resolving that they will enlarge and better their estates, do thereupon fall to oppressing of others, if they would consider the end and issue of things, to wit, that though God gives but little to men at first, yet when they quietly waite upon him, he doth many times at last advance them to great estates; and that on the other side, he doth alwayes severely punish oppressors, and deliver those at last that are oppressed by them, this would cure the madnesse of oppressors, and make them moderate their greedy desires after outward things, and teach them quietly to submit to the providence of God; and secondly, If men that are impatient because of oppressors, would consider, that God doth alwayes order the confusions and miseries wherewith such men fill the world to end in the glory of his name, and the good of his poor oppressed people, so that frequently oppressors do at last pay dearly for their cruelties, and they on the other side, that sowe in tears do reap in joy, this would make men patient in times of greatest oppression; and hereto agreeth the following clause, where in stead of saying, *and the patient in spirit is better then the hasty in spirit*, he saith, *and the patient in spirit is better then the proud in spirit*, because pride is the root whence all impatience doth spring, both that when men cannot endure any wrong or injury, and that also when men cannot stay Gods leisure, nor quietly expect the issue of things, but if all goes not with them presently according to their desires, they will bribe or oppress, or do any other evil, wherewith they can hope to bring about their purposes.

Vers. 9. *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, &c.* To wit, because of the oppression and injustice that thou seest in the world, or because of any injuries that are done thee; or the prosperity of those that are oppressors and injurious; for *anger resteth in the bosome of fools*, that is, such angry persons are certainly fools; and that not only because such anger bereaves men of reason and wisdom, and maketh them behave themselves foolishly many severall wayes, but also because it is a sure evidence of fools; See the Notes, Pro. 14. 17. 29. & 27. 3. The fools heart is the proper and peculiar place, where anger is to be found; yea constantly dwelleth there, that is, the habit of anger abides there, though the passions it puts men into may be transient and passe away; the fool could not else at all times have it so ready at hand to enrage and inflame him. This I conceive is chiefly here intended, yet will this expression of angers resting in the bosom of fools may besides imply, that such men are wont to love and cherish and defend their anger, or that it is especially the long continuance of anger that proves men to be fools, when they suffer the Sun to set upon their wrath, as the Apostle speaks, Eph. 4. 26.

Verf. 10. *Say not thou, what is because that the former dayes were better than these? &c.*] As if he should have said, Do not pretend this for thy impatience? Do not vex and afflict thy self, grumbling within thy self, and by way of repining and murmuring against God, complaining continually, that things were better and men were better formerly then now; for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this, that is, It is an act of most egregious folly to trouble thy self about this, to wit,

1. Because it is not simply the times that make men either good or bad; A good man will be good in the worst times, as a rose will be a rose though it grow upon a dung-hill, and a wicked man would have been as he is, had he lived in the best times. Mat. 23.
30. 2. Because such querulous persons are usually wont to mind onely the evil of the present times, but not the good they enjoy; and onely the good of former times and not the evil that did afflict them; and this comparing of times together may be well charged with folly; The world always was and alwayes will be like it self, full of sin and misery, and therefore in all ages there have been sad complaints of the evil of their times; and thirdly and especially because God governs and orders all things in all times by his providence, and men may be sure that God disposeth of all things for the best; And therefore when things go ill in mens dayes, for them to murmur, not considering that the sins of the times are the cause of it, is no other but to challenge God for not dispensing things aright, and such an expostulation must needs proceed from intollerable foolish pride. As therefore it is unquestionable that some ages are worse then others both for the abundance of sins and manifold calamities, so also it cannot be denied, but that men may lawfully with Godly sorrow and holy zeal bewail the sins and judgements of the times wherein they live; only they must not do it in a way of murmuring and impatience, but leaving the government of all things to God, must quietly submit to the will of God concerning the present times wherein they live; and the worse the times are, the more carefull they must be to walk holily with God, and faithfully to serve him in that their generation.

Verf. 11. *Wisdom is good with an inheritance, &c.*] Here Solomon enters upon another remedy against the vanities and miseries, whereto men are subject here in this life, or particularly against the vanity of riches, or the vanity of murmuring against the evil of the present times, and that is wisdom, whereof patience and moderation of minde is a part, or at least a necessary effect; taking an occasion, as it may seem, to speak hereof from the last clause of the foregoing verse, for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this; wisdom is good, saith he, with an inheritance; which must be understood comparatively. There is no question to be made but that wisdom is good without wealth, or without an inheritance, (which is mentioned here as the chiefest, because the most stable riches) But his meaning is, that both are good, but that wisdom doth the better, when a wise man hath wealth too, wisdom is then most profitable and beneficial both to a mans self, and to others also; wisdom without wealth is despised, Eccles. 9. 16. *the poor mans wisdom is despised and his words are not heard;* and wealth without wisdom doth hurt rather then good; Both together do best of all; and by it there is profit to them that see the Sun, that is, by wisdom with an inheritance, there is much profit and advantage to men here in this

this life. See the Note, Pro. 14. 24. And it may well be that this clause, *to them that see the Sun* is added to imply that it is but onely here in this world that riches yield any profit; after this life there will be no need of them.

Verf. 12. *For wisdom is a defence, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 2. 11. It is in the Original, *wisdom is a shadow*, for which see the Notes, Numb. 14. 9. Psal. 91. 1. & 121. 5, 6. *And money is a defence*, see the Notes, Pro. 10. 15. 30. 13. 8. Both may defend a man from hunger, thirst, cold, the injuries of wicked men, and many other evils, whereto men are liable; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it; that is, true wisdom, which is alwayes joyned with the feare of God, is the meane of bringing men to live a true spirituall life here, and to live eternally with God in heaven; which money can never do. This I conceive is chiefly intended; Yet withall understanding by wisdom, prudence and discretion, under which moderation of mind and patience may also be included, it is most true that wisdom doth many times conduce more to the preservation of mens lives, and the lengthning out of their dayes, then riches can doe; see the Notes, Pro. 3. 2, 18. & 4. 22. Nay many times riches doe bring men into dangers, out of which wisdom delivers them; at least it teacheth men to be patient and contented, and so preserves their hearts in peace and comfort, even when evils are unavoydable, which is the surest remedy and defence of all; and that which money can never doe.

Verf. 13. *Consider the work of God, &c.*] This is prescribed as another branch of that wisdom, whereby men may be enabled not to be overmuch disquieted with the confusions and distempers which they see in their times, (of which he had spoken before, verf. 10.) and that is an humble acquiescency, when things goe so ill, in the good providence of God. I know that some understand this first clause more generally, of mens taking notice of the various works of Gods providence, both in times of prosperity and times of adversity, that accordingly they might conforme thereto either in joy or sorrow, as is expressed in the following verse, *In the day of prosperity be joyful, &c.* But the following clause here makes it more probable, that Solomon speaks here onely of considering the work of God in bad times: Having in the foregoing verses prescribed wisdom (or *wisdom with an inheritance*) as a defence against oppression and violence, and other evils, for which we are wont to complaine of the dayes wherein we live, as evil times; because such may be the evil of the times, and such in particuler the over-bearing prevalency of oppression and violence therein, that no wisdom of man can secure them therein, or remedy those things that are therein evil, therefore he directs here to another act of wisdom, which is of all the surest remedy in evil times, and that is quietly and contentedly to submit to Gods good will and pleasure. *Consider the work of God*; that is, take notice and diligently consider, that in all times all things are ordered by the all-ruling providence of God; when thou seest the greatest oppression and confusion amongst men, in stead of murmuring, remember that howerosse and crooked soever things seeme to be, they are thus ordered by the providence of God, whose works are alwayes perfect, (see the Note, Deut. 32. 4.) neither can any thing therefore be better done, then as he doth it; Even by crooked things God can work out that, which shall be much for his own glory, and the good of his people; and therefore it is our duty quietly to stoop and sub-

submit to his will, and to be content with that which he doth, though we understand not the reason of it, and that because to be sure we cannot alter nor mend that which he is pleased to have done; which is the meaning of that which followeth; *For who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?* namely, that no man can change or rectifie any thing that is, or that he apprehends to be crooked or amisse, either in things naturall, or in civill affaires, or in the morall actions of men, but that they must be and are best as God would have them; Only we must still remember that God makes not the wayes and conversation of men to be crooked and perverte, but only by withdrawing his grace from wicked men, and leaving them to the power of Satan, and to the swinge of their own corrupt hearts. But see the Note, Chap. 1. 15.

Verf. 14. *In the day of prosperity be joyfull.*] That is, Enjoy comfortably the good blessings that God is then pleased to afford thee, and with thankfulness cheare and delight thy selfe therein; that so being refreshed with the sweetness thereof, thou mayest the better endure the bitterness of any affliction that may afterward follow, according to that of Job, chap. 2. 10. *What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*

But in the day of adversity consider.] That is, as in the foregoing verse, consider that it is the work of God, the just Judge of heaven and earth, whose work, though it may seeme crooked to thee, yet thou canst not alter nor mend. This I conceive is chiefly intended; yet it may also include whatever may tend to keep Gods children from fainting under afflictions, and from murmuring against the good hand of God therein: as that we should consider, first, that God is not wont alwayes to afflict his people, and that therefore we know not how soone God may send us better dayes. 2. What prosperity God hath formerly afforded us. 3. To what end God hath brought these afflictions upon us, and to what issue they tend, that we may reap that benefit by them that God intends us; and 4. how we ought to behave our selves under the afflicting hand of God, that we take great heed to our selves, that we doe not by murmuring, and seeking to extricate our selves out of our troubles in any fittfull way, or by any other undecent and unbecoming carriage of our selves, provoke God to further displeasure against us, but that we carry our selves wisely and meekly in the day of adversity.

God also hath set the one over against the other, &c.] That is, God hath established an intercourse and vicissitude of prosperity and adversity in the lives of men, the one opposite to the other, that so the one might allay the other, having respect therein to the frailty of man in generall, and to the spirituall good of his faithfull servants in particular. The meaning is, that as in the ordering of the times and seasons of the yeare, God hath settled an intercourse of day and night, winter and summer, *one over against the other*; and as in a paire of scales, when the balance stands in *equilibrio*, not turning the one way or the other, the weights in the one scale doe fully poise and answer the wares in the other; so doth the Lord usually measure out unto men dayes of comfort and dayes of sorrow, prosperity and adversity, proportioning the one to the other; And why doth God doe this? That followeth in the next words, *To the end that man should find nothing after him*; which may be understood two severall wayes, as 1. that God doth so intermingle good and evil dayes, that no man may be able to find

find out or foresee what will afterwards be, that by discerning the footsteps of Gods former proceedings, men may not be able to inferre from thence, that thus or thus God will hereafter doe, and consequently that discovering hereby, how unsearchable Gods counsels are, and how unable they are to search into the reasons of his present proceedings, and how impossible it is that they should by any care or providence of theirs prevent that which they cannot foresee, and that all things must be as he hath determined, what ever they desire, resolve, or endeavour, they may learne quietly to submit to the providence of God in all the changes that befall them, and in all that God doth unto them; and likewise to walk humbly before God, and in the feare of his all-ruling power, waiting and depending upon him in all conditions whatever, not being puffed up in prosperity, as remembring that they may soone come to be in an afflicted estate, nor yet fainting in the dayes of adversity, as considering that God may soone turne their sorrow into joy: and secondly, that God doth thus temper the changes of prosperity and adversity, to the end that no man should come after God, and find any thing in that which God hath done, which he could have mended, and have ordered better, no not for his own advantage, then as God hath ordered it, anything that is superfluous, defective, or irregular in any work of his, for which they may justly complain of God, but that on the contrary, observing how God doth with infinite wisdom and fatherly goodnesse dispose of all things, they may acknowledge every thing to be best that God doth, and so may without any fretting or discontent against God, quietly submit to his will, and rest contentedly in that which he doth.

Verf. 15. *All things have I seen in the dayes of my vanity, &c.*] That is, All these things before mentioned concerning the strange and secret proceedings of Gods providence, I have observed to be so by mine own experience in the time of my vain short life, see the Note, chap. 6. 12. yet it may well be that Solomon expresseth this in such generall tearms, *All things have I seen*, because there was indeed nothing that could be knowne by the reason of man, but he had attained the knowledge and observation thereof; and therefore he must needs have experience of those things before mentioned concerning the seeming strange dispensations of divine providence; one particular instance whereof he addes in the following words; *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness*; that is, that is oppressed and sometimes brought to an untimely end, notwithstanding that he is a truly righteous man, yea it may be even because of his righteousness; and *there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickednesse*; that is, notwithstanding he is a wicked man, yea it may be by meanes of his wickednesse.

Verf. 16. *Be not righteous over-much, &c.*] Some learned Expositors conceive, that Solomon, having layd down in the foregoing verse his Observation concerning the sad sufferings that many times befall the righteous, whilst wicked men flourish and prolong their dayes in their wickednesse, doth here in this verse tell us in the first place what the judgement of corrupt Reason is in this case, and what the advice is, which naturall and carnal men would give for the avoyding of this inconvenience, tending to a politick indifferency and neutrality in the wayes of religion and righteousness. *Be not righteous over-much*, that is, Seeing righteousness doth thus expose men to danger; be not so forward and precise in matters of religion, piety, and right-

teousnesse, as many men are, be discreet and wary, and stand not alwayes so strictly and inflexibly upon grounds of conscience and justice, but that thou mayest, as occasion serves, for thine own safety and advantage, remit a little of thy strictnesse, and comply with the times, and thine own necessary interests; *Neither make thy selfe over-wise*; that is, be not too nice and scrupulous, make not thy selfe wiser then other men, by refusing to doe as others doe; *why shouldst thou destroy thy selfe*? that is, why shouldst thou unnecessarily expose thy selfe to so great danger, as many men by such needlesse precisenesse doe often bring upon themselves? But the generall current of Expositors goe another way, taking this to be the advice of the Spirit of God by the pen of Solomon. And indeed it seemes very unsafe where Solomon goeth on in one continued tenor of prescribing directions to men for the well-ordering of their lives, to make any one passage therein to be spoken, as in the person of carnall men, unlesse Solomon himselfe doe give some hint unto us, either by some censure that he afterwards passeth thereon, or some other way, that it must be so understood; or unlesse the words will not beare any other interpretation. Now here nothing can be alledged to the contrary, but that this may be severall wayes understood as the counsell of the holy Spirit of God by the pen of Solomon; as 1. that men must take heed of being so over-righteous and over-wise, as to murmur against, and to question the justice of any such dispensations of Gods providence, as that mentioned in the foregoing verse, when the wicked live long in a prosperous estate, and the righteous are sorely afflicted and soone cut off; they may well be judged *righteous over-much*, that will take upon them to be more righteous then God, and to be *over-wise*, that will apprehend that they could order things better then as God hath ordered them; And by such bold searching into the secret and incomprehensible counsels of God, they take the ready way to provoke God to destroy them: Or secondly, that men must not under a pretence of justice, and out of an over-weening opinion of their own wisdom, be over-rigid in being inquisitive into the faults of others, in censuring and judging others, or in prosecuting the Law against them; Extreame justice may be extreame injustice; And they that will therefore stand alwayes upon such strict tearms of justice, as never to remit in the least of their right, nor wink at any thing that is amisse, but think to correct all, and to mend all, that is not as it should be, or alwayes to urge the letter of the Law, and to be more severe in punishing offences, then either reason or equity requires, may well be counted *over-wise*, and *righteous over-much*: And to these it may well be said, *Why shouldst thou destroy thy selfe*? to wit, because by this meanes men doe usually expose themselves to the envy and hatred of people, and so many times bring themselves to some miserable end. Or thirdly, that men must take heed of being too highly conceited of their own righteousness or wisdom; They that are ready in a vaine way of ostentation to vaunt and brag of their own righteousness, and to despise others in comparison of themselves; or that will think to be justified before God by their own righteousness, may well be said to be *over-wise*, and *righteous over-much*; and are indeed in danger to be destroyed by him that resists the proud, Jam. 4. 6. Or fourthly, that men must beware that they doe not out of an over-weening conceit of their own judgement, make more sinnes and more duties, then God hath made in his word; for as they are *over-wise*, that are

wise

wise above that which is written, 1 Cor. 4. 6. so they are *righteous over-much*, that will needs be righteous above the written rule of the word; by which meanes men may under a pretence of zeale, be unjust and cruel, and under a pretence of piety, they may fall into superstition. In conforming to the righteousness and holiness enjoined in Gods word, men cannot be too strict and precise; But when men out of an opiniative confidence in their own judgement, shall be violently bent upon the doing of any thing, which by the word of God they are no way bound to doe, or shall scruple that which the word of God doth no where forbid, though they may doe it conscientiously, and upon opinion of duty, then they are *over-wise*, and *righteous over-much*. That which therefore Solomon here enjoynes Gods people, is a prudent and pious moderation of their behaviour in all things, that they should be wise unto sobriety, not resting too much upon their own understanding and judgement, but advising with others, Rom. 12. 3. and that they should temper their zeale with godly wisdom and prudence; according to that, Phil. 4. 5. *Let your moderation be known unto all men*; And the reason whereby this is pressed is, lest by doing otherwise men should involve themselves in desperate dangers; as by such courses men often doe; *Why shouldst thou destroy thy selfe?* And this seemes to be inferred from that which was said before, ver. 15. that seeing just men doe often perish in their righteousness, it is extreame madness by affecting a righteousness above that which God hath enjoined, causelessly to expose our selves to destroying troubles and perills. Now this last Exposition seemeth to me the best, because of that which is added by way of opposition hereto in the following verse.

Verf. 17. *Be not over-much wicked, &c.*] To wit, by running on impenitently in wayes of wickednesse, and so continually adding sin unto sin, or by giving up our selves to any grosse enormities, to any excesse of wickednesse, boldnesse and impudency in sinning great and presumptuous finnes. But yet we must not so understand this, as if there were allowance hereby given to some lesse degrees of wickednesse; for all wickednesse is abominable before God; and therefore he that is in the least degree wicked, is *over-much wicked*; Only having fore-warned men in the foregoing verse of being *righteous over-much*; to wit, by putting themselves upon any duty above that which God hath enjoined them in his word, here he addes that on the other side men must take heed that they doe not under a pretence of avoyding this, run into another extremity, of slighting all strictnesse of conversation prescribed in the word, and laying the raines upon the neck of their lusts, to commit sin with greedinesse. And this likewise may seeme to be inferred from that which was said before, ver. 15. concerning wicked mens prolonging their dayes in their wickednesse, that men should not from thence encourage themselves to grow impudently wicked; And then for the following words, *Neither be thou foolish*; either the word *over-much* is here againe to be understood, and so the meaning is the same as in the foregoing clause, that as men must not be so over-wise, as to make duties and finnes where God hath made none, so they must not on the other hand be so extreamely foolish, as not to mind at all what God enjoynes or forbids, but without any scruple of conscience to break out into all licentiousnesse and loosenesse of life; because hereby they must needs provoke God to displeasure, and draw downe Gods judgements upon them; which

which is chiefly intended in the following clause, *Why shouldest thou dye before thy time?* or, as it is in the Hebrew, *not in thy time?* that is, why shouldest thou provoke God to cut thee off by an untimely death? for which see the Notes, Job 16. 32. & 22. 16. Psal. 55. 23. & Pro. 10. 27. Though indeed this may also include wicked mens exposing themselves to an untimely end, by being cut off by the sentence of the civill Magistrate, or by wasting and consuming their own bodies with their wayes of luxury and wickednesse. And besides, this may be added to imply the folly of mens encouraging themselves in wickednesse, from that mentioned ver. 15. that such men do often prolong their lives in their wickednesse, by shewing that quite contrary wickednesse doth usually cut short their dayes. This I conceive is the full meaning of this place; But yet as there are other different expositions given of the foregoing verse, so also of this, as 1. They that take that to be delivered as the judgement of carnall reason, that men should not be so strictly religious, as thereby to expose themselves to danger, do take this to be the contrary advice of the Spirit of God, implying that to goe about thus to temper and qualifie righteousness and wisdom with carnal policy, is to be indeed *wicked over-much*, & grosse folly, this being the ready way to expose men to Gods wrath, and so to death, yea to an untimely and unseasonable death. 2. They that understand that of being so overwise, and overjust, as to question the wisdom and justice of the dispensation of Divine Providence, they accordingly conceive that here Solomon affirms, that for men to be thus arrogantly bold, or because they cannot satisfie their own carnall reason herein, therefore to deny or slight the Providence of God, and so to grow loose and profane in their lives, is indeed the ready way to provoke God to cut them off in the midst of their dayes. 3. They that take that to be meant of being overjust and wise in censuring and judging and prosecuting the Law against others, they hold that here on the contrary, men are advised not hereupon to cast off all care of reprovng and punishing those that do offend, and to leave all to do what they please themselves: and 4. They that understand that of mens having an over-high conceit of their own righteousness and wisdom, they say that here an other extremity is forbidden: namely, that men, should not make themselves worse then they are, nor be over-base and wicked and foolish in their own eyes, as by being over ready to judge all that they do to be foolishly and wickedly done, and to aggravate their sins above the rule of Gods word, as by being prone ever and anon causelessly to conclude, that they have quenched Gods spirit, and committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that they are excluded from all hope of mercy.

Verf. 18. *It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this, yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand, &c.* That is, that thou shouldest observe this doctrine withall possible care and zeal, not being slack in a businesse of such weight nor declining from it in the least degree at any time, namely, to hold and keep constantly to this golden mean prescribed in the two foregoing verses, walking accurately by line and by rule, and not turning aside to the right hand or to the left, and so neither to be over-righteous and over-wise, nor over-wicked and foolish, but to labour after righteousness and wisdom, and yet withall to avoid such extreams; yea this men should do constantly at all times, what ever befalls them; Some I know do refer this to that which

which is added in the following clause, to wit, that the fear of God is that which we should take hold of, and from which we should not withdraw our hand. But according to our Translation that is added as a reason of this precept, *for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all*, that is, He will be carefull to keep close to the rule of Gods word, and so shall not run into any of these extreames, and consequently shall not fall into any of those miseries before mentioned vers. 16, 17. which those extreames do bring men into. And though his righteousness may seem to expose him for a time to many troubles and dangers, yet he shall at last have an happy issue out of all such tryals.

Vers. 19. *Wisdom strengtheneth the wise, more then ten mighty men which are in the city*. That is, many mighty men, See the Note, Gen. 31.7. and by *mighty men* is meant gallant souldiers, or wise and valiant Captains and Commanders, to whom the defence of a city is committed. And so the meaning is, that the fear of God, that wisdom whereby men observe that holy mean and moderation before prescribed, and avoid the extreames before mentioned, will better defend a man from sin, and Satans temptations, and all the evils whereto men by such extreames doe expose themselves, or from those evils mentioned before vers. 15. which even the righteous do sometimes undergo, then such mighty men can defend a city committed to their charge against the assaults of an enemy: and that because God and his holy angels will be to such as a wall of fire about them, and will make them invincible, which no city can possibly be, yea many other wayes wisdom is a great defence to men, for which see the Notes, Pro. 16.32. and 21.22. and 24.5. I know that some Expositors do understand this somewhat otherwise, namely that the wisdom of keeping a mean and avoiding the forementioned extreames will better support and deliver a man from dangers, then many great and potent friends in Court or City can possibly do. But the former Exposition is me thinks the clearest.

Vers. 20. *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not*. That is, that never sinneth; It is onely in heaven that the righteous shall live without all sin; Some also extend this farther to wit, that *there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not*, even in the good that he doth, by reason of the imperfection of his doing of it. But how is this inferred upon that which went before; as the particle (*for*) sheweth it is? I answer, with reference to the foregoing verse; and that either 1. by way of explaining that, as if he had said, wisdom doth indeed exceedingly strengthen a man, though withall we must know there is no man but doth sometimes out of frailty offend; or rather by way of giving a reason why men should endeavour to strengthen themselves by wisdom, namely because the justest man that lives is sometimes overtaken with sin, which may expose him to danger; if he have not this spiritual wisdom, to do what may be done to prevent offence, and to behave himself prudently, in a fair accommodation of himself to others.

Vers. 21. *Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken, &c.* Charity and meekness in passing by the injuries of others is here prescribed, under that one particular instance of the injuries of the tongue, wherein offence is most frequently given, and that as a principal act of that true wisdom, whereby mens lives may be made the more

comfortable and happy to them, yet withall this exhortation seems to be inferred from the foregoing sentence vers. 20. that seeing the best men that are do sometimes sin, therefore men should bear with those that offend. And there are three particular directions included in these words, *Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee*: 1. that men should not be over-ready to give credit to all the evil reports that are brought to them of others, lest God should punish them for this, by suffering others, it may be their own servants, to curse and speak evil of them. Secondly, that men should not be curious and eager to know what others say of them, and so closely to stand listening and hearkening what others speak, lest by this means, to their great discontent, they happen to hear base and abject men, perhaps their own servants, reproaching and speaking evil of them; and Thirdly, that men should not mind the evil speeches of others, but passe them by, as if they heard them not; at least they should not so far lay them to heart, as to be troubled with them, to be ever thinking of them, and to plot to be revenged on those that speak them; and that because those may do this, against whom men are most apt to be enraged, whereas in truth their ill words are least to be regarded, and that is their own servants.

Vers. 22. *For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy self hast cursed others*] That is, reproached and spoken evil of others. And therefore as thou wouldst have others to bear with thine infirmities, so resolve thou to bear with the infirmities of others.

Vers. 23. *All this have I proved by wisdom, &c.*] Solomons drift in this and the following verse is from his own proof and experience, first to assert the certainty of those precepts he had hitherto given for the remedying of those vanities, as much as may be, whereto men are subject here in this world, and particularly of that which he had said concerning the singular protection, which wisdom affords to men against their own corruptions, & the dangers ensuing thereupon; and Secondly, to set forth the difficulty of attaining this wisdom, thereby to teach men, not to be over ready to think upon some progresse they have made in their endeavours after wisdom and knowledge, that they know as much as is to be known, & that because the more they know, the more they will discover their want of knowledge; and yet withall to content themselves with such a measure of knowledge, as is attainable in this life, and not to aspire after the knowledge of those things that are above their reach. *All this have I proved by wisdom*; that is, by means of that wisdom which God was pleased in an extraordinary measure to confer upon me, and wherein I laboured by all possible means dayly to grow and increase: I did experimentally find the truth of all that which I have hitherto taught, either concerning the vanity of all things here below, or concerning the means prescribed, whereby men may come to live with as much comfort and content, as is attainable in the midst of so much vanity; or particularly concerning the great advantage which true wisdom yields to men in this; And yet withall he addes that after all his endeavours he came far short of that degree of wisdom which he sought to attain, as is expressed in the following words, *I said, I will be wise*, that is, I fully determined with my self to use all means that I might attain to perfection of wisdom, and perswaded my self that by those endeavours of

of mine I should attain it; *but it was far from me*, that is, I was still far from attaining that perfection of wisdom, which I laboured for; I found it still far above my reach; and that because the more he searched into Gods works of creation and providence, the more unsearchable depths he found therein; the more knowledge he attained, the clearer discovery he still made of his own wants herein; and after the diligence he used in tracing all the severall wayes, which men take for the attaining of true happinesse, he found himself still far from attaining that wisdom thereby which he sought for.

Verf. 24. *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*] As if he had said, As men cannot discern those things that are very far distant from them, nor dive into those things that are exceeding deep, so neither can they fully comprehend the works of God and the reason thereof, and that because they are so exceeding mysterious and profound, and so far beyond the reach of the eye of mans reason. And therefore no marvel it is though wisdom be so hard to be attained.

Verf. 25. *I applied mine heart to know, &c.*] In the Hebrew it is, *I and mine heart compassed to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom*; But the meaning is this, that though he found wisdom so hard to be attained, yet this did not discourage him, but rather made him more eager in the pursuite of it; in so much that he did seriously, and with all possible diligence turn himself every way, and made curious search into every thing wherein any knowledge was to be gotten, leaving no means unattempted, whereby he might hope to attain the wisdom he sought for: *and the reason of things*, that is, the nature and causes of things, why things are thus and thus, and why men did that which he observed they did; that weighing diligently the true principles and causes of all things, and comparing them with others, he might be able to give a clear and distinct judgement concerning all things whatsoever; *and to know the wickednesse of folly, even of foolishnesse and madnesse*, that is, the exceeding wickednesse, folly and madnesse that is in the wayes of ungodly men. And observable it is, that first he buckled himself to search out wisdom, and then afterwards to discover the folly of wickednesse, that so the first might be an Antidote against the second. But see the Notes, Chap. 1. 13, 17. Some conceive that Solomons drift in this verse is to shew, that having found the reason of Gods works to be above his reach, he addressed himself in the next place to observe the ordinary passages of mens lives. But I rather conceive that Solomon intending in the following verses to set forth some other vanities observed by him, besides those formerly mentioned in this book, he premiseth by way of introduction thereunto, that which he saith here concerning the diligent search that he had made after knowledge, in the exact discovery both of good and evil.

Verf. 26. *And I find more bitter then death, the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, &c.*] That is, the harlot, or whorish woman; whose heart is said to be *snares and nets*, because her heart is continually intent upon the designe of intangling mens affections, and is alwayes full of manifold cunning frauds and devices, whereby to deceive, insnare and destroy men; *and her hands as bands*, because by her wanton dalliances, her cogging gifts and lascivious embraces, she binds those to her, whom she hath once insnared, and holds them in bondage as her slaves, triumphing and insulting

ing over them at her pleasure ; Now this woman, Solomon saith, he had found *more bitter then death*, because though she seemes in her words and outward carriage to be sweeter then honey, and softer then oile, yet indeed in regard of the miseries she brings upon men, she is *more bitter then death* ; and it were better for a man to dye, then to be intangled by her ; see the Notes, Pro. 5. 3, 4. even in regard of the miseries she brings upon a man in this life, the terrors of his conscience, the ruining of his estate, the scorn and reproach he endures, the rotting and consuming of his body by noysome and filthy diseases, he is in a worse condition, then that of men that dye by an ordinary death. But then besides, whereas death doth only deprive men of this bodily and momentany life, the harlot deprives men of life eternall, and separates betwixt them and God, whose favour is better then life, Psal. 63. 3. Death in some wayes and cases may be an honour to men ; yea it may be so sanctified and sweetned, as that it may be to men a most welcome and desirable mercy ; But a mans being overcome by a harlot, can tend to nothing but misery, shame, and eternall destruction : *Who so pleaseth God*, (in the Hebrew it is, *who so is good before God*, for which see the Note, Chap. 2. 26.) *shall escape from her* ; that is, shall either be preserved from being intangled by her, or at least shall be delivered out of her snares ; And indeed, which is here implied, nothing but the supernaturall grace of God, no wisdom nor strength of their own, can ever deliver men from the power of a harlots temptations ; *But the sinner shall be taken by her* ; see the Note, Pro. 22. 14. But, may some say, How comes Solomon to speake here of the danger of harlots ? I answer, that having spoken in the foregoing verse of the diligent search he had made to discover the folly and madnesse of the wickednesse of men, he instanceth here in this one particular discovery that he had made, concerning the subtlety and danger of harlots ; the rather adding this to the Catalogue of the vanities he had formerly mentioned, that hereby he might testifie his unfeigned repentance for all those grosse miscarriages, wherinto by meanes of that sort of women he had formerly fallen.

Verf. 27. *Behold, this have I found* (saith the Preacher,) *counting one by one, to find out the account.*] This particule *Behold*, may be prefixed by way of admiration, to imply how strange and wonderfull that might well seeme which he meant now to say, or by way of perswading men to attend diligently to that, which he now assures them he had by a serious and carefull search found to be most certainly true. And this now may be, either that which he had said before, ver. 26. concerning the harlot, that such a woman is *more bitter then death*, that her heart is snares and nets, &c. or rather that which he addes afterward, ver. 28. *One man among a thousand have I found*, &c. And to challenge the more credit to his Testimony herein, he againe here styles himselfe, *The Preacher* ; thereby covertly intimating of how great importance his Testimony was, both in regard of that eminent measure of wisdom wherewith God had endued him, and in regard that he testified this after his repentance, when having been before insnared in the nets and bands of seducing women, he was through Gods mercy dis-intangled from those snares, and as a true penitent was returned againe to the Congregation of the Saints ; for which see the Note, Chap. 1. 1. And to the same purpose, I conceive, is that also added which followes in the next words, *Counting one by one to find out the account*, or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *weighing*

weighing one thing after another to find out the reason; for hereby he implies how considerable also this his testimony was in regard of the diligent and exact search that he had made to find out the truth of things, *weighing or counting them one by one* severally, that he might not be confounded with many things together, but might the better conceive of every thing, whilst he considered of it singly and apart by it selfe: Only indeed the things of which he here saith, that he counted or weighed them *one by one*, or *one after another*, may be severall wayes understood; as 1. It may be meant of men and women, and their severall wayes and courses, to wit, that whilst he made diligent search and enquiry into the conversation and doings of men and women severally *one by one*, that he might find out the reason thereof, and might give a cleare account and certain determination therein, he found that which he delivers here for an approved truth. And therefore some take the drift of these words to be all one as if he had said, That you may know that such ensnaring women, and such foolish men that are ensnared by them, are every where to be found, mark what I have observed, whilst I did severally consider the temper and behaviour of all men and women whatsoever: Or secondly, It may be meant of the manifold subtilties and devices of harlots, and the mischiefs that follow thereon, to wit, that whilst he made diligent search and enquiry into these, counting them severally *one by one*, that he might find out the number of them, he discovered that which here he declares, namely, that they are very dangerous snares, or that their subtilties are infinite, and not to be discovered; for so some understand the following verse: Or rather thirdly, It may be meant of all things in generall, to wit, that whilst he did in the pursuit of wisdom make a diligent search into the knowledge of all things, considering each thing singly apart by it selfe, and then comparing them one with another, that he might find out the reason of them, and discover how men might live wisely and happily, and the folly and madnesse of those wayes that disturb the life of man, he found out the truth of that which here he declares concerning women.

Vers. 28. *Which yet my soule seeketh, but I find not; &c.*] That is, Which full information concerning the wayes and courses of men and women, and the reason thereof, or which discovery of all the manifold and perplexed subtilties and devices of harlots for the intangling of men; or which satisfaction concerning the nature and causes of all things, I doe still with all diligence and earnestness make inquiry for, but cannot perfectly attain it. As for the following words, *One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found*, therein Solomon tels us what it was that he had discovered, though in other respects what he had made most diligent search after he could not find. And the most usuall interpretations that are given of those words are, either 1. that though there be very few men to be found, that are prudent, wise and good, and that truly deserve the name of men, yet women that are pious, and wise, and prudent, and such as they ought to be, are far more rarely to be found; A few such men he had found, *one amongst a thousand*; but such a woman amongst a thousand women he had not found; And indeed the Scripture tells us that women are the weaker vessels; and so by reason of their weakness, and the ficklenesse of their spirits, they are more prone to erre, and lesse able to resist temptations: whence it is that Solomon speaks elsewhere of a wise and ver-

uous woman, as of such a rare Jewel, *Who can find a virtuous woman? &c.* Pro. 31. 10. Or secondly, that though Solomon had taken notice of some few men that were wise and good, or that had avoyded the snares of enticing women, yet amongst those wanton women that he had conversed with, he had not found one good. And upon this ground some conceive that he expresth this number of a thousand, as having respect to his seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, 1 Kings 11. 3. Or thirdly, that the temper and disposition, the counsels and devices of men, even when they set themselves to delude and ensnare others, are far more easily discovered, then the disposition, the intentions, & plots of women, that is, of whorish women, (for of these Solomon is here speaking) Amongst these he tells us that he had not found one of a thousand whose heart could be discovered, their cunning fetches and secret devices were so innumerable many. Doubtlesse Solomons purpose in this place is not to condemn one sex rather then the other; that which he saith in severall places in the high commendation of good wives, is an evident proof that he had known severall wise and gracious women; But his aime is only to shew how unsearchable the subtilties of harlots are, wherewith they doe insatuate and beguile men.

Verf. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*] As if he should have said, This chiefly and most eminently I have discovered, as that which is a most manifest and undeniable truth; though I could not find out all the streames of wickednesse and folly amongst men and women, yet the original and fountain of them all I have clearly found out; namely, that God is no way to be blamed because there are so few either men or women, that are good and wise, and that take the right way to be happy, or because the subtilties of women are so numberlesse, and there are so exceeding few of them such as they should be; but the fault of this rests wholly upon man himselfe; and that because God created our first parents *upright*, that is, voyd of that subtilty and craft, whereof he had before spoken, and truly and perfectly wise, holy and just, so that they were in their understanding, will and affections, yea in the whole man, according to the holy will of God; mans body being subject to his soule, his inferior faculties to his reason, and both soule and body subject to God; and in a word, they were then every way able to have made themselves eternally happy: But our first Parents soone fell from this their original righteousness, in that hearkening to the temptations of Satan, they contented not themselves with that way to happinesse which God had prescribed, but yielded to follow those new devised wayes for the attaining a higher degree of blessednes, which Satan and their own deceived hearts did suggest to them, and to they, (and their posterity in them and with them) falling from that primitive honour and perfection, wherein they were created, became depraved and corrupted, and desperately deceitfull, Jer. 17. 9. and now following the counsell of their own hearts, men doe continually run into many crooked and sinfull wayes to their own ruine. So that by *many inventions*, here is meant, both the many false wayes wherein men seek to attain happines, being fallen from God, in whose favour true happines is only to be found; and likewise the many crooked counsels and devices, whereinto by their own corrupt hearts they are carried, when once they have forsaken the streight rule of Gods word, for the practising, excusing and defending of their evil courses.

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **W**Ho is as the wise man? &c.] Solomon in this Chapter proceedeth to give us other precepts of wisdom, by the observing whereof men may attaine to as much tranquility and content of mind, as in this vaine life they are capable of. Only by way of introduction thereto, he premiseth this which is said here in this first verse in the commendation of wisdom; for having told us, Chap. 7. 25. that he had set his heart to search into wisdom and folly; and having shown us in the latter part of that chapter, what he had found upon his search into the wayes of folly and madnesse, here now he tells us, what he had found upon his search into the wayes of wisdom, namely, the difficulty and the rarity, or rather the transcendent excellency thereof, (for either of these wayes the words may be understood) *Who is as the wise man?* That is, As some say, How hard a thing is it to find a man that is truly wise; Or, A man that is thus perfectly wise is not alas to be found; *And who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?* that is, where is a man amongst many to be found, that is able to teach others, or that can rightly discern and judge of all things whatsoever. Or rather, *Who is as the wise man?* that is, Who is like to him? or, there is no man to be compared to him; *And who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?* That is, Who but the wise man can doe this? or, who is to be so highly esteemed, as he that can interpret divine Oracles, that can explaine and unfold doubtfull things, and so can satisfie questions propounded, and give good counsell therein? or, that can truly judge of all affaires, and the circumstances thereof, and so can discern with respect to persons, places, times and seasons, what is fit to be done, and what to be avoyded? Yea, It may be understood as added with particular relation to that which went before, as if he had said, Seeing men have found so many inventions, so many crooked and false wayes, *Who is as the wise man*, that being able to understand and rightly to judge of things, doth not doe so, but keeps close to the rule of Gods word?

A mans wisdom maketh his face to shine, &c.] That is, 1. It makes men lovely, amiable and beautifull, awfull and reverend in the eyes of others; See the Notes, Pro. 1. 9. & 4. 8, 9. Secondly, It workes in men peace and tranquility, and joy of heart, and so likewise it makes them meeke and gentle and loving to others, and by that means their countenances become chearfull, & courteous, contrary to the sad and fierce lookes of those that are possessed with turbulent passions; even in affliction, as well as in prosperity they walke comfortably thorough faith, and doe not through discontent put on a lowring and frowning countenance, as others do. Before, chap. 7. 2, 3, &c. Solomon had told us that sometimes wisdom fenceth men against the vanities of this life, by mourning, sadnesse and anger, &c. and here now, it seemes with respect thereto, he shoves us that sometimes on the contrary, it doth the same by making their countenances chearely and serene, without any sadnesse and displeasure; see Psal. 34. 5. Thirdly, It enlightens men, so that they understand in all things what to doe, and what to avoyd; and fourthly, It teacheth men to behave themselves grauely, prudently, modestly, soberly and holily, and so causeth them to shine as

lights in the world; and the boldnesse (or, the strength) of his face shall be changed; to wit, say some Expositors, by encreasing, that is, he shall still become more and more bold and confident; though he be otherwise despicable, yet his wisdom shall make him every day more and more bold and courageous, in that thereby he becomes carefull to avoyd every evill way, and to live holily and righteously, and so is never ashamed; as likewise because thereby he foresees evill before it comes, and so is enabled to prepare for it. Or rather, the boldnesse of his face shall be changed; to wit, from presumptuous, over-daring and fool-hardinesse, to a true security, confidence and courage; or from impudency, fiercenesse, obstinacy and arrogancy, into modesty, meeknesse, gentlenesse and humility; the more a man encreaseth in wisdom, though he be never so much admired for it by others, the more lowly he will be, and the more mild to others.

V. 2. *I counsel thee to keep the Kings commandment, &c.*] Here Solomon again prescribes certain particular precepts of wisdom, tending much to the content, comfort and tranquility of mens lives; beginning first with that of being obedient to the command of the Supream Magistrate, this being one speciall act of prudence in order to mens living quietly and peaceably: *I counsel thee*, as if he should have said, If my counsel may seem worth the regarding, I advise thee, to keep the Kings commandment, that is, readily to observe & obey his commands, and that in regard of the oath of God, which may be understood two wayes, either 1. Because thou hast covenanted and sworn to obey the commandments of God, (and indeed we read that sometimes both the Kings and people of Judah did by a solemn covenant and oath oblige themselves to obey Gods Lawes. 2 Chro. 15. 12, 14. and 34. 31, 32.) and so this being one of Gods Laws, that subjects should obey the Supream Magistrate, thou art therefore bound even out of conscience to God to obey the command of the civil Magistrate. Or 2. Because of thine oath of Allegiance to the King, of which God is a witness and will be a revenger: which may the rather seem to be the meaning of the place, because we find that amongst the Israelites from the beginning there used to passe a covenant betwixt the King and people: for so it is said to have been, when David took the Kingdom upon him. 1 Chro. 11. 3. & it is most like that this covenant was confirmed by oath. Yet some Expositors conceive also that this clause is added by way of limitation, *I counsel thee to keep the Kings commandment*, yet alwayes with regard had to the oath of God, that is, not to obey the King any farther then may stand with that fealty which thou owest to God.

Vers. 3. *Be not hasty to go out of his sight, &c.*] That is, Do not rashly fling away in a chafe out of his presence, as proud and angry persons are wont to do; and as desiring to intimate thereby thy refusal to do something that he hath enjoyned thee, or thy discontent against him for something he hath spoken or done. But yet because the serving of Kings is sometimes in the Scripture expressed by their standing in their presence, as where it is said of Solomons servants, *happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee*, 1 Kings 10. 8. and of the seven chief Princes of Persia and Media that they saw the Kings face, Esth. 1. 14. therefore some Expositors by this hasty going out of the Kings sight here forbidden, understand mens hasty withdrawing themselves in anger from any place of household ser-

vice.

vice which they held under him, or their casting off their obedience, and flinging from their Allegiance in a way of defection or rebellion against him, or a rash retiring and hiding themselves from his sight, where they may secretly plot some mischief against him. But the first Exposition is the clearest. And accordingly the following words are to be understood: *stand not in an evil thing*, that is, if thou hast done any thing that evil is, do not persist in it, so as in the defence thereof to break out into any unseemly carriage against thy Prince; or if through unadvised passion thou hast forgotten thy self, do not proceed on in any stubborn way, but rather yield, and in an humble way seek to pacifie his displeasure; See the Notes, Pro. 25. 15. and 30. 32. *For he doth whatsoever pleaseth him*, that is, there is no thinking to stand out or rise up against him; he will be easily able by his power to quell thee, and by way of punishment or revenge to do to thee, whether justly or unjustly, whatsoever he pleaseth, and usually there is no dissuading Kings from doing whatsoever they have a mind to do. This therefore doth not give allowance to Princes to do what they please, but onely discovers the folly of resisting those, that have such power to do what they please.

Vers. 4. *Where the word of a King is, there is power, &c.*] That is, He is able by his command to do what he pleaseth, what he commands, will be presently done; so that there is no withstanding his displeasure, nor flying from his wrath; where ever his command comes it will be obeyed, there will be those found that will surprize thee and do to thee whatever he hath enjoined; *and who may say unto him, what dost thou?* that is, No man can resist him, no man dares mutter against him, or call him into question: Not that Kings may not be reprov'd, so it be done with wisdom and humility; but that his power is such that usually there is no man that will dare to oppose him.

Vers. 5. *Who so keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, who so fears God and keepeth his commands, shall thereby be endued with such wisdom from God, that he shall keep himself from the committing of any evil, that should provoke the Kings wrath and indignation against him, or that should expose him to any danger; yea, though such a man disobeyeth the King to obey God, the Lord God will preserve him. But questionlesse the commandment here intended is that before mentioned vers. 2. to wit, the Kings commandment; and the meaning is, that he that is obedient to the command of his King shall be free from all those evils, which disobedience against Princes doth usually bring upon men, yea he shall lack no good encouragement. See Rom. 13. 3, 4, at least if men neglect him, God will reward him: *and a wise mans heart discerneth both time and judgement*, that is, a wise man knoweth, 1. When Kings are to be obeyed, and when not, when their commands must be obeyed, and when it is fitter to dissuade, or to do something that is enjoined and not all; he is discreetly able to judge of these things, and will not in hope of reward or for fear of the Kings displeasure, do whatever he enjoins, though never so unlawfull and unfit to be done. 2. The fit season and the right way to deal with Kings, either for the preventing or appeasing of their displeasure, or the gaining of their favour, or dissuading them from pressing their commands, when they are any way grievous to him; and 3. The fittest seasons.

sons and opportunities and the best means and wayes for the accomplishing of those things that are enjoyned him.

Verf. 6. *Because to every purpose there is time and judgement, &c.*] That is, Because to every business that men undertake and purpose to do, there is a fit and reasonable opportunity to be taken, and a right manner to be observed for the doing of it, *therefore the misery of man is great upon him*, that is, men are commonly exposed to manifold miseries and calamities, by reason that they know not, or mind not the doing of things thus in a fit time and a right manner; Now this which is thus generally delivered concerning the miseries that befall men for want of observing judiciously the fittest seasons and right way for the doing of those things they undertake, Solomon addes with respect to that which he had said in the foregoing verse, concerning the wisdom of observing this time and judgement in dealing with Kings, shewing that subjects do usually bring much misery upon themselves, because they want this wisdom, of ordering themselves in their dealing with Kings seasonably and judiciously in all they do for the preventing or appeasing of their displeasure. Or else he doth here make way to another point of wisdom, which may conduce much to the tranquillity of mens lives, so far as it is attainable here in this world, and that is a heedfull prevention of or preparation for those evils, which may come upon us we know not when nor how soon? which is implied by shewing, that the best way to prevent these evils is by a circumspect care to do all things seasonably and with discretion and judgement for the manner of doing them (as he had said before in his precept concerning obeying of Kings) and withall that for want of this wisdom men doe commonly bring many miseries upon themselves, which not being able to avoid, there is no remedy against them, but a patient bearing of them.

Verf. 7. *For he knoweth not that which shall be, &c.*] That is, No man can foreknow what will be hereafter, and so he cannot tell what the issue will be of any enterprise that he undertakes; *for who can tell him when (or how) it shall be?* that is no man can possibly inform him of things to come, or of the manner how, or the time when they shall be. Now this is added to shew, that seeing therefore men cannot foresee nor prevent the evil that is coming upon them, and so can hardly know how to do things in the fittest season and manner, the misery of man must needs be great, both in regard of the continuall disquiet of his mind by his fears of the evil that may befall him, and also in regard of the evils themselves that are like to come upon him. Men may flatter themselves, that thus and thus things will come to passe, as they have suggested to themselves, where as alas they know not what the event will be, or how or when it will be; the evils which God hath appointed, shall come upon them, and the more unexpectedly they come upon them, the more heavily they will crush them.

Verf. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; &c.*] That is, when death comes no man is able to retain or hold his soul or breath of life from departing out of his body, see the Notes, Gen. 2.7. Job 10.12. & 34.14. It is as impossible for any man thus to retain his own spirit, as it is to withhold the wind from blowing: *neither hath he power in the day of death, to wit, to secure himself*

self from dying; the mightiest men, that have most power in the world, are as unable to withstand death; as the meanest and weakest amongst the people; and *there is no discharge, (or, casting off weapons) in that war*, that is, in that terrible conflict, when death, mans great enemy, as he is called, 1 Cor. 15. 26. shall assault men, and nature is wont to resist his assaults with all its strength, there is no possibility of being discharged or freed from fighting it out, or of avoiding this combate, neither is there any weapon of war, wherewith any man can assault this adversary, there is no arrow, spear or javelin which men can let fly against him; so that as there is no evading this war, so it is impossible also to beat off this enemy: before this all-conquering Champion sooner or later all men must fall, who then as a Conqueror will carry them away to the grave; (only indeed spiritually the Saints shall through the death of Christ even in death it self be more then Conquerors) *neither shall wickednesse deliver those that are given to it*, that is, say some Expositors, their wealth and great estates gotten by wickednesse; see the Note, Pro. 10. 2. or the pride, insolency and tyranny of those that are in great places; But I rather think that this is meant of those many base and unwarrantable practises, wherewith wicked men, when they have plunged themselves into danger, are wont to endeavour to deliver themselves; to wit, that all such shifts, and sinful crafty devices will be to no purpose, *shall they escape by iniquity?* saith David, Psal. 56. 7. Doubtlesse wickednesse is more likely to hasten mens ruine, then to deliver them from ruine. And this is here added, either, 1. with reference to that foregoing precept vers. 2. concerning the obeying of Kings; therefore ought subjects to be very wary of provoking their King to displeasure, because it is in his power to condemn them to death that disobey his commands, and when he doth so, it is not in the subjects power to retain his spirit; the wickedness of rebellion can never deliver them. Or else 2. with respect to what he had said in the foregoing verse concerning mans not being able to foreknow future things; whereto here he addes, that as men cannot foresee evils coming upon them, so neither can he withstand the greatest of worldly evils, namely death; thereby implying, as I conceive, that when men have been carefull to do all things seasonably and with judgement, that they may not rashly expose themselves or their lives to danger, for those evils which cannot be foreseen nor prevented, the best way is, wisely to prepare and set themselves to bear them cheerfully, and patiently to submit to the Providence of God.

Vers. 9. *All this have I seen, and applied mine heart unto every work that is done under the Sunne, &c.*] With this Transition, much like to those he hath formerly often used (see the Notes, Chap. 7. 15, 23, 25.) he passeth to the observation of further vanities. But the drift of the words seemes to be this, that whilst he was considering of these observations of his, whereof he had spoken, concerning Magistrates and people in a way of civill government, and of the good meanes that might be used to live quietly under Kings by a wise obeying their commands, he took notice of this likewise further, to wit, that sometimes God, though in justice to punish the sinnes of a nation, doth suffer tyrants intolerably to crush and afflict the poor people; adding yet this withall, that Gods advancing such men to these places of dignity, tends usually to their own hurt; *There is a time*, saith he, *wherein one man ruleth over another*.

another to his own hurt; to wit, not only because they grow the worse by their honour, and the bolder in all kind of wickednesse, but also because the wrath of God falls at last the more heavily upon them for the abuse of the power that God had put into their hands, in their oppressions, and tyranny, and other wickednesse they have committed; sometimes the people rise up against them and destroy them, and sometimes God himselfe powres forth his judgements upon them. Now the observation of this course of Gods Providence Solomon here mentions, thereby to teach men with wisdom and meeknesse quietly and contentedly to submit thereto, and to study to make good use of it.

Verf. 10. *And so I saw the wicked buried, &c.*] This place is very obscure in the Original, and is accordingly translated severall wayes by Interpreters. And hence it is that some understand the first clause only of the prosperous life and death of wicked men, I saw them highly honoured in life and death, *who had come and gone from the place of the holy*; that is, who had long peaceably enjoyed the power and honour of supream Magistracy; or who being desperately wicked wretches, had yet covered their wickednesse with a shew of religion, coming and going frequently from the house of God; And then the second clause they understand of the neglect and contempt of the godly, *and they were forgotten in the City, where they had so done*; that is, those that were truly godly, and had really and sincerely done that, which the other did only make a shew of, were driven into corners, at least they were slighted, and no notice in a manner taken of them, and so they were buried in forgetfulness. And of this it is, they say, that Solomon passeth that censure, *this is also vanity*; to wit, that wicked men and hypocrites should have so much honour done to them, whilst the righteous live and dye in so great obscurity. But according to our Translation the whole verse is to be understood of wicked Rulers, thus; *And so I saw the wicked buried*; As if he had said, Though I observed that the power, which God suffered tyrants to exercise for the oppression of others, tended at last to their own hurt (as was said in the foregoing verse) yet withall I saw, that many times they have lived in high esteeme to the last, dying peaceably, and being buried honourably, with great pomp and solemnity, with funerall Orations, statues and monuments erected for them, *who had come and gone from the place of the holy*; that is, who had all their lives time, with great state and majesty in the sight of the people come and gone from the royall throne, or seate of judicature, which is the seate of the holy God; see the Notes, Deut. 1. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 6. & Psal. 82. 1. (The expression here used is much like that, which we often meet with in the Scripture, of the Magistrates going in and out before the people, Numb. 27. 17. and is used to imply, that they lived and dyed peaceably in the place of Magistracy; as likewise the great state wherein they had lived amongst the people;) And then for the following words, *And they were forgotten in the City where they had so done*; Some take them to be added for the further setting forth of their seeming happiness, in that there was after their death no talke of their wickednesse in the place where they acted so much villany, so that not only in life and death, but even after death also they seemed to be happy; But I rather take this to be added by way of discovering the vanity of their prosperous estate, in that though they lived and dyed in peace and honour, and with a shew of great

great applause, yet within a while they were forgotten; they lived like Gods, but they dyed like men; yea indeed as they had lived like beasts, so being laid in their graves, they were forgotten like beasts, those that before flattered them being then silent, if not exclaiming against them, and so their name and memory rotted together with their dead carcases. And accordingly Solomon closeth what he had here said of these wicked tyrannicall Rulers with this censure, *this is also vanity*; to wit, to live in such pomp and power, and honour, and to be buried with such magnificent solemnity, and yet within a while to be quite forgotten; this being also no advantage to them in regard of their eternall condition, because in the midst of all their pomp and glory amongst men, the Lord abhorres them, and the more they have flourished here, the greater will their punishments be hereafter.

Verf. 11. *Because sentence against an evill work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sonnes of men is fully set in them to doe evill.*] Hereby the reason is hinted, why such wicked Governours and Tyrants, as Solomon had now spoken of, doe live and dye in their wickednesse, and both in life and death are applauded amongst men; it is because God doth usually forbear wicked men a long time, and it is the guise of all wicked men from hence to embolden themselves in their evill ways.

Verf. 12. *Though a sinner doe evill an hundred times, &c.*] That is, never so often, see the Note, Chap. 6. 3. and so haply he commit the same sin never so often, and his dayes be prolonged; to wit, through Gods forbearing to punish him; which he abuseth to the afflicting of the righteous; and consequently (for that this is implied the following words shew) though a godly man suffer evill many and many times, and his dayes be shortned, yet surely I know; as if he had said, What ever dreaming sinners may vainly imagine, yet this I know of a certainty, *that it shall be well with them that feare God, which feare before him*; that is, it shall be in the end well with them that feare God truly and sincerely, God himselfe bearing them witnesse, that seeth their hearts, or that feare him meerly out of an awfull respect to his presence and all-seeing eye, that avoyd evill, and doe good, not for feare of man, or for feare of shame or punishment, but sincerely, out of respect to God, and as desiring to approve themselves to him whose eye is upon them in all their ways.

Verf. 13. *But it shall not be well with the wicked, &c.*] In true judgement it is never well with wicked men, because their very prosperity ripens their sinnes, and fits them for judgement. But that which Solomon intends here is, that even in regard of his outward prosperity, it shall not be alwayes well with the wicked, he shall not alwayes escape, the judgement of God will at last fall upon him, and so in the end it shall not be well with him, but on the contrary exceeding ill; *Neither shall he prolong his dayes*; to wit, not alwayes, nor according to his desire and expectation, see the Note, Psal. 55. 23. God in his wrath will at the last sooner or later cut short his dayes, *which are as a shadow*, so that his life, when his dayes are most prolonged, is but a short life, see the Notes, 1 Chron. 29. 15. Psal. 102. 11. & 109. 23. & 144. 4. *Because he feareth not before God*, see the foregoing Note, ver. 12.

Verf. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, &c.*] That is, there are some just men

men that fare as ill for outward things as if they had lived wickedly; *Again there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous*; that is, there are some wicked men, that doe not only a long time goe unpunished, (which he had said before, ver. 11.) but which is far more strange, fare as well for outward things as if they had lived most righteously. *I said that this also is vanity*; that is, another and indeed a greater vanity. But now for the understanding of this we must know, that Solomon doth not intend to charge the Providence of God with vanity, for thus ordering and disposing things, both in regard of the righteous and wicked; for he knew well enough that God disposeth these things thus with admirable wisdom and justice, for the good of the righteous, and the ruine of the wicked. His meaning, I conceive, is, either 1. that it is a vanity in men to judge, that because of the sad afflictions of the righteous, and the outward prosperity of the wicked, therefore it is ill with the righteous, and well with the wicked; or secondly, that this is a vanity which men in their judgement are subject to, that they are ready vainely to conceive, that it should be alwayes well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked for these outward things, and so finding themselves often miserably deceived in their hopes, are thereupon disquieted and vexed; Or rather thirdly, that this sheweth the vanity of all things here below, in that in regard of them the state of humane affaires is so uncertain and inconstant, so full of seeming confusion and disorder, the good things of this life being usually here conferred upon those that seem in reason most unworthy of them, and the miseries of this life being usually the portion of those that must needs be best in Gods sight. And thus Solomon sheweth how God disposeth of things upon earth; that is, here below, (for after this life he would have us know it shall be otherwise) thereby to perswade men quietly to submit hereto. I know that some understand this of the vanity that is in the government of Princes, in that they many times deal with righteous men as if they were wicked, and with wicked men, as if they were righteous.

Verf. 15. *Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the Sunne, then to eate, and to drink, and to be merry, &c.*] This must be understood, as those former passages, Chap. 2. 24. & 3. 12, 13, 22. for which see the Notes there. Seeing there are so many evils and vanities, that even by the disposing Providence of God, men are liable to, and which no man can comprehend or redresse, thence Solomon concludes, that the best way for men to live comfortably here in this world, is with chearfulness and thankfulness, and in a holy manner to enjoy the blessings which God hath been pleased to confer upon them, quietly resting upon Gods fatherly providence for the time to come, without any over-curious searching into the secrets of his providence, without any vexing at those things we understand not, or troubling our selves about what shall be hereafter; *For that shall abide with him of his labour, the dayes of his life which God giveth him under the Sunne*; that is, this comfortable enjoying of these outward things, without vexation and anxiety of mind, is all the fruit that men can reap of their labours. See the Note, Chap. 2. 10.

Verf. 16. *When I applied my heart to know wisdom, &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, all kind of wisdom, (or rather, as we may see by the dependance this hath upon that which went before) the wisdom of God in the administration of things here below,

below, and the reason hereof, and to see the businesse that is done upon the earth; to wit, say some, the businesse wherein men doe severally toil and moil themselves here in this world, together with the reason and the vanity thereof, or rather, the businesse that God doth upon the earth in the government of the world, even the whole frame of Gods providence in the ordering of all humane affaires; (*for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes;*) to wit, either by reason of their continual carking and caring, and eager busying themselves about earthly things, see the Note, Chap. 2. 23. or else by reason of their eagerness in studying to find out the reason of all things that are done in the world; And indeed therefore many good Expositors do hold, that Solomon speakes this with reference to himselfe; thereby to imply that though he was so intent upon searching out the reason of Gods works, that he scarce took any rest either by day or by night, yet he could not find it out: which is that he addes in the next verse.

Vers. 17. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the Sunne, &c.*] That is, that no man can perfectly discover or comprehend the counsell of God in his works of Providence, not only those that concern the Angels and things in heaven, but even those also which are done here below, as namely those before-mentioned, ver. 14. concerning Gods afflicting the righteous, and his prospering the wicked. See the Note, Chap. 3. 11. *Because though a man labour to seek it out, yea further; though a wise man think to know it;* that is, though a man of eminent understanding, and withall a good and gracious man thinks he doth know it, or that he shall by much labour and searching attain the knowledge of it, yet shall he not be able to find it; that is, to discover and comprehend the counsell of God therein. And thus hath Solomon in these two verses proved, that the best way for men is quietly and chearfully to enjoy the present comforts, which God in this life affords them, and not to vex and disquiet themselves about the works of Gods Providence in his disposing of humane affaires, because the inquiring into this will be labour endlesse and fruitlesse; we may be sure that God orders all things for the best; but the reason of all his wayes we cannot comprehend.

C H A P. IX.

Vers. 1. *For all this I considered in my heart, &c.*] That is, All this concerning the seeming, strange and unsearchable providences of God in the ordering of humane affaires, I diligently weighed in my mind, making use of that singular measure of wisdom wherewith God had endued me, *even to declare all this*, that is, that I might make all these clear and perspicuous to mine own understanding, and discover them clearly to others, *that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God*, that is, that the persons and wayes and works of the best and wisest of men, (and much more the persons and wayes of others) are wholly ordered by the sure and secret guidance of divine Providence; Though men cannot discover nor search into the seeming unequall dispensing of things, yet this I found to be certain, that the most righteous and wise amongst men cannot dispose of themselves and their wayes as they please, but are wholly ordered by a divine hand, I know that in

other regards *the righteous and the wise and their works* may be said to be *in the hand of God*, as 1. Because God doth protect their persons from evil, and doth keep them in the way of truth and holmesse, that they may not fall away, they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. see Joh. 10. 28, 29. and 2. Because God doth accept of them and their services, and will certainly in due time reward them; though as they come from them, their works seem to passe away and to be no more, and are usually forgotten amongst men, yet they are still with God, he keeps an exact account of them, and will undoubtedly recompence them into their bosoms; Heb. 6. 10. But here doubtlesse they are said to be *in the hand of God*, because they are ordered and disposed by the secret hand of Gods all-ruling Providence; as indeed this expression of things being in the hand of God and of Christ, doth in the Scripture note that things are subject to the power of God, Joh. 3. 35. *The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand*, and that they are ruled and governed by the Providence of God, Acts 4. 28. And this is premised here to comfort the righteous, by letting them know that even their afflictions are from God, and to keep them from stumbling at the Lords dispensing of outward things promiscuously to all sorts of people, of which he speaks in the following words, *no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them*, that is, no man knoweth by their present state in this life, by those things that befall them that are evident to the outward sense, whether God loves or hates them, and that because the same outward things befall good and bad, those that God esteems his friends, and those that he esteems his enemies. I confesse that this last clause is likewise other-ways understood by some Expositors, as that no man knoweth what they shall love, and what they shall hate for the future, their affections not being at their own, but at Gods disposing; or that no men know whether that which they love, or that which they hate shall befall them, judging of future events by their present ordering of their affairs. But the first Exposition is most generally received.

Vers. 2. *All things come alike to all; &c.*] To wit, in regard of outward things. And this is the reason why no man can judge by such things whether he be loved or hated of God, as was said in the foregoing verse; *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not*, that is, to those that are godly and religious, and those that are irreligious and profane; *as is the good, so is the sinner*, that is, they are usually both in the same outward condition, and he that sweareth, to wit, without fear, and so is an ordinary swearer, and thereupon often sweareth vainly and rashly and falsely, and so profanes the name of God, *as he that feareth an oath*, that is, that is afraid of swearing vainly and falsely, and therefore is very wary of swearing, and when he doth swear he doth it reverently and religiously. Now from hence to the 13. verse some conceive that Solomon speaketh in the person of Atheists and Epicures, and tells us what carnal reason is prone to judge in the case before mentioned, to wit, that the righteous and the wicked fare every way alike both in life and death; But because Solomon speakes onely of outward events, that from thence he may encourage men to live comfortably in every condition whereinto God is pleased to bring them, I see no reason why we may not take all this as spoken by Solomon himself.

Vers. 3.

Verf. 3. *This is an evil among all things that are done under the Sun, that there is one event unto all; &c.*] That is, Amongst the many evils, vanities and miseries that men are subject to here in this world, I found this to be one sore affliction, a temptation very grievous and vexatious to men, Or, Among all humane miseries, I found this to be the sorest and grievous above all to be born, that the same equall events happen to the just and to the unjust, and so the worst of wicked men do many times live in as flourishing a condition as the best of Gods servants, and the holiest of men do usually undergo the same outward miseries with fools and ungodly wretches. Solomon doth not in these words condemn the Providence of God for ordering things thus; (for he knew well that God doth with admirable wisdom and justice thus dispose of humane affairs;) but he only notes this to be a sore temptation and very grievous to the holiest of men, when they take notice of it; Or else, as some think, this may be called *evil*, because it is occasionally the cause of much evil, in that wicked men do hereupon take occasion to break forth into all kind of wickedness; so that the evil here intended, is that which Solomon expresseth in the following words, *yea also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live*; But I rather think that by *evil* here is meant, that it is a thing very bitter and irksome to men; and that the following words do set forth a farther degree of mans vanity and misery, to wit, that even those men that spend their whole lives in all kind of wickedness, and that run headlong boldly and presumptuously into all kind of desperate madness and abominable courses, (happily the rather because they see good and bad fare all alike here,) do only at last die just as other men do, *madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead*; and there they rot in their graves as all the sons of men must do. Yet this last clause may be added onely to imply the folly of those men that from all mens faring a like here in this world, do embolden themselves in all kind of wickedness, in that after they have thus run madding after their own lusts, at last (which they never minded) they fall into the pit, and then they receive the reward of their impiety.

Verf. 4. *For to him that is joyned to all the living, there is hope; &c.*] That is, As long as life lasts, there is hope of his still enjoying his present comforts, yea of improving his condition for the better, both in regard of his spiritual and his outward estate, at least some of the benefits of the living he is sure to enjoy: *for a living dog is better then a dead lion*, that is, the basest and most contemptible person that is, whilst he lives, is in a better condition, then he that hath been of greatest account, when once he is laid in the dust, to wit, in regard of the things of this life, and the actions and employments thereof. And thus Solomon sets forth the different estate of the living and the dead, thereby to make way to that following exhortation verf. 7. wherein again he perswades men to that fore-mentioned remedy of the vanities of this life, namely, to enjoy comfortably the benefits of this life whilst life lasts, because when death comes that will deprive us of them all.

Verf. 5. *For the living know that they shall die, &c.*] Here a reason is given to prove what is said in the foregoing verse, that the living are in a better estate then the dead, namely, in regard of the enjoyment of the things of this life. And some Expositors do understand the words, as if he had said, It is true, the living know

know they must die, and that may somewhat afflict them, but yet as long as they live, they may enjoy the good things of this life, which the dead can in no wise do, because they know nothing of the things of this world; But I rather think that these words, *for the living know that they shall die*, are onely to imply the benefits of this present life; they know they shall die, this is a truth unquestionably certain, yea they find and feel it experimentally in the decayes of their bodies, and the uncertainty of their health, and consequently they may stir up themselves hereby, to provide that they may both live comfortably and die happily: the knowledge of this is an advantage to make them take off their affections from the perishing things of this world, to prepare themselves for death, and by faith and repentance to make sure of life eternal; and withall (which I conceive is here chiefly intended) to set themselves comfortably and thankfully to enjoy present mercies, which when death once comes they can no longer hope to enjoy. And therefore he addes, *but the dead know not any thing*: which must not be understood absolutely, as if the souls departed had no knowledge, but as with respect to those things, whereof Solomon is in this place speaking, that *the dead know not any thing*, to wit, of what is done here in the Land of the living; see the Note, Job. 14. 21. Or, they have no sense or experimentall knowledge, nor are capable of taking any delight in the knowledge or enjoyment of the things of this life; *neither have they any more a reward*, that is, they can no more have any benefit or content by the enjoyment of the things here below, which is the onely reward of mens labours in this life: Solomon doth not deny that men will be rewarded after this life according to their works: for this he had before asserted; see the Notes, Chap. 3. 17. and 8. 12, 13. And it is likewise true, that the dead can no more do any thing whereby they should expect a reward hereafter. But that which is meant here is, that being dead they can no longer advantage themselves any way by the things of this life, for which they have laboured: *for the memory of them is forgotten*, to wit, in regard of the things of this life, or of any thing they have done here; no man thinks of doing them any good, &c. See the Notes, Chap. 2. 16. Psal. 9. 5 & 31. 12. & 88. 7, 13.

Verf. 6. *Also their love and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, there is no more remembrance of their love and hatred and envy, when they are once dead; which indeed agreeth well with the last clause of the foregoing verse, *the memory of them is forgotten*. But I rather conceive the meaning to be, that being dead there is no person or thing which they love or hate or envy any longer; And to this some adde also that on the other side no body neither doth any longer love or hate or envy them. Questionless Solomon speakes not of the love, hatred or envy that may be in souls departed, but with respect to the things of this life, and to mens affections here, to wit, that when men are dead, they mind no more the riches, honours and pleasures of this world, nor can any longer enjoy any thing that is here below, which is more fully expressed in the following words, *neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the Sun*; and therefore if we expect any comfort in the things of this world, we must make use of them, whilst this life lasts.

Verf. 7. *Go thy way, &c.*] Some Expositors conceive that this which is said here and

and in the three following verses cannot be well understood otherwise, then as spoken in the person of sensual, brutish Epicures; But such kind of men are not wont to expresse themselves in such religious tearms, as are here used, vers. 9. where this life is again and again tearmed vanity, and the lengthening out of mens dayes is said to be the gift of God, and men are advised to be constant in loving and delighting in their own wives, without ever looking after strange women. And therefore this and that which followeth is rather to be taken still as the holy advice of the spirit of God by the pen of Solomon, *Go thy way*, as if he should have said, laying aside all vain endeavours to search into Gods secrets, and all vexatious disquiet of mind about the hidden works of Gods providence, as why he many times afflicts the righteous and prospers the wicked, betake thy self diligently and speedily to do what I now say to thee; *eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*, that is, casting thy care upon God, enjoy the fruit of thy labour, and live comfortably upon that which thou hast, see the Notes, Chap. 2, 24. & 3. 12, 13. & 8. 15. By those words *thy bread and thy wine*, there is an intimation given, that men must be carefull that they live onely upon that which is justly their own, and that their enjoyments, must be according to what is necessary and convenient, and neither above nor beneath their estate and condition: *For God now accepteth thy works*, that is, when thou doest thus enjoy what thou hast gotten by thy honest labour and is truly thine own, in a moderate and decent manner; without any anxious and distrustfull fears, God is well-pleased that thou shouldest so do. And indeed then onely can we use the creatures with joy and comforts, when we know that both our persons and works are well pleasing to God.

Vers. 8. *Let thy garments be alwayes white, &c.*] That is, When ever in other regards it is fitting and seasonable, let thy garments be cleane, handsome, and decent, yea and when thy condition will allow it, rich and gorgeous. Yet because it is generally said, that in ancient times in those Eastern Countries white garments were used, as expressions of honour and dignity, (whence the royall apparrell wherewith Mordecai was cloathed upon his advancement, is said to have been of blue and white, Esth. 8. 15.) as likewise in times of feasting and rejoycing, therefore this may be also literally meant of white garments; *And let thy head lack no oyntment*; that is, anoint thy self plentifully with sweet and precious oyntments; for this powring forth of oyntments upon the head was another thing, which they used much at their times of feasting and rejoycing. See the Note, Psal. 23. 5. The meaning of the whole is this, that the servants of God should take the comfort of the bounty of God towards them in the things of this life, keeping themselves within the bounds of religion and piety, and not out of a sordid disposition, or any other evill humour, deprive themselves of that chearfull content in the use of these blessings, which God allowes them to enjoy.

Vers. 9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest, &c.*] Therefore is the love of the husband here mentioned, because it is indeed only the love of married persons that makes their cohabiting and conversing together comfortable to them. As for those following words, *All the dayes of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the Sunne, all the dayes of thy vanity*; see the Note, Chap. 6. 12. It is true

true indeed that those words, *which he hath given thee under the Sun*, are by some understood to be meant of the wife, who is indeed elsewhere termed the gift of God, Pro. 19. 14. But if Solomon had intended this of the wife, he would only have said, *which he hath given thee*, and not, *which he hath given thee under the Sun*, which is not a proper expression. And therefore that clause is to be referred to the foregoing words, *All the dayes of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the Sun*, because it is God alone that doth in this world lengthen out the dayes of mens lives to them: and therefore concerning the dayes of mens lives, the very same expression is used before, Chap. 8. 15. *For that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour, which thou takest under the Sun*; to wit, this comfortable enjoying the good blessings of God, of which he had spoken from the beginning of the seventh verse; though some indeed think that mens living chearfully with their wives in the feare of God is here principally at least intended, this being the best of comforts to men in all their troubles, and travels and sorrowes here in this life. But see the Notes, Chap. 2. 10. & 8. 15.

Verf. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, &c.*] That is, Whatsoever thine abilities can reach to do, and which thou hast a faire occasion and opportunity to do, if it be also a thing lawfull to be done, *do it with thy might*; that is, do it carefully, diligently, vigorously, and speedily, with all the powers of thy soule, and without any delay; for that all this may be well intended by this expression, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe*, is evident by other places, where in the Original the like phrase is used, as Lev. 12. 8. Numb. 6. 21. 1 Sam. 10. 7. & Gen. 16. 6. Some conceive that the thing here enjoined is, that men should with all possible zeale and diligence take all the opportunities they can to doe all the good they are able, either in their generall or particular calling, by way of being serviceable in their places to God, or to their brethren; and that this is enjoined, either, 1. To cleare what was said in the foregoing verses from being mis-understood; That it might not be thought that therein there was any encouragement given to a voluptuous life, Solomon addes here, that withall men must endeavour with all their might to do all the good that possibly they are able: Or 2. as another meanes whereby men may come to live comfortably and happily. And indeed when men are earnest and diligent to doe all the good they can, as it is a meanes to prevent manifold crosses and miseries, so also it yields a quiet and peaceable conscience, which tends much to the happinesse and comfort of mens lives. But the whole Context in this place sheweth, that the advice here given is, that men should freely and with all their might, do whatever may lawfully be done whilst they live here in this world, as occasion serves, for their comfort and delight. Having before instanced in those chiefe outward comforts, of meat, and cloaths, and marriage, he now addes this generall advice, that in all other things, wherein an opportunity was given for refreshing themselves in an honest way, they should embrace it, if it lay in their power, and that because this present life is the only time for the enjoying of these comforts; *For (saith he) there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest*; to wit, in regard of the things of this life. He doth not deny the knowledge that is in the soules of men departed; But he exhorteth men whilst they live, freely to enjoy the commodities that are here given of God for the

the comfort of mens lives, because in the grave, or in the state of death, whither men are continually going, they can no more make any use of their skill, or knowledge, or wisdom, for the doing of any good either to themselves or others. And very observable indeed it is, what kind of contentments and delights Solomon doth here advise men to enjoy, namely, not such as are brutish and sensuall, but such as arise from our honest labours, and wherein we are guided by skill, and wisdom, and knowledge.

Verf. 11. *I returned and saw under the Sunne, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, &c.*] This passage may be added to that which went before upon several respects; for 1. It may be added as another vanity, which upon farther observation of humane affaires Solomon had taken notice of, to wit, that the event and successe of men in their affaires and undertakings, are not according to the abilities that are in men, but quite contrary, so that the lesse nimble in running doe many times winne the race, &c. Or 2. it may be taken as a farther discovery of that which he had said before, ver. 2. that *all things come alike to all*, in that the race and the victory is sometimes gotten by the weaker party as well as by the stronger, and that the simpler sort of people get a competent livelihood, yea many times great estates, as well as those that are men of great wisdom and understanding, &c. Or 3. It may be conceived as a farther illustration of what he said before, ver. 1. that all things are in the hands of God, so that it is not in the power of man to order or accomplish his affaires as he pleaseth, but that all things are disposed of by the powerful, the secret and unsearchable providence of God. And thence some conceive it is, that Solomon saith, entring upon this passage, *I returned and saw under the Sunne, that the race is not to the swift, &c.* As if he had said, I betook my selfe againe to consider of the event of things, as formerly, or, I turned my selfe from considering how the persons of men are in the hands of God, to consider how the works of men are also in the hand of God, and I observed that in every thing those that are of meane parts, do many times thrive better, and have better successe, then those that are of far greater abilities: Or 4. It may be added with reference to that which was said in the foregoing verse; for having there exhorted men to doe whatsoever their hand findeth to doe, with their might, lest men should hereupon trust to their own sufficiency, and take it for granted that in all undertakings, things are still carried on according to mens abilities, and that godliness or holiness make no great difference in the successe of mens actions, here he sheweth that this was not so, but that he had observed the quite contrary, namely, that *the race is not to the swift, &c.* but *time and chance hapneth to them all*; that is, they all meet with such successe as the seasons and casuall occurrences in those times, happening according to Gods all ruling Providence, do produce; which counsell and governing hand of God being hidden from us, therefore the events seem to us to come by chance, though it be not so in regard of God. All which should teach us, not in any thing to trust to our own abilities, or to ascribe our successe to our own strength, but to look above second causes to God the supream disposer of all, to implore his blessing, to give him the praise of all good successe, and quietly to submit to his will, when things fall not out, as we would have them.

Verf. 12. *For man also knoweth not his time, &c.*] This is added to prove the last clause of the foregoing verse, that *time and chance hapneth to all*; for, saith Solomon, *man also knoweth not his time*; that is, the time of his death, or the time of any calamity that cometh upon him. Now if he knoweth not what shall befall him the next day or houre, much lesse can he effect what he desires or resolves upon by his own counsels, wisdom and industry, but things must needs befall him casually in that they were not effected by his own foresight and providence; *As the fishes that are taken in an evill net*; that is, a net that is craftily laid for them, and that proves destructive to them, and *as the birds that are caught in the snare*, where they expected only to feed themselves; *so are the sons of men snared in an evill time*, when it falleth suddenly upon them, when it comes unexpectedly and unavoidably upon them, by the disposing providence of God from above; according to that of our Saviour, Luk. 21. 35. *As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

Verf. 13. *This wisdom have I seen also under the Sun, and it seemed great unto me.*] To wit, that wisdom related in the two following verses, of a poore man who by his wisdom delivered a little weake City, that had few men in it to defend it, when a great and mighty King had besieged it round about, and had built great bulwarks against it, of which he passeth this sentence, that to him it seemed great and wonderful, though by the inhabitants of that City it was so little minded. Severall opinions there are concerning the drift of this passage also. But three particulars are mentioned that seeme most probable; neither doe I see, but that they may be all joyntly intended; for 1. this following Relation may seem to be an instance given to make good what he had said in the foregoing verse; as namely, that by the poverty and neglect of this man of great wisdom, he proves that bread is not alwayes to the wise, and by this poore mans delivering a little weak City that was besieged so straitly by a mighty King, he proves that the battell is not alwayes to the strong. 2. The drift of it may be to set forth the excellency and profitableness of wisdom; for having shown in the foregoing verses the insufficiency of humane wisdom in it selfe for the effecting of any thing intended, lest men should hereupon slight it, here he sheweth the excellency of it, and proves, that though it doth not alwayes produce its proper effects, when God is pleased to disappoint it, yet many times it is a means of effecting great things, even beyond all humane expectation; Or 3. The aime hereof may be to discover a farther vanity, which Solomon had observed, to wit, that wisdom in men of mean and low condition is usually slighted and disesteemed; To which end he first extolls the wisdom of a poor man that delivered a City from a desperate danger by his wisdom, and then addes how little the wisdom of this poor man was regarded.

Verf. 14. *There was a little City, &c.*] This may be taken, either as a true story, or as a Parable only; and it matters not much which we conceive it to be.

Verf. 15. *Now there was found in it a poore wise man; and he by his wisdom delivered the City; yet no man remembered that same poore man.*] This last clause may intend both, 1. that before this noble exploit of his, there was no notice taken of him or of his wisdom, nor any account made of him, and so being a poor obscure person, he was not thought of as a man likely to help them in this extremity; (all which notwithstanding

withstanding he was never a whit the lesse solicitous for the publick good, nor did neglect to do for the City what he was able;) and 2. that after he had thus strangely saved the City, there was nothing done to him by way of thankfulnesse, nor was he ever a whit the more honoured or minded amongst them for that which he had done for them.

Verf. 16. *Then said I, Wisdome is better then strength, &c.*] To wit, any kind of strength, as of body, courage, wealth or military forces. See the Notes, Chap. 7. 19. & Pro. 21. 22.

Verf. 17. *The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more then the cry of him that ruleth among fooles.*] That is, they ought so to be heard, as when it is said, Mal. 1. 6. *A son honoureth his father*; the meaning is, that he ought to honour him; Or, they are usually so heard; for having spoken of the contempt of wisdome in the words immediately foregoing, ver. 16. *Nevertheless, the poor mans wisdome is despised, and his words are not heard*; lest this should be taken to be any disparagement to wisdome, here he sheweth that wisdome is of great efficacy to work upon mens affections, and that usually the words of wise men doe mightily prevaile with those that heare them, though there may be many obskinate fooles, that never mind nor regard them. As for that phrase of being *heard in quiet*, it may have respect both to the quiet stillnes, the lowlinesse, gentlenesse and mildnesse of the wise mans speaking, to wit, that such mens words will be much regarded, though they speake in a very calme, humble, and meek way, and do not deliver themselves with that loudnesse and contention of voyce, as some others doe; as likewise to that silent attention, that calme, pliable and submissive spirit, wherewith their hearers do hearken to their words; And then for *the cry of him that ruleth among fooles*; thereby is meant, either the loud and clamorous imperious commands of men in place of authority and power, amongst a stubborne, rude, tumultuous people, or amongst their Parasites, that for feare or flattery may seem to heare and admire what they say, when indeed they do not seriously at all regard them: Or else the cry of those who are esteemed all in all, and bear all the sway amongst a company of silly people, meerly because of their loud speaking. Some explaine the words thus, that wise mens words are heard *in quiet*, that is, by men of a quiet, composed, undisturbed spirit, more then the cry of him that ruleth amongst a tumultuous foolish people. And so they think that hereby there is covertly a reason hinted, why the wise mans words are usually disregarded, as he had said in the foregoing verse, to wit, because commonly men are inwardly distemper'd with some passion or other, and the wisest of men shall never be regarded, unlesse it be by those that are inwardly quiet and free from turbulent passions. But the former Exposition is more generally approved.

Verf. 18. *Wisdome is better then weapons of warre, &c.*] That is, Policy joyned with piety, (for that this is included is clear, by that which is said on the contrary in the following clause concerning a sinners destroying much good) is not only better then strength alone, but it is also better then armed strength; which is inferred from the foregoing relation of the poore wise mans defending a City against the numerous army of a mighty King, furnished with all kind of ammunition and military provision for the besieging of it, and raising of forts and bulwarks against it; *But one sin-*

uer destroyeth much good; that is, As one wise man may save a multitude of people, and that which belongs to them, so one sinfull fool, erring through folly and ungodliness, may by his foolish counsell, treachery and wickednesse, many severall wayes, destroy whole Cities and Common-wealths, and bring to nothing many provisions made, and many good counsels and enterprizes undertaken for their benefit and advancement. And thus by shewing how mischievous folly is, he still goeth on in setting forth the necessity and excellency of wisdom.

C H A P. X.

Verf. 1. **D***Ead flies cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, &c.*] That is, say some Expositors, They mar it and make it noisome and loathsome, as if it stanke. But I see not why the words may not be understood according to the letter. For though with us a dead flie or two doth not work this effect in a box or pot of odoriferous ointment, yet it might well be so in those Eastern Countries, where their ointments were far more pure and precious, and they had flies far more venomous and noisome then ours; *so doth a little folly, him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.* As if he had said, As dead flies, though little contemptible creatures, will taint and corrupt the most precious ointments, and make them unfavoury; so doth a little mixture of folly, indiscretion and wickednesse, stain and blemish the reputation of men, and bring reproach upon their good name (which is indeed elsewhere compared to precious ointment, Chap. 7. 1.) causing them to stink in the nostrils of others, though they be in places of highest honour, and were before justly respected for their wisdom and vertue; and that partly because men are naturally more prone to take notice of, and to censure a little folly that is in men, then to see and esteem of much good that is in them, and are wont for some smaller miscarriage to forget all their former good deservings; and partly because a little folly and miscarriage will be soonest discerned in men of greatest eminency for wisdom and honour, as a small spot is soonest discerned in the whitest and finest garments. And thus Solomon proceeds, as in the former Chapter, to set forth the excellency of wisdom, and the evil of folly, that so men might see how much wisdom may confer towards the comfort, tranquillity and happinesse of mens lives. And having said in the last words of the foregoing chapter, that one sinfull fool doth often destroy much good, he doth here further illustrate that, shewing how much prejudice a little folly may bring upon a man, that was before deservedly had in high esteem.

Verf. 2. *A wise mans heart is at his right hand; &c.*] This expression implyeth, 1. That the wise man doth not do things rashly, but that he is wont seriously to ponder of all things before hand, and then after mature deliberation and consideration to undertake that he resolves upon. See the Notes, Cha. 2. 14. & Pro. 16. 23. 2. That he hath his wisdom ready at hand to counsell, guide and direct him in all things, he is not long to seek what to do, but his heart is ready and prepared to every good work; and doth constantly suggest how he should order himself and his affairs wisely and judiciously upon all occasions. 3. That he hath his heart at command,

so that he can strongly over rule himself in his naturall desires, and reine in his corrupt passions and affections: and 4. That he doth all things well and in a right manner, he dispatcheth all his affairs, as with prudence and judgement, so with strength, dexterity, expedition and good successe: *but a fools heart is at his left,* that is, he sets himself about his businesses rashly and inconsiderately, and accordingly he bungles in all he doth; he is many times at his wits end, not knowing what to do or which way to turn himself; and is many times carryed away with his strong passions; and when he sets himself to work, he doth all things foolishly and preposterously, awkwardly and unhandsomely; he doth not carry on his affairs with nimbleness and dexterity, and even then when he doth that which is simply good in it self, yet he mars it in the doing of it, because he doth it with some sinister ends, or some way fails grossely in the manner of doing it. Because naturally we are readier to use our right hand then our left, and find more strength and nimbleness therein, and can do any thing more surely and handsomely and quickly therewith, then with the left (which makes us also most to esteem of that hand, Mat. 5. 29, 30.) thence are both these expressions of the wise mans heart being at his right hand, and the fools at his left.

Verf. 3. *Yea also when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool*] That is, say some Expositors, Even when he is abroad in publick, he cannot hide his folly, but through want of wit and grace, he some way or other discovers it to all men; Or; Not onely in his undertakings of greater moment, but even in all the common and ordinary actions of his life, by his talk, his looks, his gait, his gestures, or some other thing observable in his deportment of himself, he proclaims his folly so palpably, that he doth as it were say unto every one that he is a fool. I know that some Expositors do otherwise understand the words (and indeed the words will bear that sense) namely that when a fool doth those things that clearly discover his folly, yet by reason of this folly, he is withall highly conceited of himself, so that he is ready to condemn all others of folly and to say unto every man that he is a fool. But the former Exposition is I think, far the clearest.

V. 4. *If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, &c.*] That is, If the anger of the Prince, or any Magistrate in place of power, do rise up in high displeasure and indignation against thee, as a storm or flame of fire sodainly arising in his breast, See the Note, Pro. 16. 32. *leave not thy place*, that is, be not transported in mind or moved inwardly herewith; or busle not up and down from place to place, as angry persons are wont to do; Or, keep still within the bounds of thy condition, calling and duty; do not for fear of his anger neglect to do what thy place or duty requires thee to do, be constant herein; and on the other side, do not in anger cast off thine Allegiance, cease not to carry thy self as becomes a subject, but by patience, forbearance and submission yield unto him. See the Note, Chap. 8. 3. *for yielding pacifieth great offences*, as if he had said, Thou mayest haply think that a Princes wrath is alwayes implacable; but fear not that; such a yielding carriage will allay the greatest discontent thy Prince can take up against thee, whether causelessly or justly. See the Note, Pro. 25. 15. And this is here prescribed, as one particular precept of wisdom, which may tend much to the quiet and comfort of mens lives.

Verf. 5. *There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, &c.*] That is, a common evil, which I have observed in humane affairs, to wit, that which followeth in the next verses, concerning the advancement of unworthy persons, &c. *as an error, which proceedeth from the face of the ruler*, that is, from his looking favourably or with neglect or displeasure upon men, which though it may seem a small error, yet it is indeed a great fault; or rather, which is indeed a fault in Princes, they being the cause of it, though usually it proceeds from ignorance or inadvertency in them, because they may be over-carelesse in chusing men for places of honour, and power, and not being able to know of themselves what men are, they must necessarily depend upon the information of others, and so may easily fall into mistakes being deceived by the flatteries, and false reports that are made to them by those that are about them. Now this is mentioned here as an evil, which may occasion mens falling off from the respect, Allegiance, and obedience which they should yield unto their Princes (of which Solomon had spoken in the foregoing verse) and therefore wisdom should teach men to take care that they stumble not at it.

Verf. 6. *Folly is set in great dignity, &c.*] That is, very fools, weak men, that are of no abilities for government and wicked in their lives, are advanced by Princes; The abstract is here put for the concrete, as in Ps. 5. 9. *their inward part is very wickedness.* And the rich sit in low place, that is, men rich in wisdom and other precious endowments, men of great eminency for gifts and grace. Yet some understand this of the great changes that often happen in Commonwealths, when silly mean people are advanced to high places, and noble persons and great men are brought to a low condition. And so they do likewise that which followes.

Verf. 7. *I have seen servants upon horses, &c.*] To wit, like Princes; And by *servants* is meant unworthy, contemptible persons, men base born, and of a low sordid condition, and especially men of base and servile spirits, that are very slaves to their lusts; and *Princes walking like servants, upon the earth*, that is men of noble birth and condition, or, men of Princely qualities, of free, noble, prudent and pious spirits; learned, wise, grave and godly men.

Verf. 8. *He that diggeth a pit, shall fall into it, &c.*] Both this and the following Proverbial expressions do all tend to shew, that by doing evil to others, men do usually bring mischief upon themselves; And so Solomons drift in alledging them here may be, either 1. To discover the folly of Princes in advancing unworthy persons, and casting down or disregarding those that are fit to be in high places, by shewing that whilst Princes do by these disorders in government oppress the Commonwealth in general, or wrong any particular persons, it redounds usually in the conclusion to the bringing of troubles, misery and ruine upon themselves; Or 2. To shew the reason why great persons are many times brought down, and base persons are exalted, to wit, because ambitious persons do many times climb up to high places by undermining and supplanting others, and so the like is afterwards done to them; or being in places of power they contrive mischief against others, and the evil intended against them falls at last upon themselves. Or 3. To clear it to be a great folly in subjects upon any discontent against their Prince, to break out into any act of disloyalty,

disloyalty, or seek to be revenged on him by any secret treachery, because such attempts do usually prove pernicious to the Authors of them; or 4. To hint unto all men in general a point of wisdom, which will much conduce to the comfort and quiet of mens lives, and that is, to avoid all injurious dealing with others; whereby fools do usually bring much terror upon their consciences, and many other evils and miseries. See also the Note, Pro. 26. 27. *and who so breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him*; which is said, because serpents and adders are wont to lie lurking in hedges: And accordingly it may be applyed to the particulars above mentioned, that they that unjustly invade the estates and rights of other men, that break the hedge of Fundamental Lawes, and good customes, the well established government and discipline of a Kingdome, and that by any acts of disloyaltie, shall break the fence that God hath made about his own Ordinance of Magistracy, and shall violate the limits and bounds that God hath set to Sovereignty and subjection, some great evil shall unawares light upon him.

Vers. 9. *Who so removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; &c.*] That is, He that undertaketh to break down and remove the stones of another mans wall, to wit, with an intent of doing him some injury, may hurt himself thereby; in that the other stones may by that means unexpectedly fall upon him, and bruise him; Or he that will undertake to remove huge massy stones, that are too heavy for him to wield, may by over straining himself and many other wayes do himself a mischief. We have the like expression, Pro. 26. 27. for which see the Note there, as likewise Zach. 12. 3. & Mat. 21. 44. But that which is intended by this Proverb seems to be, either 1. That by the seeking the hurt of others, men usually bring some greater hurt upon themselves; Or 2. That they that go about to change the ancient customes and Fundamental Lawes of Nations, or to make innovations in Religion, or any way to disjoynt a well settled government, do usually thereby bring mischief upon themselves; or 3. That subjects contending with princes that are too mighty for them, take the ready way to ruine themselves. And so likewise the next Proverb, *and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby*, may seem to intend the same things, or more especially the danger of endeavouring to make division between persons firmly and closely united together.

Vers. 10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, &c.*] That is, If the man that cleaveth wood do not whet the edge of his hatchet (for these words seem clearly to refer to the last clause of the foregoing verse,) *then must he put to more strength*, that is, he must strike the harder, and all for want of wisdom, in not whetting his tooles seasonably as he should do. And that which is implied hereby is, that such a man puts himself to do that with a great deal of toil, which a weaker man, that was careful to whet his tooles might have done with a great deal more ease; yea many times besides, by striving to strike with so great violence, he may several wayes come to mischief himself; *but wisdom is profitable to direct*, that is, that will teach and direct men to do all things well and with good successe; even in the meanest and most ordinary employments, as in cleaving and hewing of wood, wisdom is a great help to men, as is evident in the present instance, of the labourers whetting his axe that it may do his work the better; And so it is in all things

things whatsoever : Though industry and force may do much , yet wisdom is more profitable then either of them, in that it directs men to do things with lesse toil and hazard, see the Note, Chap 9. 16. But the main thing here intended is to shew, that thus it is in the present case, that Solomon is now treating of, to wit, that by a wise carriage of themselves subjects may pacifie the wrath of Princes. See the Note, Pro, 16. 14. whereas if through folly they carry themselves stubbornly and passionately and rebelliously against them, by their violence and wilfulnesse they usually ruine themselves.

Verf. 11. *Surely, the serpent will bite without enchantment, &c.*] This may seem to be added with respect to that which was said before, ver. 8. *Who so breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.* But the drift of the words is still to shew how necessary wisdom is to direct men how to carry themselves towards Princes. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment* ; that is, if he be not charmed before he bites ; see the Note, Psal. 58. 4. *And a babler is no better* ; the meaning is, either, first, that a foolish man that knoweth not how to rule and order his tongue, betimes to charme and pacifie the displeasure of his Prince with yielding and submissive language, if he thinks to appease him afterwards, is no better then the inchanter, that neglects to charme the serpent, till he hath bitten him, and then attempts it, when it is too late ; or secondly, that a vain babler, that knows not how to charme his tongue with meekness and discretion, and so doth by his froward, discontented and disloyal speeches provoke his Prince to displeasure, is no better then an uncharmed serpent, and doth bite as a serpent.

Verf. 12. *The words of a wise mans mouth are gracious, &c.*] Or grace ; as it is in the Hebrew ; see the Note, Pro. 22. 11. The meaning is, that as they are comely and gracious in themselves, so they are pleasing and acceptable unto others, and so do procure grace and favour from men ; see the Note, Pro. 10. 32. They doe not only charme the displeasure of a King, but also gain upon him so far, that thereby the wise man doth screw himselfe into his love and favour ; *But the lips of a foole will swallow up himselfe* ; that is, they will destroy not others only but himselfe too ; such a man by his froward, unadvised and disloyal speeches, doth provoke his Prince to his own utter undoing ; see the Note, Pro. 12. 13. Thus he proveth what he had said, ver. 10. that *wisdom is profitable to direct*, and how much mischief foolish men may bring upon themselves by their disloyal speeches against their Princes.

Verf. 13. *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talke is mischievous madness.*] As if he should have said, His whole discourse is frivolous and foolish ; only indeed the more he speakes, the more usually he discovers his folly, proceeding still from evill to worse, from weaknesse to wilfulnesse and intolerable wickednesse ; as a man that is once out of his way, the farther he goeth, the farther still he goeth out of his way ; and that because if he be but in the least interrupted, contradicted, or admonished, he is wont then to bluster and to break forth into furious passion, and lays about him like a distracted man.

Verf. 14. *A fool also is full of words, &c.*] This is mentioned as another evill that is found in the speech of men, that do not order their speech according to the direction of wisdom, to wit, that they multiply words to no purpose ; whereas wisdom

some directeth the wise to observe a measure and moderation in their discourse, and not to speak more then is needfull, and usefull to be spoken, fooles on the other side are alwayes talkative, so that there is scarce any end of their babling. And this also may be added, as all that went before seemes to be, with respect particularly to the folly of subjects in speaking to the discontent of their Princes. The greatest difficulty of this verse is, concerning the dependance which the following words, *A man cannot tell what shall be, &c.* have upon this first clause, *A foole is full of words*; for 1. Some conceive that these last words are mentioned as the words of the foole, and that either, first, as in imitation of his vaine tautologies, and speaking the same thing over and over; *A man cannot tell what shall be, and what shall be after him, who can tell him?* Or else secondly, as the plea wherewith he is wont to embolden himselfe in his foolish sinfull wayes, to wit, that no man can tell what shall be hereafter, especially what shall be the estate of men after this life; whereas men talk of the punishments which God will sooner or later bring upon men for their sinfull wayes, or foolish wicked talking, and of a day of Judgement that will be at the end of the world, the truth is, that no man knoweth whether there will be any such thing or no; and therefore the best way for men is to take their pleasure in all things as far as they may. Or thirdly, as the defence whereby he seekes to justify his foolish, and wilfull undertakings and enterprizes, taken from the possibility of them, and that either by way of arguing for them, when he first undertakes them, *A man cannot tell what shall be, &c.* As if he should have said, I doe not see but my undertakings are sensible enough; who can tell what the issue may be? or else by way of excusing his enterprizes; when they have not sped well, by alledging, that the best counsells may be successlesse, because no man can tell what the event of things will be. And againe, secondly, Some conceive that the last words are added, by way of discovering the folly of the fooles multiplying many words; whereof Solomon speakes in the first clause; *A foole also is full of words*; to wit, in that he will be talking of things to come, boasting of his resolutions and purposes for the time to come, what he will doe, and what he shall have, whereas no man can know future things, nor can any man informe him therein; *A man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?* See the like expressions, Chap. 3. 22. & 6. 12. & 8. 7. This last exposition I like the best; And indeed that which Solomon intends here is very fully set forth by the Apostle James, Chap. 4. 13, 14. &c. No man knoweth how little a time he hath to live; and therefore when men boast of what they will doe hereafter, their boasting must needs be vaine, because no man can know what will be after him, that is, when he is dead and gone.

Verf. 15. *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them; because he knoweth not the way to the City.* The drift of these words is to shew the necessity of wisdom, by shewing the vanity and fruitlesse of all the endeavours of men, when they want wisdom to guide and direct them in their endeavours. Some conceive that this is spoken with reference to that which was said immediatly before, ver. 14. & that the drift of it is to tax the folly of such men, who are wont to toile themselves in searching into the knowledge of future things, or things that are most above the reach of reason, or that are most hard to be discovered; or that will be talking much of such things,

things, when in the meane season they know not *how to go to the City*, (which because it is a common broad and beaten road, children and blind men will not misse their way in it,) that is, they are ignorant of those things, which every ordinary man, yea every child almost knoweth. But I conceive the intent of the words is more generall, namely, to shew that when men want wisdom to direct them, first they toil themselves in seeking to dispatch their affaires well and successfullly, but all in vaine, and to no purpose, because as a man cannot goe to a City when he knoweth not the way thither, but missing of his way goeth up and downe, sometimes one way, and sometimes another; and many times falls into deep and rugged wayes, far more troublesome, then the right way would have been, and so is toiled and wearied in vaine and to no purpose, so they that are voyd of wisdom, and so know not how to do things in a right manner, must needs weary themselves in their foolish wayes, and faile of effecting what they intend; and so all their vaunting undertakings come to nothing; yea even in those things that are most easie, for want of wisdom they many times miscarry: and secondly, they weary themselves with the evils and miseries, which by their own folly and wickednesse they bring upon themselves, and that because they know not the way of true wisdom and piety, that royal high way which God hath so fairly and clearly revealed unto us in his word, that thereto that may well be applyed which the Prophet saith, Isa. 35. 8. *The wayfaring men, though fooles, shall not erre therein*; Yea and it may be also understood, (consonantly to all the other passages of this chapter, which treat of the matters of a civil State) as spoken with particular respect to those fooles, that by their undiscereet carriage of themselves towards Princes, do weary themselves in those many troubles and miseries which hereby they intangle themselves in; and that because they know not *how to goe to the City*; that is, they are ignorant of the plainest principles of civil government, and how to converse with men; or, they know not those easiest rules of discretion, which one would think every child should understand.

Verf. 16. *Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child*, &c.] Some Expositors take this and the three following verses to be the words of discontented subjects, murmuring against the folly and riot of their Princes. But I suppose Solomon doth here proceed to set forth the necessity of wisdom, and the great evil of folly, by shewing how great a mischief it proves to kingdoms, when their Princes want wisdom to direct them in their government: and as hitherto in this chapter he hath directed subjects to avoyd all disloyal carriage of themselves towards their Princes; so here on the other side he adviseth Kings and Princes to carry themselves as becomes men in such places, lest otherwise by their folly and misdemeanors they ruine their kingdoms. *Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child*; to wit, in understanding, and behaviour: according to that, Isa. 3. 4. *And I will give children to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them*: and againe, ver. 12. *As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them*; As namely, first, when they are voyd of judgement and understanding, and unexperienced in matters of State, unable to keep any secret, not knowing how to govern themselves, and much lesse to govern others; secondly, when they are sensuall, wholly given to play, sport and pastime, to please their appetite, and pamper themselves, but altogether carelesse and unmind-

fall of those things that most concern them : Thirdly, when they are inconstant and fickle, easily drawn away with any evill counsell that is given them. Fourthly, When they are impatient and soon angry, pettish, froward, and such as cannot endure to be crossed in their wills : and fifthly, when they love to be praised and flattered, and so are easily gulled and deceived by those that will speake them fair & fawn upon them ; *And thy Princes eat in the morning* ; that is, when, after the example usually of their foolish King, they doe wholly give up themselves to pleasure and sensuality, gluttony and drunkenness ; for this is intended, by eating in the morning, and that either, 1. because this implies that they spend their whole time, night and day, in sleeping, riot and excess ; or 2. because to do a thing in the morning, is in the Scripture phrase, to doe it with mens utmost endeavours ; according to that, Isa. 5. 11. *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink* ; see the Note also, Psal. 5. 3. Or 3. because the morning is the best part of the day, and fittest for our weightiest employments ; whereupon it seems Princes were wont in the morning to sit in judgement and in counsell ; whence is that, Jer. 23. 12. *Oh house of David, thus saith the Lord, Execute judgement in the morning, &c.* and therefore when Princes doe feast themselves at that time, it is a signe they prefer their pleasure, their glutting and pampering of themselves before their affaires of greatest importance ; And this must needs tend to the ruine of a land. Though a King be a child, yet if his Princes and Counsellors be prudent and sober men, things may goe the better, but if they also mind nothing but their pleasure, all things must then needs run to ruine.

Verf. 17. *Blessed art thou, O Land, when thy King is the Son of Nobles, &c.*] Though descent from noble and royall progenitors may be here included, (because such mens education doth usually render them the fitter for the royall dignity, and their high descent doth often engage them to tread in the steps of their noble progenitors, and withall because when Princes are so nobly borne, and come to the throne by lawfull succession, the people are commonly the more ready to reverence and obey them) yet doubtlesse by *the sonne of Nobles*, is chiefly meant a person nobly qualified, generous, wise and vertuous, not given to pleasure, but of a publick and heroical spirit, and minding princely and publick employments. As Saul by calling Jonathan *the sonne of the perverse rebellious woman*, intended that he was a perverse, rebellious son, 1 Sam. 20. 30. so here Solomon by *the sonne of Nobles*, intends a Prince seasoned with noble and honorable endowments, regarding his honour above life, and much more above pleasure and gaine. And so likewise for the following words, *When thy Princes eat in due season* ; the meaning is, that a land is happy, when the Princes are temperate and moderate in eating and drinking, not feasting all night till the breake of the next day, not preferring their bellies before their weightiest affaires, but first dispatching their businesse, and then refreshing themselves with meate and drink ; *for strength, and not for drunkenness* ; that is, so as to repair and uphold health and strength, and not meerly to satisfie their lust, and make themselves drunke, whereby strength is usually rather impaired then preserved.

Verf. 18. *By much sloathfulness the building decayeth, &c.*] This Proverbial expression is inserted here, with respect to what was said before, ver. 16. concerning the misery of a land where the Governours are childish and voluptuous ; and the drift of

it is to shew, that as a house will by degrees decay and at last fall to the ground, if the owner doth thorough carelesnesse and sloath neglect to repaire it in time; the wind and weather will make breaches in the rooſe of it, thorough which the raine dropping in, will rot the timber and walls, and ſo at laſt downe it will come; ſo likewise the ſtrongeſt Kingdomes and Common-wealths will by degrees be weakened, and at laſt utterly ruined, if Princes, who by their places are to be amongſt the people, *beaters*, Iſa. 3. 7. and *repairers of the breaches*, Chap. 58. 12. do thorough their childiſhneſſe, or their ſloath and luxury, diſregard the great work of government, and neglect in time to make up the breaches, and to cure the diſtempers that are in their Countreyes.

Verſ. 19. *A feaſt is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry; but money answereth all things.*] If this verſe be taken as an entire ſentence apart by it ſelfe, then the drift of it is, only to ſhew the uſefulneſſe or the command of money above other things in all outward affaires. In all outward bleſſings every thing hath its limited uſe, one thing is good for this, and another thing for that; feaſts are made to procure laughter, and wine is good to make the heart chearfull and merry, but money is good for the procuring of all things whatſoever; that will command not only feaſts and wine, but alſo cloathing and houſes, and whatſoever man can want or deſire. Let men call for what they will, money will help them to it, ſo that a man that hath money needs not want any thing the world can afford. But rather it ſeems to be added with reſpect to that which went before; as namely, either, firſt, with reſpect to the foregoing verſe, to ſhew why by ſloathfulneſſe mens houſes come to ruine, to wit, becauſe ſuch ſloathfull perſons doe give themſelves to feaſting, drinking, mirth, and jollity, and ſo never mind the ſupporting of their houſes, families and eſtates, but doe continually waſt what they have, till all be ruined; their money ſtill going out for the defraying of theſe their riotous expences. Or elſe ſecondly, (which I conceive moſt probable) with reſpect to that which was ſaid before, ver. 16. concerning the miſery of a land where the Princes are fooliſh and riotous, ſhewing that thus it muſt needs be, becauſe ſuch childiſh and voluptuous Princes are all for feaſting and merriment, and for the procuring of theſe things their treaſure is day after day exhausted. *A feaſt is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry*; As if he had ſaid, Thoſe ſuch Princes doe ſpend their dayes in making feaſts and drinking wine, that they may laugh and be merry; *but money answereth all things*; that is, it is their money that procures theſe, and what ever elſe they deſire for the ſatisfying of their laſts; and that they may not therefore want ſupplies thereof, they are wont to oppreſſe their ſubjects with heavy exactions, and to ſet all to ſale, juſtice, and offices, and all for money.

V. 20. *Curſe not the King, &c.*] They that conceive the four foregoing verſes to be the complaint of murmuring ſubjects concerning their Princes, do accordingly alſo hold that in this verſe, there is an answer returned to thoſe their murmurings. But rather I conceive, that Solomon, having now ſpoken of the miſgovernment of riotous and fooliſh Princes, doth hereupon take occaſion to warn ſubjects, that they muſt not becauſe of this, take liberty to revile them, to think, much leſſe to ſpeak otherwiſe of them then as may ſtand with the loyalty of ſubjects. *Curſe not the King,*

King. See the Note, Exod. 22. 28. *no, nor in thy thought*; some read it, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *no, nor in thy conscience*, and so the meaning may be, no not when thou art alone by thy self, and so no man, but thy self, is conscious to what thou hast spoken. But reading it as it is in our Translation, *no, nor in thy thought*, either it may be taken as an expression setting forth a forbearance from speaking evil of Princes even in mens greatest privacy, when they are alone by themselves, far from the hearing of any body, so that they would think, that it is as impossible that any body should know what they have said, as that they should know their thoughts; or else it may be taken according to the letter, that men must not so much as think evil of, or wish evil to their Princes; and that both because if any such evil thoughts against Princes be nourished in the heart, it will at some time or other break out at the lips, or discover it self in some expressions of discontent and displeasure; as likewise because even such thoughts are sinful, and being known to God, he hath many wonderful wayes both to discover and punish them: *and curse not the rich*, that is, neither the King, nor his Nobles and Peers; or none that are of great estate and of high place, *in thy bedchamber*, that is, not to thy most intimate friends, no not to thy wife that lyeth in thy bosom; or do it not where thou art alone by thy self, or where thou thinkest thy self most secret and retired, and far from any ear that can hear thee; *for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter*, as if he should have said, It will out at some chink or other; some body will over-hear thee, some way or other it will be speedily discovered to those whom thou hast so cursed, it may be by some unlikely persons, or unlikely means, which no man would have suspected; and so that which thou speakest in such secret, will be every where spread abroad openly by tattling talebearers, and some mischief or other it will bring upon thee. The expression is much like that Habak. 2. 11. *the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it*, and the drift of it is only to shew, that Kings have many ears and eyes, as we use to say, and therefore some body or other will inform them of it; or else that however God, from whom it cannot be concealed, will certainly punish them for it.

CHAP. XI.

Verf. 1. *Cast thy bread, &c.* Some Expositors give this account of the dependence of that which is here said upon that which went before, That Solomon having often formerly prescribed this, as a cure of the vanities of all things, here below, that men should quietly and comfortably enjoy the good blessings, which God hath afforded them, for the refreshing of themselves; here now he sheweth, how they ought likewise to make use of them for the relieving and refreshing of others: But then again others conceive of it thus, that having in the former Chapter shown, how available true wisdom is towards mens living with much comfort and tranquillity of mind, in the midst of all the vanities of this life, in that it teacheth men how to avoid the displeasure of Princes; here he sheweth how available charity is to the same end; or, having there shewn how wisdom directs men to carry themselves towards superiors, here he sheweth likewise how it directs men to carry themselves,

as they ought to do, towards their inferiors, as namely to those that are in want; *Cast thy bread upon the waters.* By *bread* may be meant mens provision for food, and under that may be comprehended all other necessities for the support of mens lives; & then by mens casting their bread, is meant their giving freely of that which they have for the relief of the poor; See the Note, Pro. 22. 9. Or, by *bread* may be meant seed, and then *cast thy bread, is, sow thy seed.* Either therefore in these words, *Cast thy bread upon the waters,* Solomon intends that men should liberally give alms to the poor, because that which is so given, will be as seed that is sown in fruitful grounds, lands that have been lately moistened with abundance of rain from heaven, or grounds that lie close upon rivers, which do usually yield a great increase; and then according the following words, are to be understood; *for thou shalt find it after many dayes,* to wit, that the seed of alms thus sown, shall at last yield them a plentiful harvest, because God will certainly sooner or later abundantly reward them: Or else rather his aim is, so to enjoin the giving of alms, as withall covertly to answer an objection, which mens corrupt hearts are wont to make against it, *Cast thy bread upon the waters,* that is, Do good to those, from whom thou hast not the least hope of receiving any recompence; Though the alms thou givest may seem to be as clearly lost and cast away, as if they were cast into the sea: Though it may seem as unlikely to yield thee any profit, as if a husbandman should cast his seed into a river, in hope of reaping from thence a plentiful harvest, and that because those to whom thou givest are no way able to requite thee, or because they are unthankful, such as will never remember the good thou hast done them, or vile wretches altogether unworthy of relief; yet withhold not thy hand from giving; *for thou shalt find it after many dayes,* that is, thine alms shall be returned with encrease to thee; Though the reward do not come presently, yet waite for it, it will certainly come at last; As that which the ebbing waters carry away, will be brought back again; Or, as the seed which being sown seems to be lost, doth after many dayes bring in a plentiful harvest; So that which thou givest in this kind thou shalt unexpectedly sooner or later find recompenced to thee; God may make those very men able and willing to requite thee; Or how ever, he will be sure to recompence it, if not to thee, yet it may be to thy children or childrens children; At least in heaven thou shalt be sure of an abundant reward.

Verf. 2. *Give a portion to seven and also to eight: &c.*] That is, As God hath inabled thee, give of thy provision and estate to many and many, distributing to every one according to their necessities, and according to the rules of right judgement. Be not weary of well doing, be still giving, when thou hast given to seven, give also to eight more, which is that our Saviour saith, Luke 6. 30. *give to every one that asketh of thee.* In this expression, *Give a portion,* he seems to allude to the manner of their feasts in ancient times, where every guest had their several portions assigned them, and certain portions also were sent to the poor. See the Note, Gen. 43. 34. and see also Neh. 8. 10, 12. & Esth. 9. 22. and in the following words, *to seven and also to eight,* there is a definite number put for an indefinite, as in Mic. 5. 5. *when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him, seven shepherds and eight principal men.* See the Note also, 1 Sam. 2. 5. *for thou knowest*

knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth, that is, men know not what sad times may come, from the evil whereof they may be in a great measure secured by their bounty to the poor, according to that, Dan. 4. 27. *break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity*, and least any evil should therein befall them or their estate, therefore it were wisdom for them to embrace the present opportunity, and to do good whilst they may. Men know not how soon they may die, and after death there will be no time for doing good, and their estates must then be left, (the thought whereof may haply grieve them when they are dying) it may be to unthrifty heirs that may waste all, or to unworthy persons, that may shut up their bowels of compassion against the poor. And again men may many several wayes lose their estates and be stripped of all that they have, they know not how soon, and then besides the trouble it may be to them, that they did so little good with their estates formerly, (for which they may think Gods hand is then upon them) even they themselves will stand in need of the charity of others; & therefore whilst they have to give, it is fit that they should do to others, as they would desire others should do to them; And indeed usually the same measure, that men mete to others, is measured to them again; they that have been bountiful to others, find others bountiful to them; those that they have relieved do many times help and relieve them; and on the other side they that have been hard-hearted to others, find others averse from relieving them. And thus the covetous mans excuse is retorted against himself; such men are wont to plead, that they dare not give, because they know not what may hereafter befall them, Nay but, saith Solomon, therefore give and give bountifully, *because thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth*.

Verf. 3. *If the clouds be full of raine, &c.*] By several elegant similitudes the wise man doth here answer the objections, which carnal men are wont to alledge, by way of excusing themselves for giving to the poor; *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth*; the meaning is, that as such clouds do not retain their waters to themselves but shewre them down plentifully upon the earth, and that not on certain mens grounds onely, but on every place whether the wind carrieth them, and do therewith refresh and make fruitful the dry, parched and thirsty earth, so rich men that have full estates, must not keep all to themselves, (as indeed covetous men are wont to pretend, that they must have respect to their own supplies) but they must give liberally to the relieving and refreshing of the hungry and thirsty poor, and that not to some only, but to all as they have opportunity and ability; And indeed when rich men do not thus make use of their wealth, they are no way useful in their places, but are like *clouds without water*, that do onely darken the face of the skie, but yield no moisture at all to the earth, and do alwayes deceive the hopes of the poor that expect succour from them. Some I know do presse this similitude farther, namely, to shew that bountiful men loose nothing by their bounty, because as the clouds do regain the waters which they pour forth upon the earth in the vapours, which after the rain, do again ascend up into the air, so the almes which is given to the poor is retained with encrease unto those that give them, according to that Pro. 11. 25. *The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth* shall

shall be watered also himselfe : And so likewise for the next clause, *And if the tree fall toward the South, or toward the North ; in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be ;* the meaning thereof likewise is, either, 1. that it becomes men to do good whilst they may, because as when a tree falls, there it lyes where it falls, fall it Southward or Northward, there is no setting it up again to bear fruit any more ; so when men are once cut down by death, there will be no more time, for the doing of that good which they should have done before ; but in that condition wherein they dye, whether as mercifull, or unmercifull men, in that they must for ever continue ; they shall be set at the right or left hand of the Judge, according as they have carried themselves towards Christs poor members, Matth. 25. Or rather, 2. that men must not withhold their hands from giving, under a pretence that the persons will be unthankfull, or are in any other regard unworthy of reliefe, and that because, as when a tree falls, it is all one to the owner, whether it falls Southward or Northward, where it falleth, there it rests, and there the owner shall find it to make his use and benefit of it ; so whether they be good or bad, thankfull or unthankfull to whom a man gives, so he gives it with a good intention of glorifying God, and relieving the wants of his poor brother, his almes shall not be lost, he shall have his reward ; where he disposeth his charity, there it shall be found againe, kept and laid up by God, and shall redound to the good and benefit of the charitable donor.

Verf. 4. *He that observeth the wind, shall not sow ; and he that regardeth the clouds, shall not reap.]* That is, As the husbandman shall overslip seed time, if he do over-scrupulously observe the wind, as fearing to sow in the wind, lest the wind should blow away his seed, or as waiting for such a wind as should bring fair and warm weather, or should bring rain before or after he hath sown his seed, thereby to further the well-growing of his seed ; and so likewise he shall loose his harvest, and never reap his corne, if upon every rising of a cloud in the sky, he feares there will be rain ; so that man shall never doe good to the poor, and so never obtain the reward which God hath promised to those that doe liberally sow this seed, that is, still out of covetousnesse or distrust, pretending, that it is not yet a fit season to give, and suggesting to himselfe many needlesse feares of what may be hereafter, thereby to justify himselfe herein, as that he may come to have many children, that in old age, or in long and tedious sicknesse, or times of trouble, he and his may want what they now give. Wind and clouds are uncertain signes of what weather will be, and may blow over, and so are the feares of covetous men.

Verf. 5. *As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, &c.]* That is, say some Expositors, the way of the wind, to wit, *whence it cometh, and whether it goeth,* Job. 3. 8. when, and from what point of the heavens it will blow, and whether with a violent or a gentle gale ; Or rather, the way how the soul doth at first enter into the body of every child in its first conception ; which indeed is the more probable, because the next clause that is joyned with it doth clearly agree hereto, *nor how the bones doe grow in the womb of her that is with child ;* that is, how the body of a child is made and growes up in the womb of the mother (for the bones are only mentioned figuratively in stead of the whole body, because the figure and frame of the whole body is chiefly from them,) how all the severall kinds of substance in the bo-

dy, skin, and flesh, and sinewes, and bones, should be made of the same seed, and how so many, and so many several sorts of bones should be formed, and hardened and knit together in the womb; *even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all*; that is, thou knowest not what God will do in future times, who as he is the maker of all things, so accordingly he doth with all things whatsoever he pleaseth. Some Expofitors doe comprehend other incomprehensible things in that which is said here of *the way of the Spirit*; as namely, how *the Spirit*, that is, the soul doth fashion the several organs of the child's first conception; according to that old saying, that *anima est sui domicilij architectrix*, how the child breathes and is not stifled in the mothers womb, or how it lives, if it breathes not; and which way the soul goeth out of the body, when a man dyeth. But howsoever the meaning is cleare, that if we know not these ordinary things, that are dayly done amongst us, much lesse can we know the future works of Gods providence; so that as the husbandman must not forbear sowing or reaping for fear of this or that, because they know not how God may order the wind or the weather, and how he may turn it to good; so neither ought men to forbear or delay relieving the poor, out of vain and idle pretences and feares, because they know not what God may do to them or theirs, or others in time to come; Though men know not how their bounty should tend to their advantage, yet God can bring it about many several wayes; And againe because they know not how soone God may cut them off by death, or strip them of their estates, and therefore it is not good to put off their charity, lest they should be surprized.

Verf. 6. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, &c.*] Some conceive this to be an exhortation, inferred from that which is said in the foregoing verse, concerning the uncertainty of future events, pressing men to an assiduous diligence in all things in general, which in their several callings God requires at their hands. And indeed all works of righteousness, whereto men are bound by their general or particular calling, are in the Scripture sometimes compared to seed sown, as in Pro. 11. 18. *To him that soweth righteousness, shall be a sure reward*, for which see the Note there: so that if we thus understand the words here, then by mens sowing their own seed is meant, that they should intend their own calling, without intermeddling with other mens businesse. But because Solomon hath been all this Chapter hitherto pressing men to be charitable to the poor, comparing almes to the sowing of seed, I conceive it to be unquestionable that these words likewise intend the same thing: *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand*; that is, Be alwayes doing good, begin betimes and never give over; be not weary of well-doing; begin in the morning of thy youth, and hold on to the evening of thine old age, or, as soone as thou beginnest to have an estate, begin presently to give, and so hold out unto thine end; whilst the day of mans life continues, there will be seasons for good works, but when the night of death once comes, there will be no more time of working then: *For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good*; that is, As the husbandman knoweth not whether the seed he soweth in the morning, or in the evening, shall spring up best, and yield the fairest crop; so neither knowest thou which of thine almes shall be best bestowed, whether of them will be most advantageous and welcome to the poore, and

received with most thankfulness, nor whether of them will be most acceptable to God, and procure from him the greatest reward; nay thou knowest not but that both may in these respects be alike good for thee.

Verf. 7. *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.*] That is, It is a sweet and delightfull thing to live in this world, and to enjoy the benefits and comforts of this life, especially to live in the Sun-shine of prosperity; see the Notes, Chap. 7. 11. & Psal. 49. 19. & Esth. 8. 16. There is herein a transition to a new direction or advice, which he prosecutes in the remainder of this book. Hitherto Solomon hath set forth the vanity of all things here in this world, and withall hath given many excellent Directions, to teach men how they may in a great measure remedy these vanities, and live with as much comfort, peace and tranquillity of mind, as here in this world men are capable of. But now because men must dye, and after this life is ended must passe into an eternall condition, either of blisse or misery, and so the happinesse of man, after which he hath all this while made enquiry, cannot be compleat and perfect, unlesse he can assure to himselfe a share in the blisse of that eternall condition, therefore in the next place he directs men how they may, after a life spent contentedly and comfortably here, attain to this eternall blisse in the life that is to come; which is indeed that happinesse that can only fully satisfie mens immortal souls, and perfectly free them from the feare of death, and all other miseries they are liable to, & that is by fearing God and keeping his commandments, and (to the end they may be very serious herein,) by thinking often of death and judgement. This is that, I say, to which Solomon in the next place passeth; And accordingly, first to make way thereto in this verse he premiseth, that it is indeed a very comfortable and delightful thing, to enjoy the benefits of this present life, especially when men have learnt to free themselves from the vanities here below, according to the directions formerly given; And then in the next he proceeds to shew that though life be thus sweet, yet they must remember that this life will have an end, and death and judgement will follow, and that therefore they cannot be compleatly happy, unlesse by the due consideration of this, they provide to secure unto themselves that happinesse which is to follow after this life is ended.

Verf. 8. *But if a man live many yeares, and rejoyce in them all, &c.*] As if he should have said, Suppose this should be so, which is indeed very unlikely; yet let him remember the dayes of darknes; that is, of death and the grave (for it is opposed to the light and the beholding of the Sun, mentioned in the foregoing verse) for they shall be many; that is, truly many indeed, many more then the dayes of the man that liveth longest can be, because in the grave, the house of darknesse, the dead must continue till the day of the generall resurrection; and if men dye in their sinnes they must continue in outer darknesse unto all eternity. *All that cometh is vanity*; that is, This sheweth that all men that come into the world, and all that befalls men here in this world, is no better then meer vanity, because they must all passe away; man must dye, and no man knoweth how little a while his life and prosperity shall continue. So that the drift of the whole verse is to shew, that though men live never so long, and in never so great prosperity, yet it is meer folly over much to delight herein, because these things will not last alwayes, the dayes of darknesse will come, and when they

they come, then it will be seen how vaine and transitory this life, and the pleasures thereof were; yea if men would seriously think of those dayes, comparing them with the short time of mans abode here, they must needs yield that this life and the delights thereof, are meer vanity, and even as nothing.

Verf. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheare thee in the dayes of thy youth, &c.*] Because young men are most apt only to mind the pleasures of this present life, and to put off the thoughts of death unto old age, therefore Solomon gives this warning particularly to them. Some conceive that this is spoken by way of serious advice, *Rejoyce, O young man, &c.* As if he had said, I would not restraine thee from the lawfull delights and comforts of thy youth; Be joyfull, and live chearfully, so thou doest it with moderation and sobriety, as still remembring thy latter end, and the judgement that will follow. But rather this is spoken ironically by way of scorne and derision (as indeed many expressions of that kind we find elsewhere in the Scripture, as 1 Kings 18. 27. & 22. 15. & Matth. 26. 45.) As if he had said, Thou hast heard that the dayes of mans living here are nothing in comparison of the dayes of darknesse that will follow; Now if thou wilt not be admonished hereby, but hereupon resolvest, that because thou must dye, therefore thou wilt take thy fill of pleasure, whilst thou livest, Doe so, take thy course, live as young men use to doe in all jollity and pleasure, *and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes;* that is, Doe what ever thou hast a mind and desire to doe, follow after every thing thou seest and is pleasing in thine eyes; deny not thy selfe any thing, which thine heart can desire, or thine eyes look after; see the Note, Chap. 2. 10. *but know thou,* that is, be thou unquestionably assured of this, *that for all these things,* that is, for thy mis-spent youth, and all those vaine and sinfull courses, wherein now thou takest such content and delight, *God will bring thee into judgement;* that is, Dye thou must, thou knowest not how soon, and after death God will bring thee, whether thou wilt or no, to stand before his tribunall at the last & great day of judgement there to answer for all that thou hast done, and to receive the just reward of all thine evill wayes, and there will be no avoyding it.

Verf. 10. *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, &c.*] Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *remove anger from thy heart;* and then the warning is, that young men should beware of rash and unadvised anger, (because young men are naturally thorough heate of blood prone to be furious herein and violent upon revenge) and especially of being enraged against those that reprove them, and would take them off from their sinfull pleasures; yea and under this all other sinfull passions and perturbations of mind may be comprehended. But if we reade it, as it is in our Translation, *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart,* then the advice is, that young men should avoyd all sinnes and sinfull pleasures, which though they may be pleasing for a time, yet they will stirre up Gods indignation against them, and so will at last overwhelm their hearts with sorrow; *And put away evill from thy flesh;* that is, abandon all fleshly lusts, and pleasures, let not the members of thy body be imployed as weapons of unrighteousnesse in the service of sin, (And so as in the former clause the inward distempers of the heart, so here likewise the sinnes of the outward man are forbidden) Or, avoyd those sinfull pleasures which will at last wast thy strength, and ruine thy
body

body, or bring the wrath of God upon thee. *For childhood and youth are vanity; that is, foolish, violently carried after pleasures that end in destruction, and subject to many corruptions; and besides, that age doth soone vanish and passe away.*

C H A P. XII.

Verf. 1. **R***emember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, &c.*] Having in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter diswaded young men from youthful lusts, here he exhorts them to a constant fixing of their minds upon God, as a powerful means not onely to restrain them from evil but also to quicken them in the doing of that, which God requires of them; and the argument that he useth to presse them hereto is covertly couched in those words, *thy Creator*; for 1. Because God made us, and we received our being from him, and so are wholly his; and 2. Because he hath given us such an excellent being, making us after his own image, enduing us with reason and understanding, that so we might know him and have a special interest in him; 3. Because he made all the creatures for our sake, and so all that we enjoy in the creatures we have from him, 4. Because by the same power whereby we were created, we are continually preserved, and 5. Because consequently he is able every moment to destroy us; therefore it is most equal that we should love, and fear and obey him, and consecrate our whole lives to his service, especially our youth, which is the first fruits of our years, the flowre and beauty of our time, wherein we are able to do him the best service, all the faculties both of soul and body being then in their prime; And the rather also should men be mindful of doing this, because in youth, men are most apt to forget God, & as they then begin to frame their lives, so they are like to continue, in regard that being once accustomed to sin, they will hardly afterwards be brought to leave it, *while the evil days come not, to wit, the dayes of old age, wherein men are subject to many and manifold miseries and sorrowes, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them, that is, wherein men grow weary of their lives, and are ever full of complaints.* The drift of all that is here said is to shew, that it is not fit that young men should put off the care of their eternal good till they come to be old, because old age being so full of infirmities and miseries, they will not then be able to do the good they have neglected in their youth, nor will scarce find freedom of spirit enough seriously and sincerely to mind the great work of repentance, and of making their peace with God; Nor is it fitting to over-burthen that age with the bitter sorrow of repenting for the sins of youth, which is already unable to bear the heavy load of so many weakneses and sorrowes as it lies under; but rather that men should by the early piety of their youth, store up those graces and comforts that may allay the bitterness of their old age.

Verf. 2. *While the Sun or the light, or the Moon or the Stars be not darkened; &c.*] Some Expositors conceive that by *the light* here is meant any artificial light, as the light of a torch or candle; But doubtlesse it is the light of the Sun that is here intended; and this I conceive is particularly mentioned, either the more fully to expresse how the Sun is darkned to old men, to wit, because they cannot discern the light

light thereof; or else because the light of the Sun is to be seen, when the body of the Sun cannot be seen, as in the twilight both of morning and evening, and when the Sun is covered over with clouds. And many Expositors do understand this of the blindness or dim-sightedness of old men, to wit, that when old age comes that doth so darken mens eyes, that they can scarcely discern the light either of the Sun, Moon or Stars, it is dark with them even at noon day. And so also accordingly they understand the following clause, *nor the clouds return after rain*, that is, even when the heavens are clear (as they use to be after rain,) yet they are still cloudy to old men by reason of the darkness of their eyes, even the clearest aire to aged men being dusky and misty; young men may have some distemper in their eyes and yet recover their sight again, but old mens eyes are clouded without hope of ever seeing clearly again. But because the dimness of the eyes is mentioned in the following verse, therefore I rather think that by the darkening of the Sun and the light of the Moon and the Stars is meant, either 1. The weakening of the vigour of the superior and rational faculties of the soul, the understanding, judgement, memory and fancy, which do in old age become more dark and dull, then they were in mens youth; or else 2. The darkness of many and manifold miseries and sorrows that do constantly attend old age, to wit, that the prosperity and joy of their former days is then turned into affliction and sorrow, all their former comforts, both greater and lesse, do then fail them, they take no delight in those things wherein others do cheer and refresh themselves, but both by day and by night, they are in continual anguish and sorrow; which may seem the more probable, because usually in the Scripture prosperity and joy are compared to the Sun and to the light; see the Notes, Judg. 5. 31. & 2 Sam. 23. 4. and on the other side grievous afflictions, such as do swallow up all former joy and prosperity, are compared to the darkening of the Sun, Moon and Stars, as in Joel 2. 10. *The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the Sun and Moon shall be dark, and the Stars shall withdraw their shining*, and so also, Isa. 13, 9, 10, 11. and in many other places. And accordingly also we may understand the following clause, *nor the clouds return after rain*, either 1. Of the vapours that do continually in old men ascend from the stomach to the head and brain, and the defluxions of rhewme and flegme by the eyes, nostrils and mouth, which are as the showres of rain that fall from the head, to wit, that as in winter, though it rain very much, yet the skie is still overcast with clouds, the very rain that falls returning back vapours into the air, that do again fill the skie with fresh clouds, so in old men though there be a continual voyding of flegme and rhewme, yet the defluxions that fall upon the breast and stomach do still send back to the brain matter enough to breed more; in young men after colds taken, rhewmes may be dried up, and so the brain may become dryer and clearer again; but in old men they continue alwayes, and are never dried up; Or 2. As a Proverbial speech setting forth the continual succession of several diseases, pains, and miseries that come thick and threefold upon old men, without any intermission of trouble, even as in winter no sooner doth it leave raining, but presently the clouds gather again, whereas in summer after some showres of rain are fallen, the heavens are usually cleer and bright again.

V. 3. *In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, &c.*] That is, The hands and armes shall shake with palsies; for these they are that are here called *the keepers of the house*, because therewith men keep off all hurt from the body and provide meat and clothing and all things necessary for the upholding and preservation of it. I know that by *the keepers of the house*, some understand the ribs, wherewith the vital parts within the body are fenced and secured from danger; and others the outward senses, or the head, where the senses are, as watchmen in a tower, and which do watch over the body for its safety, and give timely notice of any danger approaching; and others the inward faculties of memory, wisdom and understanding, which do indeed contribute much to the safe guarding of the body; and all these in old men may be said to *tremble*, because by old age they are much weakened and shaken. But the first Exposition is most proper; *and the strong men shall bow themselves*, that is, the legs and thighs, which are as the two strong pillars that bear the whole weight of the house of the body, according to that, Cant. 5. 15. *His legs are as pillars of marble*, shall then fail them through feebleness; and shall stagger, crinkle and buckle under them; whence it is, that old men use to go with staves, that therewith they may help to uphold themselves. This also some understand of the back, which is indeed the strongest part of the body for the bearing of burdens, and doth usually bow in old age; But because Solomon speakes of the *strong men* in the plural number, and the legs do indeed bear up both the back and its burdens, I question not but it is meant of the legs and thighs, wherein very much of the strength of men doth lie; according to that of the Psalmist, *He delighteth not in the strength of an horse, he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man*, Psal. 147. 10. and *the grinders*, that is, the teeth, or more particularly those teeth which we more especially call *the grinders*, *dentes molares*, the great jaw-teeth, shall cease to chew their meat, *because they are few*, because they rot and fall out, and when the teeth in one jaw are gone, those in the other jaw that were right against them are of no use; Or, if we read this clause as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and the grinders fail, because they grind little*, then the meaning is, that the teeth are not imployed as formerly they have been, both because being worn out, and becoming weak and loose, they are of little or no use, as likewise because in old age men have but little appetite to their meat: *and those that look out of the windowes be darkned*, that is, the eyes that look out through the eye-lids wax dim. Some by the windowes through which the eyes look out understand the spectacles, which aged men because of the weakness of their eyes are wont to use; and others that cristalline humour that is in the eyes; But the most understand thereby the eye-lids, or the holes of the scull through which the eyes look forth, of which the Prophet makes mention, Zach. 14. 12. *and their eyes shall consume away in their holes*.

Vers. 4. *And the doors shall be shut in the streets, &c.*] Very many Expositors understand this first clause literally, *wit*, that in old age men are wont to shut up themselves within doors because of their many infirmities, not stirring forth into the streets or into any place of publick meeting, where the younger sort delight to be; yea and some conceive that in the following clause, *when the sound of the grinding is low*, there is a reason given why old men stir so little abroad, but keep them-

themselves still within doors, namely, because eating so little through weaknesse of appetite and digestion, their strength is so far impaired thereby, that they are not able to go forth to follow their businesse as in former times, nor are fit to eat at other mens tables, but onely at home where such meat may be provided for them, as they are able to master. But because all the other expressions in this description of old age are understood allegorically, as allusions to some decayes in the house of the body, it cannot be with any probability thought, but that this must be understood so likewise. And therefore indeed the most understand this also figuratively; though in applying the particulars they are very various; for some by *the doors shut in the streets*, understand all the outward senses and the organs thereof, by which the good that is in all outward objects is conveyed unto the soul; which in old age are obstructed and decayed: others more particularly the eye-lids, which in old men will through weaknesse be shriveld and hang down over the eyes; and others the ears, which in old age are stopped and grow deaf; and this they judge the more probable, because in the following words, *when the sound of the grinding is low*, they conceive there is also an allusion to two bones in the inside of the ear, that are the cause of hearing, whereof the one stands still, and the other moves like the two stones of a mill. But most ordinarily this clause is understood of the difficulty of old mens speaking or swallowing their meat; And accordingly by *the streets*, they conceive are meant those passages, whereby the air is conveyed to the lungs, and returned back again by men in their breathing, and whereby the meat is conveyed to the stomack, the throat, and the wind-pipe, and so also by *the doors in the streets*, the mouth or the jaw-bones without, or the two lips, which David indeed calls the door of his mouth, *Psal. 141. 3. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips*, by which both meat and air enters that is conveyed inward; as likewise within, that *epiglossis* in the *larinx*, which doth open and shut seasonably to cover the wind pipe; and these are said to be *shut* in old men, either because through weaknesse they eat so little, being scarce able to open their jawes to receive their food, and much lesse to chew any harder meat being also forced to keep their lips close, lest for want of teeth, as they roll it to and fro, it should slip out of their mouthes; or because old men, by reason of the decay of the lungs, the shortness of their breath, and the stopping and weakening of the instruments of speech are not able to speak so loud, so clearly, readily and plainly, as when they were young. And this last Exposition many Expositors do the rather follow, because the teeth do contribute so much both to the speech and the swallowing of the meat, of whose grinding Solomon seems clearly to speak in the following clause, *when the sound of the grinding is low*, to wit, because the teeth stand thin and loose in old men, and for the most part they chew their meat with their gums, and so the grinding can hardly be heard, and *he shall rise up at the voice of the bird*, that is, the old man, being weary of his bed through infirmities and aches, shall rise with the Lark, being up as soon as the earliest of birds are singing: or, he shall scarce ever sleep so soundly, but that the crowing of a cock, the chirping of a sparrow, the chattering of a swallow, or the singing of any small bird early in the morning will presently waken him, and so he shall rise out of his bed, or at least rise up in his bed some way to ease himself, and all the daughters of musick

musick shall be brought low; and the meaning is, either 1. That old men are not affected with musick, as not being able to discern and to judge of the distinction & harmony of sounds, as old Barzillai said of himself, 2 Sam. 19. 35. *can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women?* (and if we understand this clause so, then by the *daughters of musick* are meant, either the ears that delight in musick naturally as children delight in their parents, which are said to be *brought low*, because they grow deaf, or at least lose much of their exquisite sense in judging of musick: or else all kind of musick whether of voices or instruments, which may be said to be *brought low*, or abased, because old men regard them not;) Or 2. That old men are not able to sing, as formerly they have done. And then by *all the daughters of musick* are meant all the natural organs and instruments of singing, as the lips, the teeth, the wind pipe, the lungs, &c. which are said to be *brought low*, because they fail old men, some being weak and some wanting, as in an old untunable instrument.

Verf. 5. *Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, &c.*] That is, say some, they shall go stooping downward, as if they were afraid, lest something on high should hit them. But rather the meaning is, that in old age men are afraid, either, first, to goe up any high steep hills, stairs, or ladders, because of the faintnesse and unweildnesse of their bodies, the stiffnesse of their joynts, and the shortnesse of their breath; or, secondly, to go or stand upon the top of any high places, when young men are venturous and bold, yea or so much as to look upward towards such high places, because of the giddinesse of their heads; yea, and thirdly, they are wont to be afraid of every knobby hillock, or stone, or clod that lyes in their way, lest they should stumble at it. Which is farther amplified in the following clause, *and feares shall be in the way*; that is, they shall go slowly, and tremblingly, as if they were afraid; or rather, where ever they goe they shall goe in feare; Being through age feeble and unweildy, and unable to help themselves, they are afraid of stumbling, slipping and falling, or they are afraid lest any dog or other creature should run against them and cast them down, or lest they should be justled down or hurt by people that go up and down hastily and carelessly; be their way never so smooth and plain, they will be still fearfull of some evill or other that may befall them: *And the Almond tree shall flourish*; that is, their heads shall suddenly be as white with gray haire, as the almond-tree is, when it blossomes: for to the almond-tree, Solomon compares the hoary head of the old man, rather then to any other tree, either because it useth to be full of blossomes, and the blossomes thereof are very white, or because it floureth and flourisheth betimes, as some say in January, before other trees, (whence it was that by the appearance of *the rod of an almond-tree*, Jer. 1. 11. the suddennesse of the Judgement, that was coming upon Gods people, was fore-shown to the Prophet, and so as the blossoming of the Almond-tree was a sure signe of the springs fast approach, so the gray haire of the old man, those Church-yard flowers, as some have called them, are fore-runners of death: *And the grasshopper shall be a burden*; that is, the lightest thing that is, shall be such a burthen to them, that they shall be impatient of bearing it; Or it may be understood as an allegoricall expression, signifying that in old age, their legs and other limbs shall become leane, and dry, and withered, like those of the grasshopper, and so become a burthen to them: *And*

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desire shall faile; that is, the desire of meat, and drink, and marriage, yea the desire of all those pleasures, wherein they much delighted whilst they were young, shall then leave them. And because these last decayes of old age mentioned hitherto in this verse, are such as betide men in their decrepit yeares, when they are almost at their journeyes end, therefore doth Solomon here adde the following words, *Because man goeth to his long home*; that is, to the grave, (whereinto old men seem to have set one foot already) or to his eternall state after death, wherein the dead must continue as long as this world lasts, until the day of the generall resurrection, and not flit about from one place to another, as they did whilst they lived here upon the earth: *And the mourners goe about the streets*; that is, kindred and friends shall goe weeping in the streets, because of the sad condition wherein the dying man lyeth; Or, they shall with great solemnity and with the attendance of many mourners carry his body through the streets to his grave; And amongst these mourners such are to be included, as were wont in former times to be hired to make lamentation at funeralls. See the Note, Job 3. 8.

Verf. 6. *Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, &c.*] Some understand this verse also literally; to wit, that by *the silver cord*, and *the golden bowl*, here is meant all kind of chaines, and bracelets, and rings, and jewels of silver and gold, wherewith the richer sort both of men and women are wont to adorn themselves: And so likewise in the following words, *or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern*, under those tearms of the *pitcher at the fountain*, and *the wheel at the cistern*, they conceive all requisite provisions and accommodations for the support and well-being of this present life are comprehended, both such as are more obvious and easie to be gotten, even as a man by stooping down at a spring may presently fill his pitcher with water, and likewise such as cannot be attained without some more labour and cost, as when water must be drawn up by a wheel from some deep well; And so they conceive the drift of this place to be as if Solomon had said, *Remember now thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth*, before first old age, and then immediately death seisseth upon thee, when all thy goodly and precious ornaments will be looked upon as broken, worthless things, and thou wilt cast them away, as not worth the minding; yea when the most needfull helps and commodities of this life will be to thee as if they were not, because thou canst not make any use of them. But then againe others hold, that Solomon doth here still proceed to set forth under these allegoricall expressions, how man is at last dissolved by death, after old age hath by degrees weakened and wasted the vitall parts of the body; for to this purpose they conceive, that the life of man is here compared to a fountain, from whence water is taken up by a pitcher, or drawn up by a wheel, a bucket, a cord, or a chaine, to be powred into a cistern; and so the drift of these words to be only this, that as when these things are broken at a well, there is no more drawing up water thereby; so when the vitall parts in a man, that should convey nourishment and life and sense and motion to all the body, which is the cistern, are broken and made uselesse, there is no hope that life should any longer continue. Yea and besides the most of Expositors doe more particularly apply the severall particulars here mentioned; as 1. By *the silver cord* that is *loosed*, may be meant the pith

or marrow of the back-bone, which comes from the braine in the back part of the head, and so is drawn along as a cord quite thorough the back-bone to the very bottom of it, only at the four and thirty joynts of the said bone, it seemes to be tyed together with so many links or knots; which, because it is white, or is included in a smooth, bright skin, like to silver, is therefore called *the silver cord*; yea and this may be extended also to the nerves, which thorough the severall joynts of that bone doe shoote forth (as the shaggy threds of this cord) and spread themselves thorough the body, and are the instruments of sense and motion, and appear like so many white strings in the flesh. And now because when this marrow of the back-bone, together with the nerves, the branches of it, become lax and loose by cold humors from the braines, men are usually taken with the dead palsey; hence this expression seemes to be taken, *Or ever the silver cord be loosed*. 2. By *the golden bowl broken*, may be meant the heart, which because of the blood and spirits it containes, may be compared to a *golden bowl*; or rather the skull or brain-pan, or that thin membrane or finewy skin, compassing the brain like a swadling-cloath, or the inner rind of a tree, which is usually called the *Pia mater*: It is called a *bowl*, because it is round, and a *golden bowl*, because it containes the brain, which is such a precious part of mans body, upon the safe-guarding whereof the life of man doth so much depend. And because these, the heart and the brain, are the principall vitall parts in man, therefore when men dye, this golden bowl is then said to be broken. 3. By *the fountain* here may be meant, either the head which is the fountain of the animal spirits, sense and motion; or the heart, which is the fountain of blood and vitall spirits. And 4. By *the pitcher at the fountain*, and *the wheel at the cistern*, are meant those instrumentall parts, which convey nourishment, life, sense, and motion into the body, which is the cistern; as those milky veines in the Mesentery, which (after the digestion of meat in the stomack, and the discharge of it from thence into the small guts) doe draw into them the concocted *chyle*, and convey it by a peculiar vessel, called *Ductus chyli Thoracicus*, into the mass of blood, which together with the blood is carried to the heart; and 2. the arteries, whereby the blood, together with the vital spirits, is discharged from the heart into all parts of the body, to give life, heat and nourishment to the whole; and then the veines doe againe returne it to the heart, and the arteries doe againe returne it to every part of the body by a perpetuall circulation (in regard whereof these instruments of life, may the more fitly here be compared to a *wheel*, that is alwayes turning round) and 3. the nerves or sinews, by which from the brain, (where the vitall spirits, brought by the arteries from the heart to the brain, are digested and turned into animal spirits) the animal spirits, which give sense and motion, are carried forth into all parts of the body. And all these are said to be broken, when they loose their drawing and distributing vertue, and so blood and spirits, and heate, and sense, and motion doe all faile in the body. Some I know would have *the pitcher broken at the fountain*, to be the bladder, when the urine ceaseth to issue from thence according as in an orderly way it useth to doe; and so likewise *the wheel broken at the cistern*, to be the lungs, which are as a wheel, transmitting the aire in and out, up and downe, and may be said to be broken, when they come to be taken off from their motion. But the former application of these figurative expressions, I conceive is most proper.

Verf. 7. *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*] To wit, That it may appear before Gods tribunal, by him to be sentenced either to heaven or hell. Or, the meaning may be, that the soul returns to God, to live for ever with him in heaven: for, say some Expositors, because Solomon is speaking here to the people of God, therefore he speaks of the state of the soul after death no otherwise then as passing presently to heavenly glory. However, the drift of Solomon in mentioning this is to shew, that therefore it behooves men whilst they live and are in health to provide for eternity, because when once the soul and body are parted, there remains then nothing but judgement.

Verf. 8. *Vanity of vanities (saith the Preacher) all is vanity.*] As if he had said, And hereby, as by all likewise that I have formerly said, it appears to be most unquestionably true, which I said at first, that all things under the Sun are exceeding vain, yea vanity it selfe. See the Note, Chap. 1. 2.

Verf. 9. *And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, &c.*] The drift of these words is to encourage men very attentively to reade, and regard, and give credit to this booke, by the due consideration of the Author, the Penman of it; 1. Because he was a man upon whom God had conferred a high degree of wisdom above other men, see 1 King. 4. 29, 30, 31. and withall, when he wrote this book, a true penitent, and reconciled to the Church, both which are comprehended in these words, *because the Preacher was wise*; see the Note, Chap. 1. 1. 2^{ly}, *Because he still taught the people knowledge*; that is, he was one that was still taking every opportunity to inform his people in the knowledge of things, thereby approving himselfe both truly wise and truly penitent; and the more himselfe increased in wisdom, the readier he was to teach others (for so the words may be read, as our Bibles have it in the Margin, *And the more wise the Preacher was, he still taught the people knowledge.*) 3. Because he was very exact in marking well what he received from others, and what he gathered from his own study and observations, and in weighing and pondering well every thing that he wrote, and did with much diligence use all meanes for the informing of himselfe in those things which he sought to know, all which is implied in those words, *Yea he gave good heed and sought out*; And 4. Because he had formerly given prooffe of his great wisdom and his desire to profit others in the Proverbs which he had composed, digested into order, and published for the good of the Church, *And set in order many Proverbs*; see the Note, Pro. 1. 1.

Verf. 10. *The Preacher sought, &c.*] Here Solomon commends this Book to men from the nature and quality of the doctrine therein contained; *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *words of delight*; that is, he laboured both by study and prayer, to write those things that would be cause of great delight to those that were able truly to judge of them, wholesome and profitable doctrine, such things as were *worthy of all acceptation*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. and that would yield reall refreshing and comfort to mens souls, and withall delivered in such expressions as might also delight the readers: *And that which was written was upright*; that is, it was not written to flatter men, or to tickle a carnall eare and fancy, nor any otherwise to please men, then as might be for their spirituall benefit and edification: *it was written in sincerity, without favouring men in any corrupt way, and to make* men

men upright in all their wayes ; See the Note, Pro. 8. 8. *Even words of truth* ; that is infallibly certain, and free from all error and falshood.

Verf. 11. *The words of the wise, &c.*] Here Solomon commends his doctrine (and so occasionally and consequently the doctrine of all other divine and sacred Writers) from the vertue, efficacy and authority thereof, *The words of the wise* ; to wit, the Penmen of the Scripture, that were infallibly inspired by the only wise God, and those that from thence doe instruct men, to make them wise unto salvation, *as goads* ; that is, sharp and pungent, to awaken and rowse up the drowfie, to attend to what is taught them, to pierce mens hearts with godly compunction and sorrow for sin, and with feare of Gods wrath, (as it is said of the Jewes, that upon the hearing of the Apostles preaching *they were pricked in their heart*, Act. 2. 37.) to reduce those that are gone astray, into the right way, and to quicken and stir up those that are dull and sluggish, by exhortations, promises and threatnings, by feare of punishments and hope of reward, to be still proceeding forward in the way of well-doing, yea with alacrity and liveliness to run the way of Gods commandments ; not flattering men in their sins, nor tickling their itching ears, but, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 4. 12. *Quick and powerfull, and sharper then any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit ; And as nailes*, whereby is meant, either, 1. such stakes or pins, wherewith shepherds doe fasten their hurdles or sheepfolds, by driving them into the ground, that so their sheep may in those inclosures be kept in together, and then this implyes the efficacy of the words of the wise, to keep men from going astray after false doctrines, and sinfull courses, and to retain them in the unity of one and the same faith, and in mutual love one to another ; or 2. the nailes, wherewith Carpenters and others doe fasten their work together, implying likewise the efficacy of the Scripture to pierce and enter into the souls of men, to make them stedfast, constant and unmoveable in the wayes of truth and righteousness, to unite them to God, and to Christ, and in mutuall love one to another ; *fastened by the Masters of Assemblies* ; that is, the Penmen of the Scripture, and others that are sent forth to be teachers in the Church, whose work it is to drive in these nailes, by exhortation and faithfull application, and to fasten them so in mens hearts, that they may never be plucked out again ; and who are therefore called *the Masters of Assemblies*, because God hath authorized them to call the holy Assemblies, Act. 6. 2. and to be spirituall Rulers in his Church, Heb. 13. 17. *Which are given from one Shepherd* ; to wit, God in Christ, the chiefe and supream Shepherd of our souls, Joh. 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 4. (so called here in pursuance of the former metaphor of goads and nailes, whereby heardsmen doe prick forward their oxen, and shepherds doe fasten their sheep-pens.) who hath been in all ages the only teacher of his Church, in regard that it was he that by his Spirit did infallibly guide the Prophets and Apostles, and other holy men of God in writing the Scriptures, 2 Pet. 1. 25. & 1 Pet. 1. 11. and he it is that hath in all ages given the Church Pastors and Teachers, to shew them the way of life, Jer. 3. 15. & Eph. 4. 11. furnishing them with gifts, and assisting them by his Spirit in the faithfull discharge of their calling and work.

Verf. 12. *And further, by these, my Son, be admonished, &c.*] That is, By these holy instructions contained in this book, wherein the whole duty of man is briefly

delivered in a few words; or by these and other the writings of the wise Penmen of the Scriptures, be informed and warned wherein to seek for true blisse and happinesse, not by seeking after and setting thy heart upon the vaine perishing things of this world, but by a quiet dependance upon Gods providence here, in a comfortable enjoyment of the portion that God hath here allotted us, and serious seeking of those things that are eternall.

Of making many bookes there is no end, and much study (or, reading) is a weariness to the flesh] That is, It wasteth and weareth away mens strength, heating the brain, consuming the spirits, and drying up the moysture of the body, and so makes their reading and study irksome and tedious to them: The scope therefore of Solomon in this whole verse seems to be either, 1. To shew that he could have expressed that which he hath written in this booke far more largely, many bookes might have been written of this subject; but that he considered that much reading is wearisome, and that this which he had delivered briefly would be sufficient to inform men of the truth herein contained; or 2. to perswade men to content themselves with the directions given here, and in other bookes of the holy Scripture, without seeking any further, and that because, if men should look into other humane writings to learn how true happinesse is to be attained, they might weary themselves with endlesse toil and labour, the books being so infinite, and the opinions of men therein so different, but never reap any profit or satisfaction hereby, as to this enquiry; and that because these are the perfect rule of faith and manners, so that only in these and such other bookes as are agreeable to these, and grounded on these, the way to the attainment of true happinesse is to be found: Or 3. to invite men to the reading of this and other parts of the Scripture, which teach men the way to life eternal, rather then other humane bookes concerning other sciences, which may distract the mine and weary the body, but cannot yield that full satisfaction, which from these divind writings may be attained.

Verf. 13. *Let us heare the conclusion of the whole matter, &c.*] That is, of all the foregoing discourse, concerning the vanity of all earthly things, & concerning the attainment of true happinesse. That which may be drawn from all that hath been said, and that whereto all that hath been delivered tends, the summe and substance of all may be comprized in these two short directions, (where with I may therefore well end this book, there being no need of adding any thing more) *Feare God and keep his Commandements*; This is a short abridgement of all that is required to make a man truly happy: under which we must know that faith in Christ is necessarily comprehended, because it is by faith in him, that the love of God to us is shed abroad in our hearts, whereby our hearts are purified, and we are brought to love and feare God, and so to endeavour sincerely to keep all his commandments: *for this is the whole duty of man*, or as it is in the Hebrew, *the whole of man*. In this the whole safety and happinesse of man doth consist; After all the enquiry that can be made, this will be found to be the summe of all the meanes that can be used for the obtaining of true happinesse.

Verf. 14. *For God shall bring every work into judgement, &c.*] To wit, At the great day of Judgement, whereof Solomon had made mention before; see the Note.

Chap. 3. 17. every work of man shall then be examined, and sentenced, there will be no avoyding it; *With every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil; to wit, not only those actions of men which were done so privately and closely, that there was never any notice taken of them by others, but also the thoughts, affections and intentions of mens hearts, which are knowne only to God. And this is added here as a strong motive of the foregoing Exhortation, to feare God and keep his commandments.*

A N N O T A T I O N S

Upon the SONG of SOLOMON.

CHAP. I.

Vers. 1.



He song of songs, which is Solomons] That is, Which was composed by Solomon; see the Note, Pro. 1. 1. to wit, either after his repentance, when he came to see the vanity of all earthly things, as is set forth in the book of Ecclesiastes; or else before his fall, which may seeme the more probable, because it is said in generall, that then he made his songs, 1 King. 4. 33. It is clearly a Pastoral marriage-song, or a song of espousals or betrothings, much of the same nature with the 45 Psalme, which is therefore called, *A song of loves*, see the Note there. Only this is composed in the way of a Dialogue, where the Speakers are the Bridegroome and the Bride, (represented in the quality of a shepherd & shepherdes, or a Country damosel) and the Bride-men and Bride-maides, the friends of the Bridegroome, and the companions of the Bride. Very probable it is that Solomon composed this song upon occasion of his marriage with Pharaohs daughter, because there are many passages in this song which doe so clearly allude thereto, as where the Bride is called *the Shulamite*, as if one should say, the wife of Solomon, and is compared to *the horses in Pharaoh's charets*, chap. 1. 9. and where the Bridegroome is so often called by the name of Solomon, or at least compared to Solomon, as Chap. 3. 7, 9, 11. but especially because Solomon, as in many other regards, so also more particularly in that his marriage with Pharaohs daughter, who being a stranger by birth, became a Proselyte, was a most excellent type and figure of Christ, admitting the Church of the Gentiles, as his Spouse, into the nearest fellowship and communion with himselfe; see the Notes, Psal. 45. 9, 10. But yet that it cannot be literally understood of Solomon and his wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, or any other particular woman, is evident, because though the Bride be sometimes termed *the daughter of a Prince*, chap. 7. 1. yet elsewhere she is represented as some Country damosel, that is Sunne-burnt, set to keep the flocks, and to watch the vineyards, Chap. 1. 6, 8. and that was beaten and wounded

wounded by the watchmen of the City, Chap. 5. 7. which are passages that doe in no wise suite with one that lived in the state of a Queen; yea it were absurd and ridiculous to think, that Solomons wife should be compared to *a company of horses in Pharaohs charets, her head to Carmel, her eyes to fishpools, and her nose to the tower of Lebanon, &c.* chap. 7. 4, 5. Such expressions are no way comely for any but a spirituall Bride. And indeed the Bridegroom is here described to be a King of that transcendent Majesty and glory, as is proper to none but only to Christ, and the Bride is set forth by such rare beauty and glory, as can belong to none but the Church, *the Lambs wife*, Revel. 19. 7. And therefore the drift of this song is prophetically to set forth the neere conjunction, and the exceeding great love that is between Christ and his Church, and so by consequence and secondarily between Christ and every faithfull soul, and that under the metaphorical expressions of a Shepherd-Bridegroom and his Bride, though not yet married together, but only contracted and espoused. And indeed the Scripture doth frequently elsewhere speake of Christ in these figurative expressions, 1. of a shepherd, as Joh. 10. 11. *I am the good shepherd*, and Heb. 13. 20. where he is called, *The great shepherd of the sheep*: and 2. of the Churches Husband or Bridegroom, as Isa. 54. 5. *Thy maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy redeemer, the holy one of Israel*, & 62. 5. *As the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoyce over thee*; see also Hos. 2. 16, 19, 20. & Joh. 3. 29. And this sufficiently discovereth the vanity of that scruple which some have made, whether this Song were written by divine inspiration, because the name of God is no where mentioned in it, and because no passage in this song is cited in any place of the New Testament; for besides that the same may be said of the booke of Esther (see the Note, Esth. 1. 1.) considering the whole book is carried in this figurative and allegorical straine, it is sufficient that God in Christ is here set forth by that name that is most suitable hereunto, to wit, the Churches Beloved; and there are many expressions in the New Testament that seeme clearly to have been taken from those conjugal expressions that are used here. As for this Title, *The song of songs*, this song is so called, not so much to imply, as some would have it, that it is a song that consisteth of many songs, as to set forth the excellency of it, that it is the chiefe and most excellent, not only of those thousand and five songs, which were composed by Solomon, 1 King. 4. 33. but also of all the other holy songs recorded in the Scriptures, yea indeed the chiefe of all songs, that either then had been or should hereafter be written; and that because it celebrateth the chiefe and highest of all mysteries, to wit, the love, the union and communion that is between Christ and his Church, more amply and fully then any other doth, as likewise because of the exquisite elegancy of those figurative resemblances under which this spirituall mystery is expressed; even as upon this account the most holy place in the Tabernacle and Temple was called, *The holy of holies*, and Christ, who is the chiefe subject of this song, is called, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, Revel. 19. 16. Whereupon the ancient Jewes have compared the book of the Proverbs to the outward Court of the Temple, Ecclesiastes to the holy place, and this Song of songs to the holy of holies; as esteeming it a treasury of the most high and sacred mysteries of holy Scripture.

Verf. 2. *Let him kisse me with the kisses of his mouth, &c.*] The Bride, the Church doth

doth here abruptly, as it were out of impatience of love, and a holy impotency of concealing her inflamed affections, break forth into this exclamation concerning her beloved, the Lord Christ, who had before made love to her; and had drawn thereby her affections to him, (which is that the Apostle saith, 1 Joh. 4. 19. *We love him, because he first loved us*) whence it is that she addes in the next words, that she had already tasted his love to be *better then wine*. It may be taken either as breathing forth her desires in a wish by her selfe, or else as speaking to her Bride-maides (as indeed she doth afterward, ver. 5. *I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,*) and that as in the person of one ready to faint, that rejects the wine and odoriferous oynments, with other cordials, tendred by her companions for her refreshing, and making knowne, that nothing will satisfie her but the love of her beloved; as indeed such is the affection of every faithfull soule to Christ, that slighting all earthly comforts, they count them as nothing in comparison of the spirituall expressions of his love. And observable it is, that out of the strength of her desires after him, she speaks of Christ in the third person, and that indefinitely, not expressing who it was of whom she speaks, *Let him kisse me, &c.* (even as Mary Magdalen did, when she was transported with grieve, missing Christ in his grave, Joh. 20. 15. *Sir, If thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him,* not naming who it was of whom she spake) as taking it for granted, that this was well knowne, that she loved, and minded, and desired none but her beloved. But what is meant here by *the kisses of his mouth*? I answer; Kisses are mentioned in the Scripture as pledges and incentives of love, Pro. 24. 26. *Every man shall kisse his lips that giveth a right answer*: see Luk. 7. 45. & 1 Pet. 5. 14. And therefore in all ages at the meeting of friends they used to kisse one another, as we see it was at the meeting of Joseph and his brethren, Gen. 45. 15. and at the meeting of Moses and Aaron, Exod. 4. 27. and so likewise when after some offence they were reconciled, as we see in Esau kissing Jacob, Gen. 33. 4. and Davids kissing Absalom, 2 Sam. 14. 33. And so their kissing was an outward token and pledge of that tye of love whereby they stood bound one to another, and an intimation of their desire that their very souls might be knit and united together. And hence it is that many Expositors hold, that with respect to the Church in the time of the old Testament, these words doe set forth the Churches longing desires after the Incarnation of Christ, namely, that he would no longer absent himselfe from her, only sending to her by his Messengers and Ministers, whether Angels or Prophets, as at sundry times and in divers manners he had done, Heb. 1. 1. but that he would come unto her himselfe being manifested in the flesh, and by himselfe make knowne to her the glad tydings of the Gospel. And indeed never was there such an union betwixt God and man, nor such a manifestation of Gods love to man, as there was in the Incarnation of Christ, Joh. 3. 16. Rom. 5. 8. And therefore the faithfull in the old Testament, that did only see the promises a farre off, Heb. 11. 39. did earnestly long after Christs presence in the flesh, and that clearer light which was to shine forth in the Ministry of the Gospel. Luk. 10. 24. *I tell you, that many Prophets and Kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them*: But I rather conceive that the words are to be understood more generally, as an expression of the longing desires of the Church in all ages, and consequently of every faithfull soul,

that

that Christ, who had contracted her to himselfe as his Spouse, (the full accomplishment whereof in marriage is deferred unto the taking of her up into his fathers house in heaven,) would in the meane season give her, not one, but many pledges of his love, not the kisse, but *the kisses of his mouth* (for there is no measure nor satiety in this love) to wit, more and more cleare and full manifestations and assurances of his conjugal love and affection to her, and of his being reconciled to her (for in this life there are sometimes some estrangements betwixt Christ and his Church,) that she might be more nearly united to him, and enjoy the more intimate approaches of his presence, and more and more delightfull communion with him ; but especially that this might be done, by speaking to her in the Ministry of the Gospel, and by the sweet breathings of his Spirit thereby into her heart, applying the comfortable doctrines of peace and salvation therein contained, (opposed to the severe rebukes of the Law) to her heart and conscience, whereby she might come to have the more feeling of his love to her ; for indeed sweet and pleasing words are in the Scripture called kisses, Pro. 27. 6. *Faithfull are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitfull* : And observable it is to this purpose, that she doth not say, *Let him kisse me with the kisses of his lips*, but *with the kisses of his mouth* ; for the kisses of his mouth are not dumb expressions, but vocal and lively declarations of his love in the Gospel, graciously and powerfully applyed by the Spirit to the heart and conscience. Yea and this may be extended also to the Churches desire of beholding Christ face to face in heaven.

For thy love is better then wine.] From the excesse of the Churches affection to Christ it is, that having spoken of him in the third person, *Let him kisse me*, &c. suddenly she turnes her speech to him, as if he were present, (all being here full of patheticall expressions,) *For*, saith she, *thy love is better then wine* ; that is, the sense and feeling of thy love is more profitable and pleasing, more sweet and delightfull, then all earthly delicates, and creature-comforts. *Wine maketh glad the heart of man*, Psal. 104. 15. & Eccles. 10. 19. it maketh those that are of heavy hearts to forget their affliction, poverty, and misery, Pro. 31. 6, 7. and that because it doth encrease, warme and refine the vitall spirits ; but now the apprehension of Christs love, wrought in the heart of believers by the graces and comforts of his Spirit, doth far more chear and revive their soules, and enflame them heaven-ward, causing them to forget all the feares and griefes wherewith the guilt of sin and terrors of the Law had formerly imbittered their spirits. Whence it is that the manifestation of Gods love thorough Christ in Gospel-Ordinances is tearmed, Isa. 25. 6. *A feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.*

Vers. 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments*, &c.] In these words there may seeme to be an allusion to a custome, very usuall in those Eastern Countries, that Bridegroomes used to anoint themselves with sweet ointments ; And because it is unquestionable, that by Christs *good ointments* here are meant the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit, which were superabundantly conferred upon him, Joh. 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*, and whereby he was anointed to be the King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church, Isa. 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tydings unto the meeke*, &c. see the

Note

Note also, Psal. 45. 7. Therefore by *the savour* or smell of his good ointments, much needs be meant the discovery of these his gifts and graces, in the transcendent holiness of his life, his divine teaching and miracles confirming the same, and all the good he did for his people whilst he lived upon earth, Act. 10. 38. together with the sweet refreshing content and delight, which they yielded to the soules of those that had any spirituall sense or discerning in them. And accordingly also we must understand the following words, *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth*; for hereby much needs be meant, either, 1. that because of the sweetness of these gifts and graces of his Spirit, the very naming of him, or the hearing him named, was as delightfull to her, as the smell of some precious ointment when it is poured forth. And it may be also there might be some allusion herein to that name *the Messiah*, or *the Christ*, which is by interpretation, *the Anointed*: that name which is above every name, Phil. 2. 9. And concerning which it is said, Act. 4. 12. that there is none other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved; or 2^d, that his name, that is, he himselfe (see the Notes, Psal. 5. 11. & 20. 1.) was as ointment poured forth, both because his gifts and graces are from him poured forth upon all the faithfull, Joh. 14. 16. according to that promise, *I will poure out my Spirit upon all flesh*, Joel 2. 28. and by the renewing of the holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, Tit. 3. 5, 6. the broken hearts of Christians are healed, their soules are strengthened, refreshed and comforted, as men are in their bodies by precious ointments, and they are consecrated, as Kings, and Priests, and Prophets unto God, as likewise because hereby the faithfull doe take exceeding delight in Christ: or 3. that because of these his precious gifts and graces, his name, that is, the communicating of the knowledge of Christ by the Gospel, and the miracles wrought by them that preached the Gospel, Act. 9. 15. yields very sweet refreshing delight to the hearts of believers, and causeth his fame to be spread abroad from place to place far and neere; according to that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *Thanks be unto God, which maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*

Therefore doe the Virgins love thee.] To wit, Because of the sweetness of thy graces, and the discovery thereof by the Gospel, which makes thy fame to be renowned all abroad. And by *the Virgins* here, as most conceive, is meant the Spoules, Bridemaides or companions, namely, either, 1. particular Churches, 2 Cor. 11. 2. or else more particularly, all true Believers, as it is explained, ver. 4. who doe own the Church Catholick as their mother, and doe honour her, and attend, as it were, upon her in comely order, as Bride-maides doe upon the Bride, and doe love Christ for his graces, 1 Pet. 1. 8. for these are tearmed *Virgins*, and said to follow the Lamb whither soever he goeth, Rev. 14. 4. for which see also the Notes, Psal. 45. 9, 14.

Verf. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.*] This againe is, I conceive, spoken by the Church to Christ, as in the person of a betrothed damosel, that lying in a languishing condition, refuseth to be lifted up and cheared by her companions, but calling as it were to her beloved, makes known that it was in his power to draw her so, that she, and her companions too, should presently run after him. Now the Church, and every faithfull soule, may be said to be drawn by Christ; partly by Christs redeeming her to himselfe; of which also some understand that of our Saviour, Joh. 12.

32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* (And if this should be intended, the words may be taken, as the desire of the Church in the dayes of the old Testament, that Christ would come and accomplish the work of their redemption) but especially by the Spirit of Christ revealing himselfe and his love to her, and thereby perswading and causing her to follow after him in the wayes of faith, and love, and new obedience; according to that, Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the father, which hath sent me, draw him;* which is that drawing of which the Lord speakes, Jer: 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindnesse have I drawn thee:* and againe, Hos. 11. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.* And indeed, by reason of the weight of that carnall corruption which remaineth in the best, which doth continually clog them, and makes them listlesse, lasie and slow of heart in following after Christ, Mat. 26. 40. the faithfull stand in need to be drawn, not only by the first grace whereby their hearts are changed, but also by a continuall supply of grace, to inable them to withstand all the oppositions they meet with in their way; And when they are effectually drawn hereby, then they run after Christ amaine; see Psal. 119. 32. according to the direction of his word, and the patterne which himselfe hath set them; yea and they draw others to run along with them.

The King hath brought me into his Chambers.] Here the Church turnes her speech againe to her companions; and that to shew, that it was no wonder though she so earnestly desired communion with Christ, having formerly received so many cleare discoveries of his love, and having been so exceedingly refreshed thereby. Nor is it any wonder that the Church, being represented in this song as a Country damosel or shepheardesse, should tearm her beloved, *The King*, since it is usuall with Lovers, even of the meaner sort of people, to please themselves with such expressions as these, My Brother, my Lord, my King, when they speake of their beloved ones, thereby to shew how dearely and highly they esteeme them: *The king hath brought me into his chambers;* to wit, his treasures and store-houses, or his chambers of presence, his bed-chamber, or closets: And by these *his chambers*, here may be meant, 1. the holy Scriptures, and the assemblies of Gods people for holy and religious services, and particularly the preaching of the Gospel there; and that because by these Christ doth peculiarly reveale to his Church, and the faithfull members thereof, himselfe, and all his secret counsels, Psal. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them, that feare him,* and so also, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10. & Mat. 13. 11, 12. they know the mind of Christ, 1 Cor. 2. 16. and he doth there discover to them all the hidden treasures and mysteries of grace; there they enjoy familiar love, amiable conference, and conjugall communion with the Lord Christ, and so are filled with his graces, and bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7. 4. yea there he affords them, not only secret counsell, Psal. 25. 14. but also secret protection, Psal. 27. 5. *In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me;* And because these things were done more obscurely in the time of the old Testament, Heb. 11. 13. Joh. 8. 56. but more nearly and clearly in the dayes of the Gospel, Mat. 13. 17. *Verily I say unto you, that many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to heare those things which ye heare, and*

have not heard them; therefore this may be chiefly meant of the dayes of the Gospel: or 2. the discoveries which Christ, immediately by his own Spirit, makes to the faithfull of his love to them, and of the interest which they have in all the benefits that he hath purchased for them, &c. when they are by themselves meditating of him and of those things that concerne their spirituall estate: Or 3. those heavenly mansions which Christ hath prepared for the faithfull, Joh. 14. 3. where they shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *face to face*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. and shall be for ever with the Lord, 1 Thes. 4. 17. and shall ever enjoy that glory and blisse, which God hath there laid up for them, even those things, which *eye hath not seen, nor eare heard, neither have entered into the heart of man*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And into these chambers in heaven it may be said, that Christ hath already brought the faithfull even here in this world, because already *God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 6. and because before hand he gives them some sight by his Spirit of those treasures of glory, which are there provided for them, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10. and they spiritually enjoy communion with God above, and have their conversation in heaven.

We will be glad and rejoyce in thee, &c.] That is, Because of this thy love to me, and the sweet manifestations thereof, in all this honour thou hast done me, &c. both I and mine must needs exceedingly rejoyce in thee, yea in thee alone: *We will remember thy love more then wine*; that is, we will think of it, and rehearse it, and speake of it to others with more joy, then men can take in any earthly things; see the Note above, ver. 2. *The upright love thee*; that is, those pure virgin-soules, mentioned in the forgoing verse, that professe thy truth, and walk the right wayes thereof, and all with an upright heart, and are able rightly to judge of things, though but a few in comparison of others, must needs by the remembrance of thy love be engaged to love thee sincerely.

Verf. 5. *I am black but comely (O ye daughters of Jerusalem)* &c.] Because it might seeme strange, that the Spouse, represented here in the person of a Country damsel or shepherdesse, should talk of the love of a King, and boast of such high favours, which the King her Beloved had afforded her, in bringing her into his chambers, &c. as she had said in the foregoing verse, in regard she might seeme unworthy of being so highly esteemed by a person of such dignity, therefore to prevent these thoughts in those that stood by, she addes these words, *I am black, but comely, (O ye daughters of Jerusalem:)* So that the very drift of these words is, I conceive, to prevent the offences that may be taken at the Churches infirmities and tribulations. By *the daughters of Jerusalem*, are meant, either the Spouses Bridemaides, those that were before called *the Virgins*, ver. 3. (for which see the Note there) who may be so termed, as being the daughters of that Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, Gal. 4. 26. Or else, either first those that live in the Church, but yet are not reall members of the Church; or secondly, those of the Jewes, that would not joyne themselves with the Church of Christ, as indeed our Saviour useth the very same expression, speaking to the Inhabitants of the earthly Jerusalem, Luk. 23. 28. *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your children*; for these are they that were most likely to be offended at the Churches blacknesse. And

as for that expression, which the Church here useth, *I am black, but comely*, it seemes to be used with respect to the condition of Country damfels, that are wont to be brown and Sun-burnt; or to the wife of Solomon, who being an Egyptian, the daughter of Pharaoh, was brown and blackish, as all that nation use to be: so that it is all one as if she had said, I confesse that I am black, yet that doth no way impair the comelinesse of my countenance; I am not deformed, but lovely brown, neither will my Beloved like me ever a whit the worse for that. But now for the Church, the Spouse of Christ, who is here intended; though she may be said to be *black*, as some conceive, because of the prophane ones and false-hearted hypocrites, that are alwayes amongst those that professe themselves Gods people, and yet withall *comely*, because of those reall Saints that are amongst them; yet I conceive that there are two other things that are chiefly intended here by her blacknesse, namely, that she is *black*, 1. in regard of the remainder of corruptions that are in the best, whilst they live here in this world; even the Apostle confesseth of himselfe, that he was *carneall*, and *sold under sin*, Rom. 7. 14. And 2. in regard the Church is frequently in such a poore, afflicted and mournfull estate, as being despised and scorned, persecuted and reproached by the men of the world; and this last I conceive is chiefly intended, both because the sad and afflicted condition of Gods people is elsewhere set forth by this expression, as, Jer. 8. 21. *For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt, I am black, &c.* Lam. 4. 8. *Their visage*, saith the Prophet of the Nazarites, *is blacker then a coal*; as likewise because in the following verse she doth plainly ascribe her blacknesse to her being Sun-burnt. And then she is said to be *comely*, because of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the saving graces wherewith she is inwardly adorned, see the Note, Psal. 45. 13. as likewise because of the beauty of Gospel administrations and Ordinances, continued in the Church even in her greatest persecutions. So that though she was black and despicable in the eyes of men, being in her outward appearance as the off-scowring of all things, yet she was lovely in the eyes of God and of Christ, and in a very happy estate and condition; yea her very blacknesse, that is, her suffering for righteousness sake did encrease her comelinesse; whence is that, *We glory in tribulations also*, Rom. 5. 3. As for those following similitudes, wherewith this is farther set forth, *As the tents of Kedar, as the curtaines of Solomon*; Some think that both of them are joyntly used to expresse the same thing, namely, that *as the tents of Kedar*, (whereof see the Note, Psal. 120. 5.) were outwardly black, (and indeed the word *Kedar* signifieth *black*,) as being made of black haire-cloath, and as being continually dusty, parched with the Sun and weather-beaten; and yet withall were full of great riches, to wit, because these Arabians that dwelt in tents, lived upon robbing and spoyling those that passed by them; and so likewise, *as the curtaines of Solomon*; that is, the tents, which he used when he travelled far abroad, were very meane on the out-side, but inwardly adorned with curious hangings and furniture; so was the Church outwardly black, but inwardly beautiful and comely, as is before noted. And they that thus expound these words are wont to justify this exposition, by shewing that the covering of tents are often elsewhere in Scripture called curtaines, as 1 Chron. 17. 1. *Lo, I dwell in an house of Cedars, but the Arke of the Covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtaines*; and Isa. 54. 2.

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: But rather these comparisons are to be applyed to the two foregoing clauses dis-junctively, to wit, that the Church acknowledgeth her selfe *black*, as the tents of *Kedar*; that is, as those Arabians that dwelt in those tents, which were a swarthy black people, or else as their tents themselves, which being the dwelling places of a poore rude people, had nothing neat or handsome in them, and were base and black on the out-side; and yet withall professeth that she (the house, wherein Christ the true Solomon dwelleth,) was *comely*, as the curtains of Solomon; that is, as those noble persons, that dwelt in Solomons Court; or rather, as the hangings of his house, which were rich and beautifull, made of silks of divers colours and interwoven with gold.

Verf. 6. *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the Sun hath looked upon me.* As if she should have said, Though I am blackish, (for so the word here properly signifieth) yet that is only by accident, that is not my native colour; it is only because I am Sun-burnt; and therefore doe not despise me for this, because the Sun hath by looking upon me, scorched me, and discoloured my face, doe not you therefore look upon me, as one not worthy of the love of my beloved. By this expresseion, *Look not upon me*, &c. may be meant, that they should not look upon her; 1. with astonishment, as being amazed at her meane outward condition, and so afraid to joyne themselves to her; or 2. with gladnesse and rejoycing, as triumphing over her, because of her afflictions; for so the same phrase is used concerning Edom magnifying himselfe over the Jewes in the day of their distresse, Obad: 12. *Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother*: & Mic. 4. 11. *Let her be defiled* (say the enemies of the Church) *let our eye look upon Zion*: or 3. with contempt, coyly and scornfully, as disdainig her because of her blacknesse; as it is said of the Leviathan, Job 41. 34. *He beholdeth all high things*; to wit, with scorne and contempt.

Because the Sun hath looked upon me;] That is, because the Sun of persecution and affliction hath scorched me; according to that, Mat: 13. where that which is said, ver. 6. *When the Sun was up*; is explained thus, ver. 21. *When persecution and tribulation ariseth*; Or, because God in his displeasure hath exposed me to these tribulations and distresses. I know that those, who by the Churches blacknesse, understand her sinfulness, or the mixture of wicked ones amongst her true Saints, doe accordingly hold, that by the Sun here is meant the Devil, or the scorching of his temptations, which are the maine cause of that blacknesse of the Church. But the following verse shews that it is the blacknesse of her outward afflicted condition, that is here at least chiefly intended.

My mothers children were angry with me, &c.] Here the Sponse shews how she came to be Sun-burnt, namely, because her churlish brethren had turned her out of doores, and forced her to be continually abroad in the Sun keeping the vineyards; and in expressing this she useth these words, *my mothers children*, either to imply one great cause why they had used her so hardly, to wit, because they were but her half-brothers, the sons of her mother, but not the sons of her father; or else, by way of aggravating their harsh dealing with her, in that they were those that had rumbled in the same belly with her, that had used her so discourteously; and so we see the same

same expression used, Psal. 50. 20. *Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thy own mothers son.* But of whom doth the Church say this, *My mothers children were angry with me*? I answer, that hereby are meant, either, 1. all those inordinate lusts, which remaine in the faithfull, and were conceived in the womb with her, Psal. 51. 5. Of whom the Apostle Peter saith, that they *warre against the soule*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. Or 2. the men of the world, that were of the same humane race with her selfe, but alwayes professed enemies to the people of God; Or rather, 3. false bastard-brothers in the Church, ungodly men and hypocrites, that are indeed in the Church, but yet God is not their father; for these doe usually hate and persecute those that are true Christians, and cast them out of the Church, (according to that, Isa. 66. 5. *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified*) who may therefore well say with David, Psal. 69. 8. *I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mothers children*; see also, Act. 20. 29, 30. Now of these the Spouse complaines, *They made me the keeper of the vineyards*, (under which serving in any hard Country-labour is comprehended, 2 King. 25. 12. *The Captain of the Guard left of the poore of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen*,) and this may be understood spiritually two severall wayes, to wit, either, 1. that unmortified lusts in the faithfull did put them upon a great deale of drudgery in the service of sin, and in giving them up to worldly pleasures, a maine cause of their blacknesse; or 2. that those that pretended themselves to be of the Church, false teachers and false brethren, did force her to joyne her selfe to corrupt and superstitious Congregations, (vineyards wherein were *the vines of Sodome and of the fields of Gomorrha*, Deut. 32. 32.) and to defile her selfe with the corruptions of their religion, will-worships and traditions of men, which did much impaire her beauty; according to what we find written, Mat. 23. 4. Act. 15. 1. 10. Gal. 6. 12, 13. & Col. 2. 20. &c. Or 3. that the primitive Church of the Apostles were by the obstinacy and rage of their brethren the Jewes against them forced to leave them, and to betake themselves to keep the vineyards of the Churches that were gathered amongst the Gentiles, Act. 13. 46. which brought great persecutions and troubles upon them: Or 4. that by false brethren, hereticks and others, the Church was brought to serve her enemies, and to endure much hard bondage and misery; which may well be set forth by the keeping of vineyards, that being so hard and laborious a service. As for the last clause, *but mine own vineyard have I not kept*; therein I conceive, either the Spouse would imply that she was not so meanly borne, as to be set to keep vineyards; (No, she had not kept her own vineyard, which was her own peculiar inheritance, but had others to keep it for her) only by the rage of her brethren she was unkindly put upon this drudgery. And this may imply, that the Church is of her selfe of honourable descent, though by the persecution of her brethren she be brought here to live in a poore, and servile, and despised condition. Or else she speaks it by way of farther bewayling her selfe in regard of this particular, that whilst she was set to keep the vineyards, she kept not her own vineyard. And then the mystical meaning may be; either, 1. that whilst the faithfull are by their inbred lusts carried out too much after the world, they dangerously neglect their own precious soules; or 2. that the Church, being forced by her brethren to joyne her selfe

to corrupt assemblies, and so being over-burdened with humane rites and ceremonies, did not maintaine the truth of God, and doe her duty to him, as she ought to have done; or 3. that by reason of the persecutions she endured, and the heavy pressures which thereby she underwent, she was scattered and broken, that she could not serve God so freely, and comfortably, as she desired, nor take that care of particular Churches committed to her, as she would have done.

Verf. 7. *Tell me (O thou whom my soule loveth) where thou feedest, &c.*] To shew that the Spouse was not discouraged with her blacknesse, so as for that to feare lest her Beloved should any whit disregard her for it, here she turneth her speech againe to him, and makes known how earnestly she desired to enjoy his presence, the rather because of those things, which had been the cause of her present blacknesse. *Tell me (O thou whom my soule loveth, that is, whom I love from my very soule, and whose presence therefore I desire to enjoy) where thou feedest;* to wit, thy flock (for in this Pastorall Song Christ is usually represented as a Shepherd, as frequently elsewhere in the Scripture) and feeding implyes the whole work of a shepherd in regard of his flock; according to that, Isa. 40. 11. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arme, and carry them in his bosome, and shall gently lead those that are with young:* and thus it followeth here, *where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noone;* which is spoken according to the custome of shepherds, especially in those hot Countries, that were wont at noone in the heat of the day, to carry their flocks into their sheep-cotes, or to some shadowy place in the fields, where they and their flocks might lye downe and rest themselves. So that for the understanding of the spirituall sense of this passage, we must know, first, that the Church, because of the hard usage of her false brethren, desires here to be informed by Christ, where those holy publick assemblies were, wherein he constantly fed the soules of his people with the word truly preached, and other holy ordinances rightly administred, that so she might goe thither and enjoy his presence, and live under his government, and partake of his ordinances, and might grow in grace, and be strengthened against temptations. Secondly, that the reason of the Churches enquiry concerning this is, that these holy assemblies are not alwayes easie to be found, 1. Because many pretend themselves to be the flock of Christ, and that Christ is present amongst them as their shepherd, when it is not so; Mark 13. 21, 22. *If any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or he, he is there; believe him not; for false Christs and false Prophets shall rise &c.* 2. Because Christ for sin sometimes withdraws himselfe from his Church, and saith, as Zach. 11. 9. *I will not feed you: that that dyeth, let it dye, &c.* and so the Church wanteth faithfull Pastors: and 3. Because the Church is sometimes forced to fly into a wilderness, Revel. 12. 14. and to hide her selfe for feare in secret places: and thirdly, that the Church doth more particularly add that clause, *where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon,* with respect to the comfort and safe repose and peace, which Christ affords to his people in the noon-tide of the hottest persecutions and temptations, according to that, Ezek. 34. 15. *I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lye down, saith the Lord God;* and that, Joh. 16. 33. *These things have I spoken to you, that in me you might have peace.*

For why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?] That

is, why shouldest thou suffer me by going aside to enquire of thee to fall in amongst the flocks of thy fellow-shepheards? This will not be for thine honour, nor can stand well with my modesty. Now by Christs *companions* here are meant false teachers, and they are so called, either, 1. Because they were such as were called to the office of being Pastors in the Church, or at least took upon them to be such, though they were indeed but Idol-shepheards: or 2. Because they glory in the name of Christians, and boast themselves to be the friends of Christ, though they be nothing so: or 3. Because they will not be subordinate to Christ, but take upon them that which belongs to him alone, as the only King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church, usurping power to prescribe Lawes for his worship and service with as much authority as himselfe, as if they were not his servants, but his *companions*. So that the meaning of the words seemes to be this, that the Church makes known her feare, lest for want of knowing exactly which was the true flock of Christ, she might goe astray and be drawn away to joyne her selfe to the corrupt Congregations of false, idolatrous, or hereticall teachers. This last clause may be indeed read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *for why should I be as one that is vailed by the flocks of thy companions?* And if it be read so, because this being *vailed* may be taken for the attire of a harlot, as some would gather from that which is said of Tamar, Gen. 38. 15. or else for a signe of sorrow, because mourners used to cover their faces, Ezek. 24. 17. or for a signe of modesty; see the Note, Gen. 24. 65. Accordingly the meaning may be that the Church is afraid of being amongst corrupt assemblies, either 1. because she desired to avoyd the danger of contagion, yea all appearance of evill; or 2. Because she would not be as a mourning widow, that is cast off and forsaken of her husband; or 3. Because she was troubled to be amongst those, whose wickednesse she should be loth to behold, or amongst whom she should scarce dare to own the truth, or the Lord Christ, her beloved.

Verf. 8. *If thou know not, &c.*] Here Christ satisfieth his Spouse the Church in that concerning which she had in the foregoing verse desired direction from him. Nor can it seeme strange to any, that Christ should speak to his Church, as present with her, and yet withall give her direction how to find him, as if he were absent from her, if we consider that even when Christ is absent from his Church in regard of bodily presence, yea in regard of the manifestations of the presence of his grace, yet as God, he is alwayes present with her: As for those first words, *If thou know not*, they may be premised, either, 1. to shew, that the faithfull may not know, where the true Church is, that is truly his, so fully and perfectly, as they should know it, they may be doubtfull and troubled about it, especially in the Churches low estate and condition; or 2^{ly}, to hint unto her, that it was strange she should not know this, and that she had need to be very carefull that she did not mistake herein; *If thou know not, (O thou fairest among women)* &c. And thus he extolls her beauty, with respect to her being washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and her being adorned with the pure and sincere graces of Gods sanctifying Spirit, which is farre more lovely then the painting of hypocrites; as upon the same account it is said of the Nazarites, Lam. 4. 7. *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubies, their polishing was of Saphir*; and the Church is said to be a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Eph. 5. 27. yea
this

this may have respect to the Churches foregoing complaint of her blacknesse; for hereby he gives her to understand, that though she thought meanely of her selfe and was despised by others, as one that was tanned and Sun-burnt, yet in his eyes she was exceeding faire, and indeed therefore the fairer, because she bewayled her blacknesse, the humble being alwayes most beautifull in his sight: As for the following direction given her, *Goe thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock*; the meaning is, that leaving the false shepherds and their flocks, she should mark the footsteps of his flock, and goe in that track, that is, that she should follow the example of the faithfull in former ages, recorded in the Scripture, that had knowne the voice of Christ their shepherd, and had followed him; according to that which is said, Heb. 6. 12. *Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*; and Rom. 4. 12. where believers are said to *walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised*, and so by this meanes she should be sure to joyne her selfe to the true flock of Christ, and to find him, who was alwayes present amongst them, Mat. 28. 20. And withall observable it is, that Christ speakes here of the faithfull as one flock, opposed to the many flocks of his companions, mentioned before, ver. 17. those that joyne not with the true Church of Christ, being usually divided into many sects and parties.

And feed thy kids besides the Shepherds tents] That is, feed those of thy flock, that are young and tender, those my little ones, that are despised and contemned in the world, with the instructions of those faithfull teachers, that are truly sent of God to be spirituall guides unto his people; and of whom it is said, that their lips shall preserve knowledge, and that men should seek the Law at their mouthes, Mal. 2. 7. Or, teach them to follow the example or the doctrine of the holy Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles; according to that which is recorded in the holy Scriptures, which may well be here intended by *the tents of the shepherds*.

Verf. 9. *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaohs charrets*] If Solomon had intended to write this song concerning any of his wives, it had been extreamly harsh to compare them to Coach-horses, or chariot-horses: see the Note, Chap. 1. 1. It was therefore doubtlesse intended concerning the Church, the Spouse of Christ, whom Christ here tearms his *love*, because the Church is indeed the sole object of Christs speciall love. And because the horse is a very comely and stately creature, and the Egyptian horses were esteemed of all others the most generous, and of greatest speed and beauty, (whence it was that Solomon had his horses from thence, 1 King. 10. 28. and the horses and charets of Egypt were in succeeding ages greatly admired and sought after, Isa. 30. 1. *Wo to them that goe down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in charets*) and it is not to be questioned but that the Kings, the Pharaohs of Egypt, had the choicest of them all, therefore some conceive that the Church is here compared to *a company of horses in Pharaohs charrets*, to imply,

1. her comeliness, gravity and Majesty, which made Christ take as much delight in her, as men are wont to doe in beholding a company of goodly and gallant horses.
2. Her speed in flying into Christ, as soone as she heares where he is to be found, and her unwearied forwardnesse in running the wayes of Gods Commandments, and in discharging all those honourable services wherein Christ at any time employes her.

And

And 3. her readinesse to be guided and ordered by Christ in all things, or her complying with him in the matrimonial yoke. But because the horse is usually set forth in the Scripture as a warlike beast, Job 39. 21. &c. and Pro. 21. 31. *The horse is prepared for the day of battell*, and the Egyptian horses and charets were much desired for the warre, therefore I rather think that the Church is here compared to a company of horses in Pharaohs charets, to signifie her strength and valour, and that she should be victorious over her enemies, as for the same reason she is afterwards said to be terrible as an army with banners chap. 6. 10. Because when the Church did what he had advised her to doe in the foregoing verse, that is, when she abandoned the flocks of his companions, and joyned her selfe to his flock, she must then expect persecutions and troubles, therefore to comfort her against these troubles with a promise of victory, he compares her to a company of horses in Pharaohs charets; And indeed upon the same ground Christ and his servants are set forth riding upon white horses, Revel. 19. 11, 14. and it is expressly said of the Church, Zach. 10. 3. *The Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battell.*

Verf. 10. *Thy cheekes are comely with rowes of jewels, thy neck with chaines of gold.*] Some think this is added yet farther to set forth why the Spouse was compared in the foregoing verse to a company of horses in Pharaohs charets, to wit, because her cheekes and neck were as comely to behold, or because they were as richly adorned, as the cheekes and necks of their horses in those Eastern Countries used to be, especially in Kings charets, that had rich chaines about their necks, and head-stals and bridles gorgeously adorned with rowes of jewels; which indeed agrees with that, Judg. 8. 26. where it is said, that *the Kings of Midian had chaines of gold about their Camels necks.* But because the Spouse had before complained of her being Sun-burnt, I rather think that her Beloved doth still proceed on to shew, that though she was tanned, yet she was exceeding comely and beautifull in his eye; and so alluding to the custome of women in those Countries, that used to weare rowes of jewels on their heads, that hung down to their cheekes, &c. He saith, *Thy cheekes are comely with rowes of jewels, &c.* That is, thou art curiously adorned with chaines or necklaces, and with rowes of jewels: Or, (because the Spouse is here represented as a shepheardesse, and such Country damosels used not to weare such costly attire) the meaning may be only this, that her face and neck (the cheekes being put figuratively for the whole face, as being the chiefe seate of shamefacednesse, modesty and beauty) were as comely as if they were adorned with rowes of jewels and chaines of gold; their native beauty was such that they needed no outward ornaments to set them forth. Now by these *rowes of jewels and chaines of gold*, wherewith the Church, the Spouse of Christ, is adorned, may be meant in generall those Lawes and Ordinances, and those gifts and graces, shining forth in the profession and practice of Gods people, and the good works that are done by them, whereby the outward face of the Church is exceedingly adorned, and the members thereof are made comely and gracious in the sight of God and good men; see the Notes, Pro. 1. 9. & Psal. 45. 9, 13. Or else those most eminent and conspicuous members of the Church, that are in a high degree above others adorned with gifts and graces, which for their singular worth may well be compared

to jewels, and whereby they are fitted to doe much service to God and his people; see Pro. 25. 12. Yet some doe more particularly apply the rowes of jewels on the cheeks, to the beauty of the orderly observation of Ordinances in the Church, and the chaines on the neck, to mens chearfull submitting of themselves to these Ordinances.

Verf. 11. *We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver*] It is conceived that the Bridegroom doth here promise, that he and his friends or companions would farther adorn his Spouse by making her *borders of gold*, to wit, to wear on her head or neck, *with studs of silver*, that is, curiously wrought with specks, prominent knobs or knots of silver, to render them the more beautifull. But the spirituall sense is clearly this, that Christ here promiseth his Church, first, that he and his father and his holy Spirit (see the Note, Gen. 1. 26.) or he by his Prophets and Apostles and other his faithfull Ministers and servants, would yet farther adorne his Saints with an increase of the manifold graces of his Spirit; or secondly, that they would adorne the Church in Gospel times not only with a greater measure of grace, but also with more glorious ordinances, then those carnall ordinances were under the Law; according to that, Isa. 60. 17. *For brasse I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brasse, and for stones iron*: or thirdly, that he would raise in his Church men of eminent gifts and graces, teachers and others; according to that which is said of the Nazarites, Lam. 4. 7. *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubies, their polishing was of Saphir*. The expression here used, is much like that, Pro. 25. 11. *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver*.

Verf. 12. *While the King sitteth at his table, &c.*] Here the Spouse seemes to speake againe to her Bridemaides and companions (as before, ver. 2. & 5.) or to the friends of her Beloved. And the drift of her speech is, either, 1. to praise her Beloved, as in the foregoing verses he had praised her, and to acknowledge that all that was amiable and lovely in her, had been wrought in her by him; or 2. to shew that as he did highly esteeme of her, so likewise she did make precious account of him, and that what she had done was done to testifie her respect to him, and by way of procuring his favour towards her; *While the King* (see the Note above, ver. 4.) *sitteth at his table*, to wit, accompanied with his guests, his holy Saints and servants, *my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof*; for the understanding whereof we must know, 1. that there is in these words an allusion to a feast, as the mention of the Kings sitting at his table doth evidently shew. 2. That because the using of perfumes, and odoriferous ointments for the refreshing and chearing their guests, was in those dayes one of the chiefe civilities of their feasts, and *spikenard* was one of the chiefe things whereof they did compose their most sweet and precious ointments; Joh. 12. 3. *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus—and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment*; see the Notes also, Psal. 23. 5. & 45. 7, 8. Therefore doth the Spouse, the Church make mention of her *spikenard*, *my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof*. And 3. that as Christs imparting to his Saints the joyes of his glorious presence in heaven is usually set forth by a banquet; so also the communion they enjoy with Christ upon earth in the preaching of the

the Gospel, and other his holy Ordinances, and particularly in that love-feast at the Lords table, 1 Cor. 10. 21. *Many shall come (saith our Saviour) from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;* see also, Mat. 22. 12. And herein it is likely there is an allusion to those holy feasts, which the Jewes made with their sacrifices in the time of the Law; for *they did all eat the same spirituall meate, and did all drink the same spirituall drink with us,* 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4. and they were all refreshed with the same spirituall joyes, though they are now more fully and clearly imparted to us in the dayes of the Gospel. And accordingly therefore by the Churches *spikenard* here may be meant, either, 1. Christ, or the graces of Christ; *While the King sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof;* As if she should have said, My Beloved is my spikenard, he is to me instead of all perfumes and precious oyntments, nothing is so sweet to me, as he is; Or, whilst the King, my Beloved, sitteth in heaven, compassed about with his holy Angels and glorified Saints, and I am here on the earth below, yet even from thence, notwithstanding this vast distance, the sweet savour of his graces cometh unto me, and therewith I am refreshed by his word and Spirit, (see the Note above, ver. 3.) and how much more then will it be so, when I shall be with him in glory? Or else 2. the graces, and the holy fruits thereof, wrought in her by Christ; *While the King sitteth at his table;* that is, while Christ is present amongst his people, in his word and Ordinances, communicating himselfe to them, and sitting with them as it were at the same table, a signe of sweetest friendship and fellowship, *my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof;* that is, my faith and other graces are actuated, quickned, and encreased hereby, and doe yield the fruits of repentance, prayer, praises, and other good workes, which are both a comfort and refreshing to my selfe, and delightfull to my Saviour: So that there is nothing in me, that is praise-worthy, but what is the work of his own grace.

Verf. 13. *A bundle of myrrhe is my wel-beloved unto me.*] That is, a bunch, or a bag of myrrhe; for if by *myrrhe* here the flowers of myrrhe be meant, then it may be best translated, *a bundle* or bunch of *myrrhe*; but if it be the sweet gumme that issueth from the myrrhe-tree that is here intended, then it is best translated *a bundle* or bag. However this expression seemes to imply the superabundance of grace and blisse, that is stored up in Christ; and the drift of the Church in these words is to signifie, either that all those sweet graces in her, for which her Beloved had so commended her, were wholly from him; or else rather that Christ was exceeding sweet and delightfull to her, and a great refreshing to her upon all occasions; so that though she was delightfull to her Beloved, as he had before expressed, yet nothing so, as he was to her. And besides observable it is, how emphatically the Church limits this to her selfe, *A bundle of myrrhe my wel-beloved is unto me*; which is a speech of faith and propriety, applying Christ and his benefits unto her selfe; as indeed the faithfull doe only perceive the sweetnesse of Christ, others savour nothing but worldly things only. Because *myrrhe* hath a bitter roote (and therefore they offered our Saviour for drink when he fainted, *wine mingled with myrrhe*, Mark 15. 23.) and it is likewise of great use for embalming, (and therefore was used by Nicodemus in the embalming of our Saviours dead body, Joh. 19. 39.) therefore some conceive that Christ is compared here,

here to a *bundle of myrrhe*, to signifie also, that Christ is bitter at first to men because of afflictions, and that by Christ all true believers shall put on incorruption, and shall be preserved unto eternity. But it is surely the sweetnesse of the myrrhe only that is here intended.

He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.] In these words there seemes to be an allusion to the custome of women, Country damosels especially, in wearing bunches, or nosegayes, as we call them, of sweet-smelling flowers, within or before their breasts, therewith to adorne and refresh themselves; or in wearing silken sweet bagges or pomanders, or boxes of perfumes, that the sweet savour thereof might be delightfull to themselves and others. However in saying that Christ should lie all night betwixt her breasts, the Church makes known what precious account she made of Christ, that she desired to have him nearly united to her, even that he might dwell in her heart by faith, Eph. 3. 17. that her affections might still cleave unto him, and his to her, and that she might be ever thinking of him, and of the great things he had done for her, Col. 3. 16. Yea this lying betwixt her breasts *all night*, may imply his constant and perpetuall abode in the Church, which is that Christ promised, Joh. 14. 23. that he and his father would make their *abode* with those that truly loved him, and Mat. 28. 20. *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* And because of those words, *my breasts*, some understand it more particularly of Christs being in those that are the teachers of his Church, as a bundle of myrrhe unto his people.

Verf. 14. *My beloved is unto me as a cluster of Camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.*] The Spouse doth here farther compare her beloved, the Lord Christ, to a *cluster of Camphire*, which is a sweet gumme, or *Cypres* (as the Original word is translated in the margin of our Bibles) whose flowers or berries, as it is said, doe grow together in a cluster, as grapes doe, and are exceeding sweet, thereby to signifie how sweet Christ was to her, (for which see the foregoing Note) and that with respect to the many and glorious things he did and suffered for her, and the many glorious priviledges and benefits he purchased for her. And because *Engedi*, a towne in the tribe of Judah, Josh. 15. 62. called also *Hazazon-tamar*, 2 Chron. 20. 2. being neare to Jordan and watered with springs, was a very fruitfull soile for gardens and vineyards, where they had fig-trees, and other trees which they did highly esteeme, planted amongst their vines, therefore the Spouse compares her beloved to a *cluster of camphire* (or *cypres*) in the vineyards of Engedi.

Verf. 15. *Behold, thou art faire, my love, &c.*] Here Christ speakes in the praise of the Church, his Spouse, thereby giving her to understand, that there was no love lost between him and her; she did not make such precious account of him, but that he made as precious account of her. Concerning the Churches beauty, see the Notes before, ver. 5. & 8. & Psal. 45. 13. Because the faithfull are by nature, not faire but deformed, this may be one reason amongst others, why this particule *behold* is prefixed, as by way of admiration. And it is twice repeated, either to assure her that it was so, that though she complained of her blacknesse, yet indeed she was faire; or else to signifie both that she was exceeding faire, wonderfull faire, even to admiration (as in our ordinary speech when we would affirme a man to be exceeding naught, we use to say, *He is naught, he is naught*; and when we would set forth a thing to be

very

very excellent, we are wont to say, It is excellent, it is excellent,) or that she was every way faire, faire within and without, in grace and good works, faire with all variety of beauty.

Thou hast doves eyes] The eye being one of the principall beauties of the face, and the modest eye of women being most amiable in mens eyes, the Bridegroom here commends his Spouse particularly for the sweetnesse of her eyes. And because 1. doves have goodly and lovely eyes, quick, bright and piercing eyes, sparkling like fire: 2^d, they are noted to be constantly faithfull to their mates, not looking after others; and 3. they are very simple, harmlesse, meek and gentle; according to that, Mat. 10. 16. *Be ye wise as serpents, and harmlesse (or simple) as doves*; therefore Christ doth here compare the Churches eyes to *doves eyes*, thereby intending, 1. that the eye of her faith, whereby she discerned spirituall and supernaturall things, was a pure and chaste eye, in that she owned no other teacher but Christ, and would not believe any other but his words only; Joh. 6. 68. *Lord, to whom shall we goe?* saith Peter, *thou hast the words of eternall life*; in that she looked to him only, and rested upon his alone righteousnesse for life and salvation, Phil. 3. 9, 10. and in that in all conditions she trusted in him alone, and rested on his watchfull providence over her, Psal. 123. 1, 2. not seeking to idols, or relying on the help of any creatures; according to that, Isa. 17. 7, 8. *At that day shall a man look to his maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves or the images.* 2. That the eye of her intention in all the service she did to God and to Christ was single and sincere, not having respect to her own praise and glory, or any such thing, but meerly to obey and please him: her love and heart being wholly set upon him, and not looking with an adulterous eye to worldly things; which is that singleness of the eye, whereof Christ speakes, Mat. 6. 22. *If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light*: and 3. that the faithfull are of a harmlesse, meek and gentle spirit. This I conceive is intended by commending the Church for her dove-like eyes. Yet some understand it of the faithfulness, sincerity and meeknesse of those, whom God appoints to be Teachers in the Church, that being to watch over their soules, Heb. 13. 17. are therefore as eyes to the rest of the body.

Verf. 16. *Behold thou art faire, my beloved, &c.*] Here the Spouse returneth that praise of beauty to her Beloved, which in the foregoing verse he had given to her: It is as if she had said, Am I faire? yea rather thou art faire; It is fitter by far that I should say so of thee, in regard my beauty is nothing in comparison of thine (and what is meant by the beauty of Christ, see in the Note, Psal. 45. 2.) and all the beauty that I have, is derived from thine, I shine with thy beames, and am faire, meerly because of the beauty that thou hast put upon me; which is that the Evangelist saith, Joh. 1. 16. *And of his fulnesse have all we received, and grace for grace*; and the Apostle, Gal. 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*: see also, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Thus I conceive these words depend upon that which went before; yet some think, that because Christ had commended his Spouse in the last words of the foregoing verse, for her chaste dove-like eyes, therefore she now affirms here, that his beauty did well deserve, that she should look only to him and to no body else: As for that which

which she addes concerning his pleasantnesse; *Behold thou art faire, my beloved, yet pleasant*; thereby is meant that his beauty was not so much terrible and majesticall, as sweet and lovely; that as he was beautifull in himselfe, so he was exceeding pleasing and amiable and delightfull to her; according to that, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Unto you which believe he is precious*; and Gal. 6. 14. *God forbid that I should glory save in the crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

Also our bed is green] In those Eastern Countries they used beds instead of tables to eate at; see the Note, Eth. 1. 6. but rather here there is relation had to the beds, whereon they used to sleep by night; of which David speakes, Psal. 132. 3. and in saying *our bed is green*, there seemes to be an allusion to the custome of those times in adorning their Bridal-beds with garlands, green boughes and herbes of sweetest savour; And accordingly by *our bed* here is meant, either the assemblies of Gods people, or the holy Ordinances, wherein the Church doth enjoy sweet communion with Christ, the Lord Christ familiarly embracing her as his Spouse, and she him, and whereby she enjoyeth much sweet peace and rest; Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest*; or else the very hearts of the faithfull, wherein the spirits of the faithfull doe enjoy sweet communion with the Spirit of Christ, and thereby exceeding great peace of conscience. And when the Church saith, *Also our bed is green*, thereby she intends, either that thorough her enjoyment of Christ in his Ordinances she was in a flourishing and joyfull estate and condition, the peace which this yielded her being exceeding sweet and delightfull to her; or else that hereby she became very fruitfull, to wit, both in regard of her growth in grace, and her *being fruitfull in every good work*, Col. 1. 10. which is very sweet and delightfull to all that have the Spirit of Christ, 1 Thes. 1. 8. *In every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad*; and also in regard of her bringing forth children to Christ; according to that, 1 Cor. 4. 15. *In Christ Iesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*; see the Note also, Psal. 45. 16.

Verf. 17. *The beames of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.*] Some conceive that the Spouse doth hereby give her Beloved to understand, that their house, though some meane Country-cottage, yet because of his presence with her therein was to her all one as if it were some stately cedar palace. However spiritually by their *house* here is meant, either heaven, *our house which is from heaven*, as the Apostle calls it, 2 Cor. 5. 2. where Christ and his Bride, the Church, must one day dwell together for ever; or else the Catholique Church of God on earth, which is called the house of God, 1 Tim. 3. 15. wherein Christ and the faithfull doe sweetly dwell and converse together. And because cedar is a very precious and strong wood, not subject to rot or to be worne-eaten, and so of a very permanent nature, and withall of a sweet smell, as the firre also is, therefore in saying, *The beames of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir*; Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *our galleries of fir*, which were walking places for pleasure, round about on the tops of their houses; if we take it as spoken in reference to our house in heaven, then the Spouse must needs intend thereby, that her Beloved hath there provided for her habitation with him a house transcendently glorious and pleasant, and that shall never decay nor wax old; *A house* (as the Apostle calls it, 2 Cor. 5. 1.) *not made with hands, eternall in the heavens*; but if we

we understand it of the Church the house of the living God here on earth, then it may signifie first the glorious excellency, strength and stability of the Church in generall, against which the gates of hell shall never prevaile, Mat. 16. 8. and that she is alwayes most precious in Gods sight; or 2. that the particular Congregations of the Saints should through their communion with Christ be adorned with sweet graces, or men of holy sweet and gracious spirits, (some of them being for their strength of grace as pillars in the Church, or beames, that by their preaching of the Gospel and other eminent good services in their places, doe help much to the staying and upholding of the Churches of Christ; and others as rafters, though of lesse use, yet very usefull and conspicuous in their places) as likewise that they should be firme and durable, and because of the Ordinances therein enjoyed, and their Christian fellowship therein, like galleries of sweet wood, pleasing and delightfull both to God and to his people: Or 3. that the graces of Gods people are firme and solid and incorruptible, by meanes whereof they are sure to persevere and to continue constant in the faith unto the end: or 4. that the Scriptures, the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and the holy truths contained therein, whereon the faith of Gods people doth rest, are the strength of the Church, (and not rotten worme-eaten traditions) and so shall be as long as the Church it selfe shall be upon earth.

C H A P. II.

Verf. 1. **I** *Am the rose of Sharon, and the lillie of the valleys*] We reade of a City or Towne in the Land of Gilead, that was called *Sharon*, 1 Chron. 5. 16. and it seemes that from this Towne all the Country about, between Mount Tabor and the Sea of Galile, from Cesarea to Joppa was also so called: It was doubtlesse a rich champaigne Country, famous for its fat and flourishing pastures; and therefore we find that king Davids herds were fed there, 1 Chro. 27. 29. and Sharon is frequently mentioned amongst the most fruitfull places in the land of Canaan, as Isa. 39. 9. where to set forth the grievous desolation that should be brought upon the most flourishing parts of that Land, it is said, *Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits*: and Isa. 35. 1, 2. where the joyfull flourishing of Christs kingdome is set forth by the flourishing of Sharon and Carmel. *The desert shall rejoyce and blossome as the rose—the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon*: yea in this last place there may seeme to be some hint given, that Sharon was particularly famous for the best roses. However by *the rose of Sharon* is meant the most goodly and beautifull rose. And so likewise by *the lillie of the valleys* is meant, not that which is abusively so called by Herbalists, but the most beautifull and goodly lillie, because valleys by reason of the wetnesse and fatnesse of the soile, are wont to yield the fairest and most fragrant lilies; yea it may be particularly meant of those valleys, mentioned together with Sharon, 1 Chron 27. 29. where Davids herds were fed, as they were in Sharon. But now by whom these words are spoken, whether by the Bridegroom or the Bride, is somewhat questionable, because the words are applicable to Christ and the Church too. They that take them to be the words of the Spouse, conceive that the drift of them is to set forth,

forth, not only the spirituall beauty of the Church, (for which see the Notes, chap. 1. 5. 8. & Psal. 45. 13.) and how sweet and delightfull the graces of the faithfull are both to Christ and others endued with the Spirit of Christ, see the Notes, Chap. 1. 12, 13. but also especially the continuall danger the Church is in, by reason of the many enemies that are still ready to oppresse her, being herein like a rose, not inclosed and fenced in a garden, but growing in an open field, exposed to be cropt by every hand, or troden down by every beast that comes neare it. But because it seemes more proper that Christ should thus set forth his own excellencies, thereby the more to allure his Spouse to him, (according to those expressions, which he used in his ministry whilst he was upon the earth, *I am the light of the world*, Joh. 8. 12. and *I am the way, and the Truth, and the Light*, Joh. 14. 6.) then that the Church should thus commend her selfe, I rather take these words to be the words of Christ to his Spouse the Church, wherein taking occasion from what his Spouse had said of him in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter, ver. 16. *Behold, thou art faire, my beloved, yet pleasant*; he now replies thereto, *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lillie of the valleys*; As if he had said, It is not without cause that thou dost so highly esteeme of me, seeing my grace to poore sinners, that have by the eye of faith beheld the beauty of it, and have experimentally felt the sweetnesse of it, is above the choicest of all worldly contentments. The rose is accounted the Queene of flowers, farre excelling all others in beauty and sweetnesse; and we know what Christ saith of the beauty of the lillies, Mat. 6. 29. to wit, *that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these*. So that by tearming himselfe *the rose of Sharon, and the lillie of the valleys*, is implied, 1. his surpassing spirituall beauty, for which see the Note, Psal. 45. 2. whence it is that he is also said to be *white and ruddy*, chap. 5. 10. 2ly, how sweet, pleasing and delightfull he is, not to his father only, Isa. 42. 1. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soule delighteth*, but also to his Saints, whose consciences are refreshed by the sense of his grace, even as the braine is refreshed with the smell of the sweetest flowers; see the Notes, Chap. 1. 3, 12, 13, 14. And 3. that though Christs condition here in this world was meane and low, as a lillie in the valleys, yet he was the more precious for this, and received the more abundant grace and glory.

Vers. 2. *As the lillie among thornes, so is my love among the daughters.*] That is the daughters of Jerusalem, or the daughters of men; and so it is the same with that, chap. 18. *O thou fairest among women*. They that hold it was the Spouse that in the foregoing verse tearmed her selfe *the rose of Sharon, and the lillie of the valleys*, doe accordingly say that the Bridegroom catching hold of those words, doth here presently reply, that she might well tearme her selfe a lillie, since all the daughters amongst whom she lived were but as thornes if compared with her. But if it were Christ that there tearmed himselfe *the lillie of the valleys*, then it is cleare that he proceeds here to glory also in his Spouses beauty, in that as he was a lillie, so was she also, as being clothed with his righteousness, and sanctified with his Spirit, in regard whereto it is that S^t John saith, 1 Joh. 4. 17. *That as he is, so are we in this world*; and the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *That he that is joynd unto the Lord is one spirit*. So that the drift of these words, is either, 1. to set forth the state of the Church here

in this world, to wit, that as the soft lillie, when it grows amongst thornes, is pricked and torne by them, so is it with the Church here in this world; living here amongst wicked, ungodly men, she is continually afflicted and persecuted by them; whence is that, Hof. 2. 6. *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes*; and that, Ezek. 28. 24. *There shall be no more a pricking briar unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorne of all that are round about them*; see also the Notes, Numb. 33. 55. and 2 Sam. 23. 6. whereto we may adde also, that as the lillie retaines her purity and sweetnesse, even in the midst of brambles and thornes, yea and smells the more sweetly, the more it is bruised by the thornes, so the faithfull retaine their innocence and integrity when they dwell amongst the vilest men, and the more they are galled and persecuted by them, the more heavenly-sweet their conversation is in every regard; and likewise that God doth many times make use, even of wicked ungodly men, as a hedge of thornes, for the defence of his Church against others that seek to ruine her; Or 2. rather, to set forth the excellency of the Church by way of comparing her with others, *As the lillie among thornes, so is my love among the daughters*; That is, when a lillie doth grow, or, If we suppose a lillie to grow up among thornes, as far as the sweet, white and beautifull lillie doth excell those saplesse and fruitlesse thornes, that are good for nothing but to be burnt in the fire: so far doth the Church in honour and dignity excell all other companies and assemblies of people whatsoever: And so it is likewise with every Saint in particular, in regard of the wicked professing themselves Gods people, amongst whom they live; they are as so many lillies amongst thornes; being *blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world*, Phil. 2. 15. And indeed as the worthlesse and basenesse of the thornes doth the more set forth the beauty of the lillies, so doth the vild courses of ungodly men the more set forth the holinesse of true Christians. This, I say, is chiefly intended by this comparative expression, which is evident in the next verse, where the Churches Reply is to the very same purpose.

Verf. 3. *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.*] These are clearely the words of the Spouse; and observable it is how Pastoral-like the expressions still are, *Lenta salix quantum pallenti cedit oliva*. Her beloved had said in the foregoing verse, that she excelled all the daughters as far as the lillie excels thornes, and now she extols him in the same kind of language; *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood*; that is, as far as the apple-tree, which yields variety and oftentimes abundance of fruit, both lovely, and sweet, and profitable, doth excell all other the trees of the wood, which either beare no fruit, or that which is sower, bitter and unsavory, meate fitter for hogs then men, *so is my beloved among the sons*; that is, so far doth my beloved excell all other the sons of men; see the Note, Psal. 45. 2. or all other the sons of God, or that pretend themselves to be the sons of God; None of those Cedars the Angels are to be compared to him, and much lesse the children of men, who are such poore worthlesse shrubs, and least of all those false Christs and false Prophets (called before his companions, chap. 1. 7.) trees that bring forth none but poysonous fruits, *Grapes of gall, of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah*, Deut. 32. 32. And thus the Spouse hath returned to her beloved the

praise which he had given her, but with advantage and encrease; for whereas the lillie excels the thornes, only in beauty and sweetnesse, the apple-tree excels all other the trees of the wood, not only in that it is lovely to the eye, and sweet to the smell; according to that expression, Chap. 7. 8. *Thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples*; but also in that it yields fruit, that is cordial for the stomach, and pleasant to the tast, as is afterwards expressed in the last clause of this verse.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight.] To wit, as weary travellers in the heate of the day are wont to sit down under the boughes of some goodly shadowy tree, thereby to shelter themselves from the scorching beames of the Sun, and so in the coole of that shadow doe rest themselves to their great refreshing and delight. The protection which Princes yield to their subjects is usually set forth in the Scriptures by the shelter of a shadow, as in Lam. 4. 20. *The breath of our nostrills, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen*: see also Judg. 9. 15. By the shadow of this apple-tree therefore is meant, the protection which Christ yields to all true believers by his providence and mediation from the scorching heate of Gods wrath, the curses of the Law, the persecutions of the world, and the danger of all judgements and afflictions whatsoever: whereto agreeth that promise concerning Christs kingdome, Isa. 4. 6. *And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heate, &c.* See also the Notes, Psal. 17. 8. & 91. 1. & 121. 5, 6. And then by the Churches sitting down under his shadow with great delight, is meant, 1. Our putting our selves under his protection and government by owning him thorough faith as our Lord and Saviour: 2. our abiding and persevering in our faith and union with him, Joh. 15. 4. 3. The quieting of our hearts and spirits by this meanes from all feares and terrors, that glorious rest, foretold by the Prophet, Isa. 11. 10. which Christ promiseth to all that embrace him by a lively faith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, &c.* Mat. 11. 28, 29. see also, Joh. 16. 33. and which Believers have in all ages enjoyed by him, Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 4. The full satisfaction which this yields to the soules of Believers, causing them to sit down, and without seeking any farther, to place their whole happinesse and content in him alone; and 5. the unexpressible delight and joy that doth hereupon cheare and revive their hearts.

And his fruit was sweet to my tast.] As if she had said, My beloved reapes no fruit nor benefit by me, but I reape abundance of fruit and benefit by him; not only refreshing under his shadow, but also fruit too, the golden apples, I gather from this my deare and precious apple-tree, whereon I dayly feed by faith, and find much sweetnesse therein. And by this fruit is meant, 1. all the workes of his Prophetical, Priestly and Kingly office, all that he did and suffered for our redemption and salvation, the very meditation whereof yields exceeding great delight to the faithfull: and 2^{ly}, all the spirituall blessings purchased for us, and imparted to us thereby, as the Gospel, the fruit of his lips, with all the promises and consolations thereof, and all other Gospel-ordinances; and so likewise Remission of sin, justification, sanctification, with all the fruits of righteousness wrought in us thereby, our adoption, the consolation of his

his Spirit, that hidden Manna, Revel. 2. 17. and what ever other benefits we enjoy through him, but especially the hope of glory and life eternall, with respect to which fruit it is, that Christ is called *the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*, Revel. 2. 7. For all these doe yield most sweet and pleasant delight to the soules of those that are made partakers thereof; whence are those expressions we meet with in the Scripture, Psal. 119. 103. *How sweet are thy words unto my tast! yea sweeter then honey to my mouth.* And Psal. 34. 8. *O tast and see that the Lord is good.* And 1 Pet. 2. 2, 3. *As new borne babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* All the sweets of earthly delights have no relish in them to a true Christian, in comparison of the sweetnesse that he finds in Christ and his benefits.

Verf. 4. *He brought me to the banquetting house.*] Here the Spouse relates how her beloved had formerly, or at present manifested his singular love to her by bringing her into his *banquetting house*. It is in the Original *the house of wine*; and accordingly they translate this place thus; *He brought me to the wine-cellar*; and suitably hereunto, because wine-cellars are low vaults under ground, dark, raw and cold, but yet withall well stored and fraught with wine, that cheareth the heart, Psal. 104. 15. they understand this passage of the great refreshing comforts which Christ doth usually afford his people, when he hath brought them, for reasons best known to himselfe, into an estate of deep and dismal affliction and sorrow. That condition of darknesse and trouble, which is in it selfe as a dungeon to the Spouse, is by Christ made a wine-cellar, Psal. 119. 71. *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted,* & 2 Cor. 1. 4. *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* But reading the place as it is in our translation, *He brought me to the banquetting house*, I conceive that by Christs *banquetting house* here is meant the Scripture, or the publick assemblies and ordinances, whereto when the Saints are brought thorough the secret swaying of their hearts by his Spirit, besides the communion which there they enjoy with Christ, and with their brethren, he there entertaines and feasts them with all variety of dainties, the divers gifts and graces of his Spirit, together with the sweetest of comforts, working in them joyes unspeakeable and glorious.

And his banner over me was love.] They that expound the foregoing words of this verse of Christs making the afflicted estate of his Church to be as a wine-cellar to them, doe accordingly understand this clause thus, that in the afflictions of his people, Christ, the Captain of their salvation, by the manifestation of his gracious presence amongst them, and the love he beares them, doth as with a banner displayed, cheare them up, proclaiming defence to them, and resistance against their enemies; according to that, Isa. 59. 19. *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.* But reading the foregoing words as they are in our Bibles, *He brought me to the banquetting house*, I conceive that accordingly in this following clause, *and his banner over me was love*, Solomon alludes to the custome of Captains hanging up their Banners or Ensignes over their heads when they made any great feasts, thereby to adde the more glory and splendor to their entertainments; and the Churches maine intent in these words is to shew, that Christ by the manifestation of his love in the preaching of the Gospel, doth exceedingly glad

and rejoyce her heart. And indeed the preaching of the Gospel may well be compared to a Standard, a Banner or Ensign displayed, whose Motto or Device is LOVE, and that in severall regards. 1. Because the great work of preaching the Gospel is to lift up Christ crucified, as a Banner displayed in the eyes of all nations, to unfold and display before men all the heavenly mysteries of Gods eternall counsell concerning mans salvation, and so to publish and make knowne that wonderfull love of God in giving his own Son to dye for poore sinners: And hence are those expressions, Joh. 3. 14. *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wildernesse; even so must the Son of man be lifted up;* to wit, in the preaching of the Gospel; and Gal. 3. 1. *O foolish Galatians — before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified amongst you;* and Eph. 3. 8. *Unto me — is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;* that is, the riches of Gods love in Christ; to make known, as it followes there, ver. 18, 19. *The breadth, length and depth, and height of that love, which passeth knowledge.* 2. Because as Captains by their Banners doe gather their souldiers together, and keep them close together in one body; So it is by setting up the Standard and Banner of the Gospel amongst a people, that Christ doth draw, and gather in his Elect unto himselfe, to follow and serve him, and doth keep them knit together without scattering one from another: And therefore under these very tearms doth the Prophet foretell the calling of the Gentiles, Isa. 11. 10. *There shall be a roote of Jesse; which shall stand for an Ensigne of the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious:* and againe, Chap. 49. 22. *Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my Standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sonnes in their armes, &c.* But what now is the cause of this? Surely as it is meerely the free grace and love of God that causeth him to call us by his Gospel, 2 Tim. 1. 9. so it is also by the Gospels discovery of Gods wonderfull love to us in Christ, that we are wonne to love him againe, and to serve him in love; *The love of Christ constraineth us,* saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 14. and 1 Joh. 4. 19. *We love him, because he first loved us.* 3. Because as souldiers are by their Banner and Ensigne encouraged and heartened to fight manfully against all their enemies, and not to shrink but to stick close to their colours in hope of victory; so by the discovery of the love of God, and of Christ in the Gospel, Christians are emboldened to withstand couragiously all their spirituall enemies, and are continually supported and inwardly strengthened, and so are inabled to hold out unto the end, in assured expectation of being at last more then Conquerors through him that hath loved them, Rom. 8. 37. *We glory in tribulations — because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,* Rom. 5. 3, 5. And this it is that makes the Church to her enemies, Chap. 6. 4, 10. *Terrible, as an Army with Banners.* 4. As it is knowne to what Company souldiers belong by the Banner which they follow, so true Christians are known & distinguished from the men of the world by that Gospel grace of Love, and by their conscionable attendance upon and obedience to the ministry of the Gospel. Joh. 13. 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;* and Joh. 10. 27. *My sheep heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* And 5. As souldiers are wont upon the taking of any Towne or Castle to set up their Standards and Ensignes in token of conquest; so the setting of the Gospel

spel in any place, is a signe that such a people are subdued to Christ; and Christ doth there triumph over Hell and Death, Hof. 13. 14. yea and they that are subdued (which is strange) doe triumph also, as being made conquerors together with him, over all their spirituall enemies; see Rom. 8. 36. &c. & Psal. 20. 6.

Vers. 5. *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love.*] The Spouse having been feasted with the dainties of her beloveds banquetting house, and therein tasted of his exceeding love to her, falls into a kind of swoon or love-qualm, and thereupon calls upon her Bride-maids, or her beloved and his Bride-men, to stay her, that is, to support her, and to keep her from sinking, *with flagons*, to wit, of wine, (which hath a cheering, reviving quality, Psal. 104. 15.) and to comfort her with apples, to wit, with the smell of them; for when men or women are ready to faint, it is usuall, by putting odoriferous apples, or oranges, or some other strong smelling things to their nostrils, to revive them or keep them from swooning: That which we translate, *Comfort me with apples*, is in the Hebrew, *Strew me with apples*, as if she should have said, Strew apples under me, and therewith, as with a bolster or bed beat up, or spread under me, (for they used beds at their banquets and feasts) uphold me from sinking, and refresh my languishing spirits; for, saith she, *I am sick of love*, to wit, either through an exuberancy of admiration and joy at the apprehension of her beloveds love to her, and the delight she took in it, as it is said of the Queen of Sheba, when she was astonished with admiration at her seeing the exceeding glory of Solomon, that *there was no more spirit in her*, 1 King. 10. 5. and as it is said that *Jacobs heart fainted*, when he heard that Joseph was still alive, Gen. 45. 26. or else rather through the violence and passionatenesse of her love towards him, accompanied with a fear of his parting from her (as indeed elsewhere the mention that is again made of her being *sick of love*, is because her beloved had withdrawn himself, Chap. 5. 6, 8.) and working in her a vehement desire of enjoying him more fully, then as yet she did, at the day of her marriage. And indeed that an extraordinary passion of love may thus wound the heart of a man or woman and make them sick and ready to faint, is evident by that which is said of Ammons falling sick for his sister Tamar, 2 Sam. 13. 2, &c. Love softens and melts the heart, and doth often carry out the affections of lovers so violently to the party loved, that their vital spirits are ready to fail thereby. But now for the spiritual sense of this place, we must know, First, for the Churches being *sick of love*, that though the faithfull may be said to be *sick of love*, with respect to the extream grief and anguish of their spirits in a time of sore tribulation and desertion, when notwithstanding their hearts are sincerely set upon Christ, yet they lie under sad apprehensions of Gods displeasure, because they are for the time without all sense of Christs love to them, and cannot discern the least saving work of grace wrought in them, but are alwaies groaning under the remembrance of their manifold failings and sins; which may well be reckoned among the most grievous of those spiritual sicknesses, whereof our Saviour speaks, Matth. 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a physitian, but they that are sick*: and the Prophet Isa. 33. 24. *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick*; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity; yet here I conceive the sicknesse the Church speaks of, must be ascribed, either 1. to her being overwhelmed and overcome through astonishment at the rare discovery

discovery of Christs wonderfull love to her, whereof she had spoken in the foregoing verse, and the unusual measure of joy wherewith hereupon she was transported and ravished: Or 2. rather, To her excesse of love and ardent longing after a fuller enjoying of Christ, her beloved, wrought in her by that late discovery of his exceeding love to her, and the tast she had gotten of those sweet and heavenly dainties wherewith he had feasted her; for in this case *hope deferred maketh the heart sick*, Pro. 13. 12. especially if it be accompanied with a feare of loosing what hath been formerly enjoyed; and the soule that is transported with such vehement desires after the full enjoying of Christs presence, must needs be as sick of the world, yea dying to the world, and senselesse of all things that are here below, and be alwayes paining, and sighing, and groaning after the enjoying of Christ in his kingdome of glory. Psal. 73. 25, 26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, &c.* And then, secondly, for the help she requires, *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples*, we must know, 1. that it is Christ, or rather the Ministers of Christ and other private Christians to whom she speaks; and 2^{ly}, that by *the flagons and apples*, wherewith she desires to be stayed, and upheld, and comforted, are meant the cordial promises and comfortable doctrines of the Gospel, together with the fruits of Christs Mediation, which she desires may out of the Scripture, the bowles and flagons of the Sanctuary, be applyed to her heart and conscience, and that in the fullest measure, for the strengthening of her weak faith, and the chearing and reviving of her drooping spirits, that her consolations might abound through Christ; for as it was the discovery of Christs love that had wounded her, so it was only the manifestation of the same love that could heale her againe. *Make me to heare joy and gladnesse, that the bones, which thou hast broken may rejoyce*, Psal. 51. 8.

Verf. 6. *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.* There may well be in these words an allusion to the manner of their sitting on their beds (if I may so call it) in those times when they feasted together, which was that they lay along, as it were, in one anothers bosomes, the first having his left hand under the head of him that was next him, so that with his right hand also he might embrace him; and so it was in order with all the rest. However it is cleare that the fainting Spouse doth here glory in the tender care of her beloved over her, in that so soone as ever she had called for help to them that were about her, he himselfe had presently caught her up in his armes, and *cherished* her, (it is the Apostles word, Eph. 5. 29.) even as a loving husband is wont to cherish his sick wife; which may be meant of Christs chearing up his afflicted people by the immediate motions of his Spirit, as it were preventing the outward meanes of grace; or else of his working effectually together with the outward means, to make them successfull for the reviving and bearing up of their fainting spirits. As for these expressions, *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me*, all that I conceive is intended hereby is, that when the hearts of his people are ready to faint, Christ is wont to imploy all his power for their support, bearing them up, as it were, with both his hands; or that by all possible expressions of his ardent and tender love, as by so many close and fast embraces, he doth labour to assure them how neare they lye to his heart, how inse-

parably

parably they are united to him, that he may keep them from sinking under any sorrowes, and beare up their hearts in the expectation of their future glory; see Psal. 37. 24.

Verf. 7. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, &c.*] Who are meant by these daughters of Jerusalem, see in the Note, Chap. 1. 5. Because this verse is severall times repeated in this Song, it may seeme to be inserted after the manner of those verses, which we use to call *versus intercalares*, wherewith as the foote of the Song, Pastorals and Marriage-Songs are in other Poets often interlaced: very many Interpreters, translating the last words of this verse, *until she please*, not as they are in our Bibles, *until he please*, doe accordingly conceive of this as the Bridegroomes charge, enjoyn- ing those about his Bride, that seeing she was after her languishments fallen asleep in his embraces, they should be very carefull not to disturb or awaken her; which they understand of taking heed that the Churches peace be not broken by heresies or schismes, or any other disturbances whatsoever. But according to our Translation, these are clearly the words of the Spouse; which may also seeme the more proba- ble, both because as the foregoing words, so also those that follow are her words; and likewise because it seemes to be one of the *decorums* of this Song, that the Bride- groom speaks only to his Bride-men and companions; it is alwayes the Bride that speaks to her Bride-maides, the daughters of Jerusalem. It is the Spouse therefore that lying in the embraces of her beloved, and apprehending that in this posture he might lay himselfe to rest, doth therefore charge her Bride-maides not to trouble or disquiet her beloved, whilst he was pleased thus to cheare her up with his em- braces. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *I adjure you*, I charge you, as by an oath, *by the roes, and by the bindes of the field*; that is, I charge you, that as you dearly love and prize the roes and bindes of the field, and would be loth to loose them, or according to the love ye beare to them (which is said because Country damosels that used to feed their flocks abroad in the fields, where the roes and bindes ranne, were wont exceedingly to delight in the beauty and comelineffe of these pretty creatures, and likewise in hunting them, and in sporting and playing with them) as if she should have said, I adjure you by those things you most delight in, *that ye stirre not up nor awake my love*, that is, him whom my soule loveth, or who dearly loveth me, *till he please*, that is, till he awakes of himselfe. Now that which is spiritually intended hereby is this; The Church after her per- plexity having been comforted by the embraces of Christ, is very carefull not to have this peace and rest of hers disturbed, and thereupon chargeth the faithfull, ac- cording to the authority she hath over her particular members, to be very carefull that they did not give her Lord the least offence, that they did not by any heresies or schismes amongst them, by any distrustfull feares, or murmuring, or any sinfull courses whatsoever, disturb or vex his holy Spirit, lest being provoked thereby to displeasure, he should withdraw himselfe from her; according to that, Isa. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sinnes have hid his face from you that he will not heare*; see also, Chap. 63. 10. This I conceive is that which is intended by these words, *Stirre not up, nor awake my love*; for as for the fol- lowing words, *till he please*, it is said that this word *till*, or *untill*, doth usually in the

Scripture imply, that a thing shall never be; as in Isa. 22. 14. *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till you die*; that is, never; see also Gen. 28. 15. and so here it implies that it would never please Christ to awake in displeasure against his Church, and to hide himselfe from her, unlesse he were disquieted and disturbed by the finnes of his people. And yet the meaning may be too, that the faithfull in the time of the Law were to waite patiently for the comming of the promised Messiah, and to take heed that they did not provoke him by unbelieving feare; Or that when Christ seemes to sleep and to neglect his Church in times of trouble (as he did the Disciples in that storme, Mark 4. 38.) it is the duty of his people. to content themselves with the comforts, which he is pleased to afford them by his Spirit, and to waite through faith & patience till he was pleased to come in to their help. But now for the spirituall sense of this adjuration, *I charge you by the roes, and by the hindes of the field*, that hath the most difficulty in it. Some hold that there is nothing else intended hereby, but as if the Church had said, *I charge you by those things that are most deare to you, and most amiable in your eyes*; only they say this is expressed in a language suitable to a Pastorall, by mentioning the roes and the hindes of the field, which are the delight of shepherds. But then againe others understand this in a more mysticall way: as, 1. Because these creatures are exceeding swift and nimble in running, (whence it is said of Asahel, that he was *as light of foote as a wild Roe*, 2 Sam. 2. 18. see the Note also, Chap. 22. 34.) therefore some doe understand hereby the holy Angels, who are more quick and speedy then roes and hindes in doing what ever God enjoynes them; as if it had been said, *I charge you by the Angels, who observe your wayes, and will speedily execute judgement upon you, if you observe not my charge, that you doe not any way disturb my beloved*: and 2^d. Because roes and hindes are wild untamed creatures, exceeding timorous and frightfull, therefore others think the Gentiles in their wild unconverted estate are figured hereby, and so take the meaning of the charge to be this, that as the faithfull would be loth the Gentiles should be scandalized by their sinfull and offensive conversation, and frighted from comming in to Christ, or that the nations amongst whom they lived should be made instrumentall for executing Gods wrath upon them, they should be carefull to observe the charge that was now given them. And 3. Because the males and females of these creatures are noted for their ardent love one to the other; see the Note, Pro. 5. 19. therefore others understand the adjuration thus, *I charge you by the roes and hindes of the field*, that is, *I charge you by that tender conjugal love that should be betwixt Christ and Christians, like that of the roes and hindes of the field, and who otherwise shall for this rise up in judgement against you, that you doe not by any unkind offensive carriage disquiet my Beloved, and cause him to leave me in displeasure*.

Verf. 8. *The voice of my Beloved!*] If there be any connexion to be conceived betwixt this and the foregoing verses, it must be supposed that while the Spouse slept, her Beloved had withdrawne himselfe, and (as his words afterwards imply) had been abroad in the Country, and that thereupon being suddenly wakened at his returne, either by his voice, or otherwise, hearing him speake, she breakes forth, as one hastily awakened and startled from her sleep, into this abrupt and joyfull expression,

The voice of my beloved! as if she should have said, Surely it is the voice of my beloved: which may be meant either generally of any thing he had spoken, or particularly of those words of his afterwards rehearsed by her, ver. 10. *Rise up, my love, my faire one and come away.* Nor is it at all hard to conceive how this is spoken of Christ and his Church: for 1. Christ doth sometimes withdraw and absent himselfe from his Church for a while, as he did in regard of his bodily presence before his Incarnation, and many times in regard of the manifestation of his grace and favour to them; see Isa. 45. 15. 2^{ly}, Christs voice doth alwayes give notice of his comming, before he comes. Thus the Prophets did of old foretell the comming of Christ in the flesh, Luke 1. 68, 69, 70. *He hath visited his people* (saith Zacharias) — *As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began:* and the Baptist was the voice of Christ preparing his way before him, Mark 1. 2, 3. And so likewise for his comming seasonably to the help of his people, many precious promises he hath given us in his word; Isa. 35. 4. And 3^{ly}, the Church knoweth the voice of Christ, and rejoiceth to heare it; Joh. 10. 3, 4. *His own sheep know his voice;* and Isa. 52. 6. *They shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak; Behold it is I.*

Behold! he cometh leaping upon the mountaines, skipping upon the hills.] No sooner did the Spouse heare the voice of her beloved, but she presently cheares up her selfe in the expectation of his speedy comming; in the assurance whereof she speakes as if she saw him comming, *Behold! he cometh.* Now this may be meant, 1. of Christs comming in the flesh; for the faithfull did in all ages make knowne that they expected the comming of the Messiah according to his promise; yea by the eye of faith they saw him comming a farre off. Joh. 8. 56. *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.* 2. Of his comming to a people in the preaching of the Gospel; for where ever the Gospel is preached, there Christ is present, Mat. 28. 20. and is seen by believers, Gal. 3. 1. and received by faith into their soules, Joh. 13. 20. And 3. of his comming in to the comfort and help of his people in all their tryals and troubles; for even in this case the faithfull by the discoveries of Christs Spirit doe discern his approaching to their help before he is come; even as soone as the voice of Christ sounds in their eares, his Spirit comes in with assurances of comfort, mercy, and help to their hearts: whence is that of David, *Make me to heare joy and gladnesse,* Psal. 51. 8. And indeed these two last applications have, I think, the fairest probability in them. But now for that which is said by the Spouse of the manner of her beloveds comming to her, *leaping upon the mountaines, skipping upon the hills,* that is questionlesse so expressed with relation to that which followes in the next verse, where Christ is compared to a roe or a young hart, creatures that are wont to run swiftly over the mountaines, leaping as they run, and skipping from one hillock and one cliffe to another; in allusion whereto that expression also is used, Isa. 35. 6. *Then shall the lame man leap as an hart:* and so that which she intended to signifie hereby is, with what chearfull speed and alacrity she knew her beloved would returne to her, that he would not suffer any dangers or difficulty in his journey to delay his comming. I know that some Expositors doe say, that this expression of Christs *leaping over the mountaines,* &c. is used to imply, 1. the wonderfull grace that was manifested to poore man, in that the fallen Angels, once the great Potentates of

heaven, were passed over, and the Son of God was sent only to save the children of men. And 2. How openly and apparently to the eye of faith Christ manifested himself, when he came to accomplish the work of mans Redemption; according to that, Nah. 1. 15. *Behold upon the mountaines the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, &c.* But I conceive with the most of Expositors, that it is the zeale of Christ in overcoming all difficulties, and breaking thorough all impediments in his way, that he may come in seasonably to the help and salvation of his people, that is here mainly, if not solely, intended. As when he came to redeem us, he brake thorough the finnes of his people, all the power and rage of Satan and his instruments, wherewith they sought to crosse him in his work, and trampled upon death and hell, and all that stood in his way; *Every valley shall be filled (saith the Baptist) and every mountaine and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough wayes shall be made smooth,* Luk. 3. 5. So likewise in carrying on the work of grace in his elect people, that he may make them sharers with him in his glory, and in his coming to the ayde and comfort of his people in all their dangers, neither the hillocks of their lesser, nor the mountaines of their greater finnes, no nor any opposition from Satan, or the world, shall keep Christ off from them; the greatest mountaines shall be made plaines before them, Zach. 4. 7. All the kingdomes of the world must become the Lords and his Christs, Revel. 11. 17. Nor shall any thing be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ; see Rom. 8. 38, 39.

Verf. 9. *My beloved is like a roe or a young hart.*] To wit, in regard of his tender love, and amiable lovelinesse, but especially in regard of his speed in coming in to the help of his people, according to that which is said of the Gadites, 1 Chron. 12. 8. *that they were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.* But for this see the two foregoing Notes, ver. 7, 8.

Behold he standeth behind our wall.] No sooner did the Spouse hear the voice of her beloved, but she saw him coming, (as it is in the foregoing verse) and in an instant he was present with her, a great expression of Christs love and delight in his Church; only at first he hides himself, as it were, *Behold he standeth behind our wall;* wherein there may be an allusion to the custom of lovers, that to the end they may come the more unexpectedly upon those that do earnestly wait for them, are wont at their first coming, to stand a while unseen behind a door, or behind a wall. And several waies this is by Expositors applied to Christ. 1. Some understand it of Christs making himself known to the Jews in a dark and hidden way, under the shadows of Legal Types and Ceremonies, which the Apostle calls *the partition wall*, that divided betwixt the Jews and Gentiles; Eph. 2. 14. afterwards he revealed himself to them by the Gospel, clearly and plainly; which was signified by the rending asunder of the vail of the Temple at the death of our Saviour, Matth. 27. 51. but during the Ceremonial Law he only called to them as it were from behind a wall. Others apply it to the Incarnation of Christ, when *the Word was made flesh*, Joh. 1. 14. and so the glory of his Godhead was hidden behind the wall of his manhood, that mud-wall of our flesh; our house of clay, as mans mortal body is called, Job 4. 19. and which may indeed the rather be called *our wall*, because it was our sin that made it mortal: And hence it was that whilst he was upon earth, there were so few that knew him, Joh.

1.10, 11. *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not: He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* But 3: more plainly and satisfactorily it is applied to our imperfect knowledge of Christ, and communion with Christ, whilst we are here in this world; in heaven we shall behold him face to face, but here Christ standeth, as we may say, behind the wall of our hearts (such an expression we have in the Hebrew, Jer. 4. 19. where that which we translate, *I am pained as my very heart*, is in the Original, *I am pained at the wals of my heart*) namely, because our outward senses and natural understandings, are as a wall that keep us from any clear and full enjoying of communion with him. Christ stands and knocks at the door of our hearts, Rev. 3. 20. but when by faith we do open to him: yet because that which is in part is not yet done away, we enjoy his presence so, that he still stands at a distance from us; our body of flesh, and our body of sin in us, do still hinder us from a perfect and compleat communion with him.

He looketh forth at the window, shewing himself through the lattesse.] This is added further to set forth Christs darker revelation of himself to his Church here in this world, not only under the Law, (as is shewn in the foregoing Note) and whilst he lived upon earth, but also in all succeeding Gospel-times, for as long as the Church is here in this world, and hath all her light shining unto her through the Word, and other Gospel-ordinances, Christ, and grace through Christ, are but darkly and obscurely discovered to us, as when we see a man through a window or a lattesse, according to those expressions of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *Now we see through a glasse darkly*: and 2 Cor. 3. 18. *We all, with open face beholding as in a glasse the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Only indeed this expression here, *he looketh forth at the window, shewing himself* (or as it is in the Hebrew, flourishing) *through the lattesse*, may besides also imply, 1. That Christ shews himself to his people, in his Ordinances, sweet, pleasant and amiable, like some sweet plant or flourishing flower, that appearing through a window, by its pleasant beauty, and sweet sent, yields great delight to those that behold it: And 2. That the eye of Christs providence, doth from above heedfully observe, and fully see all our waies (even as a man that looks through a window or lattesse, may fully and distinctly see those that are without, when they can very hardly discern him) and doth with much provident care watch over us, for our safety and welfare.

Verf. 10. *My beloved spake and said unto me, &c.*] To wit, by his Word and Spirit, *Rise up, my love, my fair one*, See the Notes, chap. 1. 9, 15. *And come away*; The Spouse here relates how she was invited and perswaded by her beloved, at his return, to go away with him, as I may say, to his country-house, there to enjoy the pleasures of the Spring-tide, as is expressed in the following verses. Some conceive that the Church is here called to come from under the burden of Legall rites, to enjoy the liberty and comfort of Gospel-priviledges; as in Isa. 60. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* But we may rather take it in a more general sense; to wit, either, 1. That the Church is hereby invited to more through reformation and progresse in grace, to lie no longer under any errors and superstition, to arise from her sloth and security, from the intanglement of earthly cares and pleasures, to abandon all her sinfull courses, to forsake the world in

heart and affection, and to be still following on after Christ, as it is said of the faithfull, that *they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*, Revel. 14. 4. that so she might encrease her joyes, by a more full communion with him: And indeed, considering the remainders of corrupt nature that are in the regenerate, even to them may that of the Apostle be applied, Eph. 5. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* Or 2. that she is called by Christ to arise out of her fears and sorrows, in her afflicted estate, to the enjoying of that glorious and comfortable condition, which he had prepared for her.

Verf. 11. *For, lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.* According to the several Expositions of the words in the foregoing verse, 1. Some understand it of the *winter* of the Ceremonial Law, that was a time of cloudy darknesse and bondage, in the Ordinances whereof, there was but cold comfort comparatively; but that being *past*, the Gospel succeeded, that *acceptable time*, as it is called, Isa. 49. 8. & 2 Cor. 6. 2. that pleasing, joyfull spring-time of the year of grace and salvation; the benefit whereof therefore the Church is here perswaded chearfully to enjoy. 2. Others take the *winter* to be that state of sin, wherein the elect lay before their conversion, and that the Church is here invited to a progresse in grace upon this account, that it was not fit they should be still such as they were in their unregenerate estate. Winter is a dark, cold, dead, uncomfortable time, there's no pleasure then, all things are then barren and dead, and lie covered under frost and snow: and so it is with those that lie in their natural estate, it is ever winter with them, they are *dead in trespasses and sinnes*, Eph. 2. 1. there is no spring of grace in them, nor warmth of solid and sound comfort, nothing that is truly desirable, because sinne depriveth a people of their beauty, even as a cold nipping winter strips the earth of all her glory. But now when men are called in unto Christ, who is *the resurrection and the life*, Joh. 11. 25. they are then *quickned together with Christ*, Eph. 2. 5. they then become *fruitfull in every good work*, Col. 1. 10. Gospel comforts, as in a spring time, warm their heart, and so they are pleasant, sweet and fruitfull in their lives. And this is that, I say, which some Expositors think Christ presseth upon the Church, to raise her out of that state of deadnesse and worldlinesse wherewith she was surprized, that it was not fit it should be with her, as in the winter of her unregenerate estate. And 3^{ly}, others, I conceive most aptly, do by the *winter* understand the afflicted estate and hard times of the Church here in this world, either by reason of inward troubles and trials, or outward tribulation and distresse. These are cloudy, pinching, stormy and tempestuous times, when men lie under sad apprehensions of Gods wrath for sin, these fill the soul with terrible tempests of grief and fear; and when the world raiseth storms of persecution against the Church, it must needs go hard with the poor people of God. Christ therefore here assures his Church, that the heaven was now clear, and that there was nothing now but what might yield delight, to wit, either because in him they might be pacified against all their inward terrors and fears, Rom. 5. 1. or because he had stilled the rage of the enemy against them, according to that which was long since prophesied of him, Isa. 4. 6. that he should be *for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* And Isa. 32. 2. *a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest;* and hereby he seeks to raise her up from her fears and sorrows.

Veri.

Verf. 12. The flowers appeare on the earth.] To wit, those early flowers, which are wont to bud forth in the first beginning of the spring, as the violet and primrose, &c. or the blossomes of those trees, that doe first shoot out. And hereby may be meant, either, 1. the manifold sweet and comfortable blessings which God affords his Church, after a sad winter of affliction and persecution; or 2. Men and women eminent and conspicuous above others for their gifts & piety, that should after those hard times begin to hold up their heads with courage and comfort: or rather, 3. all the effects of Gods grace wrought in the faithfull by the nearer approach of Christ, that Sunne of righteousness, in Gospel-Ordinances, as namely, a holy profession of the faith, the sweet buddings of good desires, abundance of gifts and graces, those fruits of the Spirit mentioned, Gal. 5. 22. together with a heavenly conversation, manifested in all kind of good works, and joyes unspeakeable and glorious following hereupon, all which tend to make the faithfull *a sweet savour unto God*, 2 Cor. 2. 15. and usefull and delightfull to each other; and to adorne the Church and make her to appeare like another Paradise upon earth: see Phil. 1. 11. all which was long since foretold concerning the Church in Gospel times, even in such like expressions; as Isa. 27. 6. *Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit*: and Chap. 35. 1, 2. *The desert shall rejoyce and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly*, &c. see also Hos. 14. 5, 6.

The time of the singing of birds is come.] Because the birds sing not so continually and chearfully in the winter, as they doe in the spring and summer, therefore is this mentioned as another token of the springs being come. And hereby may be meant, either, 1. all the occasions of exceeding great joy, which God should give unto his people after their great oppressions and troubles; according to that which is said of the Jewes after their returne out of Babylon, Psal. 126. 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing*; or 2. the exceeding joy of the Gospel, and so it may comprehend, 1. the carolling of that heavenly Quire of the Angels at the birth of Christ, and the first publishing of the Gospel, Luk. 2. 14. *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men*. 2. the preaching of the Gospel by the Ministers whom Christ hath set apart to that service, which must needs be the sweetest of musick to the consciences of afflicted sinners, when by their glad tydings they shall be assured of the pardon of their sinnes, and of Gods love and favour; whence are those expressions concerning the preachers of the Gospel, Isa. 52. 7, 8. *How beautifull upon the mountaines are the feet of him that bringeth good tydings — ! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing*. And 3. the joy of the Saints, by reason of the joyfull sound of the Gospel, which shall cause them seasonably to sing forth praise unto God; see Isa. 24. 14. & Eph. 5. 18, 19.

And the voice of the turtle is heard in our Land.] Because this bird appeares first, as swallowes and other birds with us, at the comming in of the Spring, therefore is this also here added. Now because the turtle is an usual hieroglyphick of solitarinesse and mourning, therefore some Expositors hold, that by *the voice of the turtle* is meant the preaching of the Doctrines of mourning for sin, selfe deniall, bearing the Crosse, crucifying the old man, and such like, taught by Christ and his Ministers, or particularly by the Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ: But because all the other expressions

ons joyned with this, the budding forth of flowers, the singing of birds, &c. doe apparently signifie a time of joy, therefore it seemes most probable, that this must likewise be so understood. And accordingly by *the voice of the turtle*, may be meant, 1. the preaching of the glad tydings of the Gospel of peace, even that voice of our Saviours, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, and that with respect to the turtles being an Embleme of peace: or 2. the Churches praying to God, or praising of God; which may be called *the voice of the turtle*, partly because the Church for her chastity and pure conjugal love to Christ, may be fitly tearmed his *turtle dove*; see the Note, Psal. 74. 19. and partly because it is by the holy Ghost, who appeared upon Christ in the likenesse of a dove, Mat. 3. 16. that the Church is acted both in her prayers and praises. Or if there were any respect had in this expresseion to the mourning of the faithfull for sinne, I conceive it must be upon this ground, because if this *voice of the turtle*. come once to be heard in a Land, it is a most comfortable signe of neare approaching deliverance.

Verf. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, &c.*] Because the fig-tree and the vine are two of the last trees that shoot forth in the spring, therefore these are here mentioned in the last place, their budding forth being a signe, that the spring is now well come on; as our Saviour expressely also saith of the fig-tree, Mat. 24. 32. *When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.* And because the fig-tree doth shoot forth her first green figs, before or together with her first leaves, whereas other trees doe for the most part first shoot forth blossomes and leaves, and then afterward their severall fruit, hence is the expresseion here used, *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs.* And so for the next words, *And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell*; that which seemes intended is, that when the small little branches of the vines doe first shoot out the flowers thereof, they yield a very pretty delightfull smell; they *give a good smell*; that is, though they yield no extraordinary strong sent, yet they send forth a very acceptable pleasant savour. However, that which is spiritually signified hereby is, either, 1. that both Jewes and Gentiles (for the fig-tree may signifie the Church of the Jewes, and the vines the severall Congregations of the Gentiles) should upon the preaching of the Gospel, betimes come in to Christ, and should be adorned with variety of graces, and bring forth the severall fruits of new obedience, which should yield a sweet savour, being acceptable to God thorough Jesus Christ; or 2. that God would blesse his Church after the winter of her low estate with peace, & the severall sweet blessings of peace; as indeed a comfortable quiet condition is often promised the people of God under this phrase of their sitting under their vines, and under their fig trees, as in Mica 4. 4. and elsewhere. And then againe in the figurative expresseions here used very observable it is, 1. that the people of God are here compared to fig-trees and vines, which usually bring forth in greatest plenty, and whose fruit is counted the sweetest of all fruits, to shew, that Christians should bring forth fruit in great abundance, and that their obedience is very pleasing to God, Hof 9. 10. And 2. that Christ doth not despise, but makes precious account of the first buddings of grace in young Christians, though far from that maturity and ripenesse that afterwards he will expect from them.

Arise,

Arise, my love, my faire one, and come away.] See the Note on these words before, ver. 10. The repeating of them againe implyes, 1. the weightinesse of that which the Church is here pressed to doe. 2. With what speed she is required to doe it, even presently without any delay; see Gen. 41. 32. 3. Our dulnesse and sluggishnesse that must be so often pressed unto it: and 4. the exceeding love and mercy of Christ in being so urgent with her in that which was meerly for her good.

Verf. 14. *O my dove! that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the staires.*] The staires here intended are, I conceive, the craggy places in rocks, which have the appearance of steps or staires for men to climb up: so that *by the clefts of the rock, and the secret places of the staires*, the same thing is meant, to wit, those holes and hollow places in high steep rocks, wherein doves are wont to build their neasts for the greater safety, and to hide themselves. Some conceive, that because the Spouse might keep in, notwithstanding she had been so earnestly invited to come forth, out of feare of being hardly used by the shepheards, therefore her Beloved doth here againe desire her to come forth, in the confidence of his presence and protection, that so he might delight himselfe with seeing her, and conferring with her: However in the spirituall sense these words, *O my dove!* are an expression of the great love that Christ beares to his Church, and the great delight that he takes in her. In many regards the Church may be compared to a dove; as, 1. Because the spirituall beauty of the faithful is like that of the dove; see the Note, Chap. 1. 8. & Psal. 68. 13. 2^{ly}, Because their spiritual chastity is also like that of the dove; see the Note, Chap. 1. 15. 3^{ly}, Because they are meek and gentle and harmlesse as the dove; a bird, as some say, without any gall, and hath neither beake nor claws to doe any hurt with: 4^{ly}, Because as the dove is a neat and cleanly bird, delighting to lodge in neate places, and to feed cleanly; so the Church delights in all kind of purity, she loves no wayes of uncleane-ness, nor delights to feed upon sinfull pleasures, the dogs meate of the world, nor upon mens inventions, but upon pure Manna, the pure word of God, Christ, and spirituall things. 5^{ly}, Because as the dove is a sociable creature, delighting to consort and dwell together; so the Saints delight in the communion and assemblies of the Saints; whence is that, Isa. 60. 8. *Who are these that flie as a cloud, and as doves to their windowes*; and 6^{ly}, Because the Church is subject to many feares, and is often in sorrow and mourning, and herein doth much resemble the dove, a timorous and fearefull bird; Hos. 11. 11. *They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria*, and a bird that hath a mournfull kind of tone; where-to many passages in the Prophets doe allude, as Isa. 38. 14. *I did mourn as a dove*; & chap. 59. 11. *We mourn sore like doves*; & Ezek. 7. 16. *They that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountaines like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity*. But the maine thing here intended, is, that the Church is like the dove in regard of the doves hiding themselves *in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the staires*. And hereby is meant, either, that as the dove being a weak, helplesse creature, no way able to defend her selfe against birds of prey, hath only this refuge left her, to fly into the holes and clefts of rocks, thereby to secure her selfe; so the Church, being weake in her selfe, and not able to grapple with her mighty enemies, is often in times of persecution constrained to fly into the farthest

parts of the earth, and there to hide themselves and sit mourning like doves in secret corners; as it is said of those Confessors, Heb. 11. 38. That *they wandered in deserts, and in mountaines, and in denyes and caves of the earth*; see also Jer. 48. 28. To which some adde also the faithfulls withdrawing and retiring themselves out of a modest apprehension of their worthlesness and many infirmities, or a desire to serve God freely in secret, and so to avoyd being suspected of hypocrisie: Or 2. the Churches seeking to secure her selfe from the wrath and judgements of God; and from the rage of persecutors, by flying thorough faith and prayer to God in Christ, as her rock of refuge: Or 3. The Churches sure safety, in that she is hid as in a rock, to wit, either, 1. in the inaccessible rock of Gods election, which abideth for ever, and cannot be overthrowne, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Or 2. in the mediation of Christ, the true Rock of shelter, Mat. 16. 18. & 1 Cor. 10. 4. even in the wounds that were made in his blessed body, which were as the holes in this rock: Or 3. under the secret of Gods providence and protection; for which see the Notes, Psal. 32. 7. & 61. 2, 3. & 91. 1.

Let me see thy countenance, let me heare thy voice.] Some think that the Church is here invited to come forth out of the narrow limits of Judea, and to shew her selfe amongst the Gentiles, and there boldly to preach the Gospel. It is best to understand the words generally, that the Church is here invited to enjoy communion with Christ more fully and comfortably then she had formerly done; for by letting him see her countenance is meant, that she should hold up her face with comfort, now the winter stormes were over, that she should enjoy his presence in his Ordinances, and walk with him in all holinesse and uprightness of conversation: and by letting him heare her voice is meant, that she should be much in praying to him, and praising his name, that she should let him frequently heare the voice of her supplications, Psal. 28. 2. and the voice of her thanksgiving, Psal. 26. 7. see also, Psal. 50. 15.

For sweet is thy voice, &c.] The meaning is, that Christ delights in the prayers and praises of his people; according to that, Mal. 3. 4. *Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord*; & Pro. 15. 8. *The prayer of the upright is his delight*; yea even when she mournes as a dove before him, she is then most welcome to him: *For the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, &c.* Psal. 51. 17. And so for the next words, *And thy countenance is comely*; the meaning is, that Christ delights in the spirituall beauty of his people; see the Note, Chap. 1. 5. & Psal. 45. 11. and loves to see her often presenting her selfe before him, yea even when she comes weeping, with a blubbered face, and a mourning countenance; for his work is to bind up the broken-hearted, &c. Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

Verf. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.*] Because of this word [*us*] some conceive that these words must be taken as spoken by the Bridegroom, and his Spouse joyntly together: But this may be only, because the charge here given was for the advantage of both. And considering that it doth most properly belong to his authority and power to take order for the preventing of every thing that may be distastfull to him, to his Spouse, it may seem most probable, that this is spoken by him to his Bridemen or companions, to wit, that his Spouse being now come forth to go with him into the fields, they should take order that their walking in the vineyards might not be the lesse delightfull to them, by their seeing what

what spoil the foxes had made amongst the vines. Now in giving this charge, having said, *Take us the foxes*, (wherewith indeed Judea did abound, see the Note Judg. 15. 4.) he addes, *the little foxes, that spoil the vines*; and that either only as tearming them *little*, with reference to wolves and wild boars, and other greater beasts, thereby implying that even these *little foxes*, as well as greater wild beasts, would do much mischief in the vineyards, to wit, by eating the ripe grapes, and by scraping holes about the vines, whereby they might be quite marred: or else as intending thereby the younger cubs, and that not only the old ones, but even these *little foxes* must also be taken, both because they would grow greater, and now being young they might be the more easily taken; and likewise especially, because these little foxes, by reason of their boldnesse, not being yet so wary as the old ones, and by reason of their wantonnesse in gnawing and scraping the vines, did often most mischief amongst the vineyards. And now for the spiritual sense of this place; First, It is clear, that by Christs and the Churches *vines* here, are meant the several Congregations of Gods people, or particular Christians, See the Note chap. 1. 6. & Psal. 80. 8. *The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel*, saith the Prophet, *and the house of Judah his pleasant plant*, Isa. 5. 7. Secondly, Though by *the foxes that spoil the vines*, may be meant all the enemies of the Church in generall, that waste and destroy Gods people, as namely tyrants and persecutors, who for their craft and blood-thirsty rage, may well be called *foxes* (such as Herod was, who is called a fox, Luke 13. 32.) and who may be here also tearmed *the little foxes*, by way of contempt, to imply that how highly soever such thought of themselves and of their mighty power, God would make no more of destroying them, then of taking so many little foxes; yet here, I conceive, by *the foxes* are meant, at least principally, false teachers, hereticks and schismatics; First, Because such are expressly called foxes in the Scripture, Ezek. 13. 4. *O Israel, thy Prophets are like the foxes in the deserts*. Secondly, Because these are frequently noted in the Scripture to be men of much serpentine craft and subtilty; *Deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ*, 2 Cor. 11. 13. such as cover their self-respects, and mischievous purposes under a shew of much zeal, and so lurking in the very bosom of the Church; and that by *sleight and cunning craftinesse*, *do lie in wait to deceive*, Eph. 4. 14. and by good words and fair speeches, and glozing pretences, and enticing carriage, and many other subtil courses, do indeed deceive the hearts of the simple, Rom. 16. 18. And thirdly, Because these, by the name of *little foxes*, seem purposely to be opposed to *the wild boar out of the wood*; and *the wild beasts out of the field*, Psal. 80. 13. that is, persecuting tyrants out of the Church, and that to imply, that though these do not root up and waste Christs vineyard, as those other do, yet a great deal of mischief they do therein; and therefore their waies are said to be *pernicious waies*, 2 Pet. 2. 2. and they are said to *creep into houses*, and to *lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts*, 2 Tim. 3. 6. yea and to *subvert whole houses*, Tit. 1. 11. whereto agrees that of the Prophet, Jer. 12. 10. *Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have troden my portion under foot; they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness*. And yet withall the mention that is made of the *little foxes*, may be also intended to imply, that even those that seem least hurtfull amongst these seducers, must not be endured, and that they

must be looked after betimes, when they first begin to shew themselves, because then they may be more easily suppressed, and so the mischief, they will otherwise do, may be prevented. 3. The charge here given is to Magistrates, and Ministers principally, who are his vine-dressers, and the keepers of his vineyards; yet not so but that others in their places are required to be assisting herein. And 4^{ly}, by taking these foxes is meant, what ever holy means may be used to rid the Church of these pestilent seducers and disturbers of the Church, who are indeed no better then *bruit beasts* (as the Apostle calls them, 2 Pet. 2. 12.) *made to be taken and destroyed*; they must be detected, and convinced, and confuted by the Ministers, and so taken (as I may say) in the net of the Scripture, yea they must by just censures be cast out of the Church, hunted and chased out of the Lords vineyards; yea and if this will not make them give over doing mischief, they must be smoked out of their holes, and either chained up, or (if incorrigible) destroyed, by the power of the civil Magistrate, that the souls of Gods people may not be destroyed by them.

For our vines have tender grapes.] The meaning is, either that because the vines did already bud out with tender grapes, therefore it was fit that care should be taken to suppress the foxes, that the fair hopes they had of a comfortable vintage, might not by them be made frustrate; or else that therefore all diligence was to be used for the taking of the foxes, because now the grapes were so young and tender, the smaller matter would shake them off, or other waies destroy them. And so that which is mystically intended may be, that new gathered Churches, and young beginners in Christianity, are most in danger of Hereticks and Schismatics, and ought with most care to be secured: Christ is carefull of young Christians, and would not lose the hopes of the first buddings of grace.

Verf. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.*] Because of the words in the following verse, *Turn my beloved, &c.* therefore some conceive that this must be taken, as spoken by the Spouse to her Bride-maids, when her beloved had upon some occasion withdrawn himself. And again some think that from the 10. verse unto this verse, the Church related the words of her beloved, and here begins to speak what she thought of what he had said. But neither of these are necessary to be supposed. Only indeed this which the Church here saith, seems spoken as in answer to all those expressions of her beloveds love, which she had related in the foregoing verses; Having said there, how earnestly he had invited her to come forth to him, &c. hereupon she breaks forth into this way of boasting and glorying in the love of her beloved, in the mutual interest they had, and the delight and complacency they took one in another. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; as if she had said, I am sure of it, and can boldly speak it (according to that, 1 Joh. 4. 16. *We have known and believed the love that God hath to us,*) my beloved did first give himself to me, and then I made a totall resignation of my self to him; and so by a Covenant of grace we are really united together as husband and wife; He is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, and I am one spirit with him, *He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. which is that the Lord by the Prophet saith, Ezek. 16. 8. *I swore unto thee and entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine*: and hence it is that our hearts are knit together in a bond of unchangeable love; my beloved desires no other love but me,

and I desire no other beloved but him ; we rest satisfied and are fully contented with one anothers love : And hence it is that we enjoy full communion one with another ; I have an interest in all that is his, all his graces and glorious excellencies, and he hath the command of all that I have. And this seems also to be another of those passages which are often repeated, as the burden of the Song. See the Note above, vers. 7.

He feedeth among the lilies.] As if she should have said, He feeds his flock in fruitfull, pleasant, flowred, and sweet pastures, such as may well be called gardens, rather then meadows ; and therefore it is no wonder though I have set my heart upon him, and do thus triumph in his love. Some take the word [*He feedeth*] passively, and so would have the meaning to be, that the graces and services of his Saints are the choice dainties whereon Christ feeds, sweet and pleasant as lilies. And then of those that understand it actively of his feeding his flock among the lilies, (as before, chap. 1. 7.) some say it is meant of his feeding his Saints in his heavenly Paradise, with sweetest pleasures and delights : But others again understand it better of the Church here below, to wit, either that Christ exerciseth his Pastoral office among pure and lovely Christians, lillie-white Saints, and such as grow up as lilies, Hos. 14. 5. or that he feedeth his flock with goodly Scripture truths and mysteries, or with very precious and sweet Ordinances : Or yet in more generall terms this expression may imply, either that Christ is very sweet to his Spouse, ; or that he deals bountifully with his people, and carries himself with much sweetnesse towards them.

Vers. 17. *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away, &c.*] Some referre this to the last clause of the foregoing verse, *He feedeth among the lilies, until the day break, and the shadowes flee away* ; and accordingly they would have the meaning to be this, that Christ doth the work of a Pastor amongst his pure and precious flock, feeding them with his holy Ordinances, until the morning of life eternall shall drive away the shadowes of this world, and then there will be no farther need of the word and Sacraments, but he will converse with his Saints in a more glorious manner, and shew himselfe to them face to face in the splendor of his heavenly kingdome unto all eternity. But taking the words as they are placed and joyned together in our Bibles, *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away, turne my beloved, &c.* The mystical sense is farre more cleare, namely, that the Church, finding that her beloved had withdrawne himselfe, (which was hinted in the foregoing Note,) doth here call upon him to returne againe, and that as one not able to endure his absence, *turn my beloved* ; or rather, that she desires of him, being now present, and having now much cheared her with a gracious visit, that when ever he should see cause to withdraw himselfe from her, (as there are times indeed when Christ doth hide himselfe from his Church and people, Isa. 45. 15. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thy selfe, O God of Israel, the Saviour*) he would be ready upon all occasions to returne to her help and comfort againe. As for the first branch of this verse, *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away*, some take it to be all one in effect, as if the Church had desired that this Christ would doe, so long as there was a succession of day and night, that is, as long as the world should continue ; As if she had said, As long as the Sunne shall break out day after day in the morning, and as long as upon Sun-setting, the shadowes shall

shall flee away, (the ground of which expression is, because in the evening the shadowes doe runne out in length, as seeming to flee away; according to that of the Prophet, Jer. 6. 4. *Woe unto us, for the day goeth away, for the shadowes of the evening are stretched out*) be ready seasonably to come in to my refreshing. And so they make this place parallel with that, Psal. 89. 29, 36, 37. concerning which see the Notes there, and that this (*until*) is all one in effect, as if the Spouse had desired it might never be otherwise; see the Note above, ver. 7. But I rather take these words, *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away*, to be a Periphrasis of the day of Christs second comming, which is elsewhere called, *the day of the Lord*, 1 Thes. 5. 2. and *the day of Christ*, 2 Thes. 2. 2. and with respect to the generall Judgement that shall then be, *the great and the terrible day of the Lord*, Joel 2. 31. By the darknesse of the night in the Scripture is usually meant times of ignorance and sinne, as, Mic. 3. 6. *Night shall be unto you, that you shall not have a vision, and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine, and the Sunne shall goe down over the Prophets, and the day shall be dark over them*; and Eph. 5. 8. *Ye were sometimes darknesse, but now are ye light in the Lord*. And so also times of trouble and sorrow, as in Lam. 3. 1, 2. *I am the man that hath seene affliction by the rod of his wrath; He hath led me and brought me into darknesse, and not into light*. And againe by the day is often meant a time of knowledge, and holinesse, and comfort, and joy; as in 1 Thes. 5. 5. *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day*, &c. And Rom. 13. 12, 13. *The night is farre spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darknesse, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day*, &c. See the Note also, Eccl. 8. 16. And so here by *the day break*, and the shadowes fleeing away, is meant the breaking forth of the Lord Christ, that Sun of righteousness, in the brightnesse of his glory at the day of his second comming, and the fleeing away of all the shadowes of ignorance and sinne, and misery thereupon; for as upon the breaking forth of the morning light, the darknesse of the night, which is nothing else but the shadow of the earth interposed betwixt us and the Sunne, doth sodainly vanish away; and as the shadowes of the Ceremoniall Law, as they are called, Col. 2. 17, Heb. 10. 1. did all flee away at the day of his first comming, so in the shining forth of that glorious morning of the day of his second comming, as it is called, Psal. 49. 14. All the shadowes of sinne and ignorance and sorrow shall be sodainly chased away, after which there shall be no more any night, but the Church shall be for ever in a state of perfect light and joy. That therefore which the Church here desires of Christ is, that he would alwayes constantly, even unto the day of his second comming, be ready at hand to come in to her help and comfort in all times of tribulation and desertion, and so support her and stirre up the graces that were in her, that she might persevere unto the end. I know some limit this request of the Spouse to the faithfulls desire of comfort in an houre of desertion, and so accordingly they understand her request thus, that her beloved would returne, till by a thorough discovery of himselfe to her soule, he had wrought in her a sense and feeling of spirituall joy, which is that, say they, the Apostle Peter intends in these words, 2 Pet. 1. 19. *Untill the day dawns, and the day-star arise in your hearts*. But the former Exposition is more full and cleare.

And

And be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountaines of Bether.] Or, as it is in the margin, *Upon the mountaines of division*. We read not elsewhere of any place in the land of Judea, that was called *Bether*. The most probable opinion that we meete with is, that it was that place in the Land of Gilead, on the outside of Jordan, which is elsewhere called *Bithron*, 2 Sam. 2. 29. and that the mountaines here were called *the mountaines of division*; either, 1. Because they were divided in the top into many severall hills; or 2. Because the river of Jordan was thereabouts divided when the Israelites did at first enter the Land of Canaan; or 3. Rather because this place was by Jordan divided from the Land of Judea. And so the ground, why the Spouse desires here that her beloved would in his returne to her, *be like a roe or a young hart upon the mountaines of Bether*, may be, either because in those mountaines he used to feed his flock; or because it was a place much frequented by roes and young harts, and so all that is intended is, that he would be as speedy in his returne to her, as those creatures are in their running upon *the mountaines of Bether*. See the Notes above, ver. 8, 9. And againe by Christs comming to the help of his Church *upon the mountaines of division*, may be meant, either, 1. his comming from the heavens to their help, which may be called *the mountaines of division* for their height, and because they separate and divide betwixt us and Gods presence of glory; or else 2. his comming to the Churches help and comfort in her severall Congregations, dispersed abroad in severall places all the world over; and too often sadly divided in regard of schismes and dissentions amongst themselves; or 3. his leaping over or subduing those mountaines of sin and ignorance, whereby we are hindered from a full fruition of Christ. However, by his being *like a roe or a young hart*, is clearly meant his comming sweetly and swiftly to the help of his Church, according to those continuall pantings of the faithfull after Christ, *Come Lord Jesus, yea come quickly.*

CHAP. III.

Verf. 1. **B***y night on my bed I sought him, whom my soule loveth.*] It is not necessarily to be supposed, that in the severall passages of this Song, there should be alwayes an immediate dependance of every verse upon that which went before; they may represent what was done and said in severall places and at severall times. But yet that which followes here may well be taken as depending upon that which went before. It was hinted before, Chap. 2. ver. 8, 16, 17. that whilst the Spouse slept, her Beloved had withdrawne himselfe from her; And here now she proceeds to tell her Bride-maides how hereupon she behaved her selfe, *By night on my bed I sought him, whom my soule loveth*, to wit, as a wife that missing her husband in the dark night, doth first feele for him in the bed, and afterwards calls upon him, to see if he were in the Chamber. As for those words, *him whom my soule loveth*, see the Note, Chap. 1. 7. Some say, that by the Spouses seeking her beloved in her bed is only meant, that she wished for him, and desired the time were come that she might find him there; and that because till the marriage was consummate between them, it was not proper to say that she expected to find him there. But considering the faithfull are said in the Scripture not only to be espoused, but also to be married to Christ.

Christ here in this world, as their husband; see Jer. 3. 14. & Isa. 54. 5. & Eph. 5. 23. &c. (though indeed the full consummation of the marriage betwixt Christ and his Church in generall, is not to be till Christs second coming in glory.) I see no reason why this figurative expression may not be understood literally as it is in the Text, that she sought him in her bed. However, for the mystical sense of the words we must know, 1. that though Christ is alwayes graciously present with his people, even in their worst condition, Isa. 43. 2. & Psal. 34. 15, 18. yet there are times when they may be without the sense of his favourable presence, occasioned by the terrors of some sore affliction, and the darknesse that is upon their own spirits, or by his withdrawing the light of his countenance from them; and then it must needs be dark night with them; according to that, Isa. 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darknesse and hath no light?* 2. That in these times of desertion, the faithful being quickned by the Spirit of Christ, doe usually seek to recover againe some comfortable evidence of his gracious presence by resorting to his Ordinances, by meditation, prayer, repentance, and such like holy meanes of obtaining a comfortable communion with him: and 3. accordingly they may be said to seek him by night on their beds, 1. Because meditating of Christ by night on their beds (taking it literally) is one of the usuall meanes whereby in such times of desertion the faithfull are wont thus to seek after Christ; at those times when others take their rest, then their soules are tossed and troubled with longing desires after Christ: as it is expressed, Isa. 26. 9. *With my soule have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early:* Or 2. Because this many times befalls them, when they were immediately before wholly at ease and quiet; even when the faithfull enjoy full content in regard of outward delights, and being withall free from all feares of their interest in Christ; doe lay themselves down securely, as it were on a bed of ease, many times by the wakening of Gods Spirit, they are brought to bethink themselves more seriously of their estate, and to enquire whether the quiet and peace of conscience they enjoy be sound and well-grounded or no; and not finding it so, they set themselves to seek after it, and all their outward contentments and delights yield them no delight at all without that: or 3. Because they seek after Christ in the darknesse of tribulation and desertion, with quiet, patient, and submissive spirits, being content quietly to waite upon God: or 4. Because they seek after Christ idly, being too much taken up with their worldly enjoyments, and not with that anxiety and diligence and paines, as it is fit Christ should be sought; they would be glad to enjoy the sweetnesse of Christs gracious presence, but are loth to abandon their carnal delights. And 5. to this some adde, that the faithfull seek Christ by night on their bed, when in an houre of desertion they seek him in the place of Gods publick worship, (called before the Churches bed, for which see the Note, Chap. 1. 16.) where they are wont to enjoy his gracious presence, and the embracings of his loving kindnesse. But of this I conceive the Church speakes in the following verse.

I sought him, but I found him not.] This implies how eager she was to find him: The repeating of the word, say some, *I sought him*, and then again *I sought him*, implies that she was constant and earnest in seeking. But it may be added by way of bewailing

bewailing the succeslesse of her endeavours, at least for a time, or in that way of seeking him in her bed. Where Christ is sought in times of desertion, he is not alwaies presently found: The faithfull may seek him by solitary meditations alone by themselves, and yet find no comfort; but especially when men seek him coldly and idly, no marvell though then he still hides himself; unlesse the Church doth rouse her self out of the bed of carnal ease, and seek Christ with zeal and fervent desires, he will still stand aloof from her, Jer. 29. 13. *Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

Verf. 2. *I will rise now, &c.*] Here the Spouse makes known, that missing her beloved she could take no rest in her bed, but resolved with her self what is here expressed, *I will rise now*; that is, presently, without any delay, lest I lose mine opportunity: *And go about the City in the streets, and in the broad waies, I will seek him whom my soul loveth*; as if she had said, I will spare no pains, but will seek him diligently every where: for seeking *in the streets, and in the broad waies*, imports a busie and narrow search, according to that, Jer. 5. 1. *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, &c.* That which is intended is, that though the faithfull in a time of desertion do not presently find Christ, yet they will not give over, but will continue seeking still, and will be content to undergo any pains and trouble, that they may come to enjoy his favourable presence. By the Spouses rising out of her bed may be meant, the faithfuls self-denial in regard of their ease, and worldly contentments, and resolute abandoning of all things that may hinder them from seeking the gracious presence of Christ, and that peace of conscience which thereby they shall be sure to enjoy: Or, by her rising and going *about the City in the streets, and seeking her beloved in the broad waies*, may be meant, That when the faithfull cannot obtain any sensible apprehensions of their interest in Christ, and of his gracious presence by their own private meditations, or what ever else was intended in the foregoing verse by seeking him by night on their bed (for which see the Note there) they are wont then to seek it in other waies, as either 1. By going to the Word and other holy Ordinances in the publick assemblies of Gods people, where Christ useth to teach, as Solomon elsewhere saith, Prov. 1. 20, 21. *Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates, in the City she uttereth her words*: See also Neh. 8. 1. & Luk. 13. 26. Or 2. By consulting with as many of the Saints and servants of God, as possibly they can, and getting directions from them, yea by observing the courses of all sorts of people, and how it fares with them. Or 3. by stirring up the graces that are in them, and buckling themselves to act their graces with all chearfulnesse and zeal, to walk in those waies which Christ hath prescribed them, and to tread in his steps. And indeed this is the very reason why Christ doth sometimes hide himself from his people, that hereby they may be brought to seek him the more earnestly, even as David did, when he said, Psal. 63. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee*: and so this is one of the main benefits which the faithfull reap by their tribulations and desertions, that hereby they become more fervent and industrious in the waies of Christianity, Psal. 119. 67. they become so violent upon this, that as men besides themselves, they mind nothing in a manner, but this, (as it

was with the Spouse here, that could not stay till morning, but in the dark night ran alone up and down the City to seek her beloved) a zeal which worldlings judge to be no other but madnesse, 1 Pet. 4. 4. *They think it strange, that you run not with them into the same excesse of riot, speaking evil of you.* See also Act. 26. 24.

I sought him, but I found him not.] That is, Though I sought him with all that earnestnesse that is before expressed, yet I could not obtain that sensible evidence of the presence of his grace that I desired. Some hold that the drift of this passage is to signifie that Christ is not to be found amongst the greatest multitudes, or by the most common and generally received opinions of men. But rather the drift of it is to shew, that even when the faithfull do use the means appointed for the clearing of their evidences of their interest in Christ, yet they may for a while still continue in darknesse; and that because Christ may still hide himself, either for the greater triall of their graces, their faith, patience and constancy: or else to bring them to use the means more seriously and diligently then they have formerly done.

Verf. 3. *The watchmen that go about the City, found me.*] That is, they found her wandering by night up and down the City to seek for her Beloved. And if by the City we understand Jerusalem, the City of God (as indeed, where should the faithfull look for Christ but there?) then by the watchmen must needs be meant, either the Prophets and Apostles, and other true Pastors, or such at least, as are in the place of Pastors and Teachers, together with other officers of the Church: for such are usually in the Scripture called watchmen, as in Ezek. 3. 17. *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel:* and Isa. 62. 6. *I have set watchmen upon thy wall, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence.* And Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves; for they watch for your souls.* See also Isa. 52. 7, 8. Some Expositors I know hold that by these watchmen are meant the wisemen and the Princes of the world that are meer strangers to the mysteries of Christ, 1 Cor. 2. 8. And others, that hereby are meant Hereticks, that are still going about every where to deceive, and that because it is not said that the Spouse did here receive any information from these watchmen concerning her beloved, and Chap. 5. 7. it is expressly said that they smote her and wounded her. But considering that the word watchmen doth properly import such as by their place are to watch over the souls of Gods people, most probably it must be meant of such as are Pastors and Teachers in the Church; either, First, Such as are able and faithfull watchmen (and then observable it is, that they found out the Spouse, and not the Spouse them; which intimates, that it is the duty of faithfull Ministers to seek out those, that look not after them.) Or secondly, Such as are in place of Pastors, but no way fit for the place, being false teachers, blind and ignorant, such as the Prophet complains of, Isa. 56. 10. *His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber; and therefore no marvel though the Church could receive no satisfaction from them.*

To whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?] The vehemency of the Spouses desire after her beloved is set forth by this, that not fearing the watchmen, when they came upon her, she either staid not till they questioned her, or regarded not what

what they said, (if they did speak to her) but presently fell upon enquiring of them, whether they had seen her beloved, not being ashamed to own her Love to be the cause of her nightly wandering; as likewise by this, that she speaks, as if she thought no body could be ignorant of her love, and as if every body must needs know, and love and admire her beloved, as well as she. All which doth notably set forth how impatiently desirous the faithfull are of enjoying communion with Christ; and how farre they are from being afraid or ashamed to own him and their love to him, before those that have most power in their hands.

Vers. 4. *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soule loveth.*] That is, It was but a little while, or I was gone but a little way after I had enquired of them, ere I found my beloved. They that by the watch-men of the City doe understand hereticall teachers, or such as are in the place of the Ministry, but are no way such as they ought to be, doe accordingly observe that men must passe by such before ever they can hope to find Christ. *Let them alone* (saith our Saviour of such watch-men, Matth. 15. 14.) *they be blind leaders of the blind.* But understanding thereby the faithfull teachers of the Church, hereby is implied, 1. that even in the use of the meanes, Christ is not alwayes presently found; he may for a while hide himselfe from afflicted consciences, though they seek for comfort from the ministry of the word, both that their joy may be the greater when they doe find him, and that they may not ascribe their comfort to the excellency of the meanes, but to the free grace of Christ in revealing himselfe to them: 2. That they that persevere to seek Christ in the use of all holy meanes, shall be sure notwithstanding at last to find him; *Seek and ye shall find*, Mat. 7. 7. Such love in seeking Christ shall be at last successfull, Joh. 14. 21, 23. when they begin to think themselves past all hope, then on a sodaine Christ doth often manifest himselfe to them sooner then they expected, Heb. 10. 37. *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry*: yea and 3. that this is usually by the help of directions and instructions formerly received from Gods Ministers; (as here it might be by the watch-mens directions that the Spouse found her Beloved, though their answer be not expressed) those instructions, that did no good for the present, may yet after a while be effectuell for comfort.

I held him and would not let him goe, &c.] This sets forth the vehemency of the Spouses affection; As soone as I found, I caught hold on him, saith she, and held him fast, and would not let him goe: which agrees fully with that which Solomon elsewhere directs us to doe, Pro. 4. 13. *Take fast hold of instruction, let her not goe, &c.* When the faithfull after a time of desertion doe recover the gracious presence of Christ, they are the more carefull and zealous to cleave fast to Christ; after so much hazard and sorrow in the losse of him for a time, and so much paines taken to find him againe, they are loth and fearfull by any negligence on their part to loose him any more, and therefore they use all holy meanes to make his presence familiar and perpetuall, & determine they will not part with him for any advantage in the world: as Jacob resolved w^h en he was wrestling with the Angel, Gen. 32. 26 *I will not let thee goe, except thou blesse me*, so they resolve not to part with Christ, till they receive that blessing from him, Matth. 25. 34. *Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the king-*

dome prepared for you. And so accordingly some understand the following words, *Untill I had brought him into my mothers house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me*; to wit, that the Spouse resolves not to part with Christ, till she with him was brought, or till she had brought him formed in her heart, Gal. 4. 19. into the heavenly Jerusalem. But indeed that is not the exposition that is most generally received. This expression, *I held him and would not let him goe, untill I had brought him into my mothers house, &c.* is suited to the modesty of a virgin, that would doe nothing without the consent of her mother, and likewise to the custome of those times, namely, that the women used to dwell in each family apart by themselves; see Gen. 24. 67. And for the understanding of the spirituall meaning hereof we must know, 1. that this may be spoken in the name of severall believers, who call the universall Church their mother that conceived them: or that the Church that is at present militant upon earth, may tearme the Church in former times her mother, from whom she received her being: and 2. that by *my mothers house, and the chamber of her that conceived me*, is meant, either, 1. the publick Assemblies of Gods people; and so that which is intended is, that when the faithfull have found the sweet discoveries of Christs love to them, their endeavour then is to bring him into the publick Assemblies, there to praise and magnifie his name, and to tell of his love to them, to be ravished with his desired embraces, and to communicate her comforts to others, that they also may rejoyce with her: yea and some doe hereupon apply it more particularly, as that the Church of the Gentiles doth here expresse her resolution not to be satisfied till she have brought Christ into the severall assemblies of the converted Jewes, from whom she did at first receive the knowledge of Christ. Or 2. The heart and conscience of believers, where faith dwelleth, Rom. 10. 10. and then the meaning is, that when the faithfull have gotten some comfortable evidence of Gods love in Christ, they resolve not to let goe their hold of him, till they have gotten full and constant assurance of their election and salvation by Christ, that so Christ and they may enjoy constant, familiar and delightfull communion one with another, as those doe that live under the same roose in their mothers house: for the word, *untill*, see the Note, Chap. 2. 17.

Verf. 5. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the bindes of the field, that ye stir not up nor awake my love, til he please.*] The very same passage, word for word, we had before, Chap. 2. 7. for which see the Note there. Only observable it is, which is here added by severall Expositors, that this passage seemes to be thus repeated with reference to a custome, then used and even to this day continued amongst us, to wit, that they were wont with songs and the noise of muscical instruments before the Bride-chamber to awaken the Bridegroome and the Bride, by way of congratulating their marriage to them.

Verf. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wildernesse like pillars of smock, perfumed with myrrhe and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?*] The best of Expositors hold, that here begins a new passage of this Song, which hath no dependance upon that which went before; (for which see the Note, Chap. 3. 1.) wherein the Bridegroome, or rather the friends of the Bridegroome or Bride, (who are still the Chorus in this Pastorall) discovering the Spouse afarre off, comming from feeding her flock,

flock, or driving home her flock *out of the wilderness*, (for any Country that is not frequently inhabited, and full of houses, is usually in the Scripture called a *wilderness*, see Exod. 3. 1. & 1 Sam. 17. 28.) doe thereupon break forth into this expression of admiration, *who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoak*, &c? As if they had said, What Country damosel is this, that comes up from the desert in so stately a manner? Oh how lovely and comely and delightfull is she! Her tallnesse and straightnesse is set forth by comparing her to *pillars of smoak*; and that which is added of her being *like pillars of smoak, perfumed with myrrhe and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant*; that is, smoak that ariseth from the burning of the sweetest of all powders, either hath relation to her perfumed attire, or else is intended only to set forth, that she was as pleasing for her beauty and comeliness to the eye, as such rich perfumes are pleasing to the smell. And because she is represented as ascending up in a mountainous Country, where the higher she went up, and the nearer she came to them, the more her tall stature was discovered to them, and the more they smelt her sweetnesse, therefore she is said to goe up *like pillars of perfumed smoak*. Now all this is to shew how spiritually glorious, comely and delightfull the Church is, even to admiration, either in the eyes of Christ, or of the Angels and the faithfull servants of Christ, his friends and Bride-men, yea in the eyes of all that shall well take notice of her: first, she is said to come *out of the wilderness*, (and that as in allusion to the Israelites being carried out of the wilderness into Canaan) and that either, 1. Because she is called out of the world, which is as a wilderness, dry and barren, and voyd of all goodnesse, untilld, full of briars and thornes, a place of wild and savage beasts, and because she is content to abandon the world, and all her carnall lusts and worldly enjoyments, that she may goe up to Christ. And this indeed was most evident in the conversion of the Gentiles, who out of barbarisme were turned to be such a holy people; and therefore it is mentioned often in the Scripture as a strange and wonderfull thing; as in Isa. 35. 1. *The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoyce*. And Chap. 43. 19, 20. *I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owles, &c.* Or 2. with respect to her being delivered from some sad, desolate, wilderness-condition, wherein she had been for a time, by reason of some sore persecutions by tyrants, or some grievous troubles occasioned by some pestilent hereticks and schismaticks, that had bereaved her of much of her beauty and glory. Secondly, she is said to ascend *like pillars of smoak*, both with respect to her being raised by faith above the world, and her mounting up in her affections and conversation heaven-ward, whether her beloved is gone before her; and because she did in her first originals grow up and encrease exceedingly, multitudes being daily added to the Church, and that when her spirituall beauty and glory was hidden from the world under an afflicted, obscure, smoaky condition, and there was no outward power nor worldly wisdom or eloquence used in perswading men to come in to her, as likewise because of her courage and boldnesse in the exercise of the true Religion, without any omitting thereof for feare, or any other base respect. And, thirdly, she is said to ascend *like pillars of smoak, perfumed with myrrhe and frankincense, &c.* as in allusion to those pillars of smoak which used to arise from the sacrifices of the Temple.

ple, where there was much incense burnt, Psal. 141. 2. to set forth the fragrantcy of her vertues and graces, and the spirituall sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, and other good workes, which doe continually come up before God, and make them a sweet savour unto him, 2 Cor. 2. 15. See also, Act. 10. 4. Phil. 4. 18. & Revel. 5. 8.

Verf. 7. *Behold his Bed, which is Solomons.*] These may be the words of the Spouse, the Church, who in the foregoing verse was discovered coming out of the wilderness, and mounting up heaven-ward; wherein by setting forth the magnificent glory of Solomons Spouse, in regard of the bed, which he had prepared for her; she seeks to imply, that if one that were betrothed to Solomon must needs long to have her marriage consummate, that she might enjoy him in such state and glory, it could not seeme strange, that she should hasten to the enjoyment of her beloved, the true Solomon, whose glory was so far greater, then the others; see the Notes, 2 Sam. 12. 24. & 1 King. 4. 23, 24. But it is more generally held, that this also, with that which followes in the rest of this Chapter, is added by those that admired the Spouse in the foregoing verse, to wit, the Bridegroom, or his friends, and that by way of encouraging her still to hasten to her Beloved, that had provided so magnificently. And by this bed of the true Solomon is meant, either, 1. the holy assemblies of Gods people; or 2. the hearts of Gods people; for which see the Notes before, Chap. 1. 13, 16. Or 3. The kingdome of heaven, where the Saints shall enjoy the love, and presence, and delightfull embraces of the Lord Christ, their husband, and that with incomprehensible rest and peace unto all eternity. Some indeed would have this bed of Solomons to be prayer, and others the Scripture, in both which indeed the faithfull doe often enjoy sweet communion with Christ. But the former expositions seeme more cleare and proper.

Threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.] It may well be that Solomon had this very number of valiant men, of his own subjects, that he might have the more assurance of their faithfulness, (such as were Davids Worthies,) to watch every night, as a royal guard, before his chamber; see the Note, 2 Sam. 11. 9. Or else a definite number may be put for an indefinite. But however hereby doubtlesse is figured, (as in allusion to the watch that was kept by night in the Temple, Psal. 134. 1.) either how safely without all danger or feare the Church shall rest with Christ in heaven, or else the keeping and safe-guarding of the persons, the hearts and minds of the faithfull here in this world, partly by Gods ~~provide~~ care over them, 1 Pet. 1. 5. and partly by his causing them by his Spirit to keep a diligent watch over their own hearts and wayes, Pro. 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence;* by meanes whereof they are both secured from dangers, Psal. 91. 1-5. and likewise they enjoy much sweet quiet and rest in their minds, Pro. 3. 23, 24. According to that of the Apostle, Phil. 4. 7. *The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Yea by these threescore Worthies keeping the bed of the true Solomon, may be meant, either, 1. the holy Angels, true Israelites indeed, holy and faithfull, who *excell in strength*, Psal. 103. 20. and doe continually take care for the preservation of Gods people, Psal. 34. 7. Or 2. the faithfull Pastors and Ministers of the Church; those spirituall watch-men, spoken of before

fore, ver. 3. for which see the Note there. Or 3. the pen-men of the Scripture, whose writings tend many wayes to the rest of Believers, Rom. 15. 4.

Verf. 8. *They all hold swords, being expert in warre.*] That is, They are all valiant expert fouldiers, that know well how to handle their weapon. And if by this guard, as is said in the foregoing verse, we understand the Angels, then hereby their exceeding great power and prowesse is signified; but if thereby we understand the Pastors and Ministers of the Church, then the meaning may be, that they stand alwaies armed with that sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Eph 6. 17. *which is quick and powerfull, and sharper then any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow*, Heb. 4. 12. and are able men, each of them well knowing how to use this weapon skilfully for the defence of the faithfull against all that oppose them and seek their ruine; *Holding fast the faithfull word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers*, Tit. 1. 9.

Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.] For the sword on the thigh, See the Note, Psal 45. 3. That which is mainly intended hereby, seems to be, that both Angels and Ministers are watchfull over the Churches peace and safety, and chearfully ready to defend her from all sudden dangers and fears, especially such as she may be subject to through ignorance or error, or the secret attempts of the rulers of the darknesse of this world, Eph. 6. 12.

Verf. 9. *King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon*] That is, of Cedar, which was the chief wood of Lebanon, concerning which, see the Note, Chap. 1. 17. Some reade this, as we see in the margin of our Bibles, *King Solomon made himself a bed of the wood of Lebanon*; and accordingly they hold that here there is given us a fuller description of the richnesse and magnificence of that bed mentioned before, ver. 7. But it seems more probable, that the word here used in the Original, which is indeed no where found but in this place, doth rather signifie some Litter, such as our Sedans are, or some Couch-coach or Charet of state, which Solomon provided for himself and his wife to be carried in, at the time of their nuptials, or when ever they meant to shew themselves in any way of pomp and triumph amongst the people; and that because of those words that follow, ver. 11: where the people are called forth to the beholding of this glorious sight, *Go forth, O ye daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon*, &c. However the drift of this passage seems to be the same with that before, ver. 7. namely, by setting forth further the magnificent state of Solomon, to imply how much more desirable the enjoyment of Christ, the true Solomon is, whose glory doth so farre transcend the glory of Solomon, as in other things, so in regard of this his Charet; for by this Charet is meant, either 1. The humane nature of Christ, wherein the Lord of glory shewed himself amongst men, *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, Joh. 1. 14. which was richly adorned with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and which he made and assumed to himself, being the more fitly compared to the Cedars of Lebanon, because it never saw corruption, Act. 2. 31. Or 2. The word of the Gospel, which is indeed of Christs own framing (we received it wholly from him, and must not vary in the least from that form of doctrine, which he delivered to us) and wherein Christ doth ride

as in a triumphant Charet from one place to another all the world over, and so shall do alwaies; and therefore it is called *the everlasting Gospel*, Rev. 14. 6. Or 3. The Church, made up by Christ of particular Saints, those incorruptible Cedars, Psal. 92. 12, 13. wherein by the profession and preaching of the Gospel, Christ is continually carried up and down, as in a Charet amongst them.

Verf. 10. *He made the pillars thereof of silver, &c.*] Which was indeed very plentiful in Solomons daies, 1 King 10. 27. *The bottom thereof of gold*; that is, the couch or seat whereon they were to sit, or lie, was made of rich cloth of gold: *The covering of it of purple*; that is, the upper part of it, or the curtains, which was the covering of those that sat in it, was made of some costly purple stuff: *The midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem*; the meaning whereof I conceive to be this, that the inside of this Charet was all lined with curious hangings of needle work, full of love stories, or richly adorned with all variety of precious stones, the love and delight of the daughters of Jerusalem. And perhaps this word *paved*, is used figuratively, to shew that the very flour of the coach, [whereon they set their feet, was overlaid with such rich clothes of tapestry, and as in allusion to that variety of artificial works that used to be in their pavements in those daies. And now according to the severall Expositions given of Solomons Charet in the foregoing verse, we may also spiritually apply the severall parts of it, as they are here particularly described, the more to set forth the glory of Solomon, and under that the glory of Christ, of whom Solomon was a type. First, Understanding by the Charet the humane nature of Christ, by these *pillars of silver* may be meant, the precious gifts wherewith his humane nature was adorned: and 2. By *the bottom thereof of gold*, the singular and transcendent purity of his nature, free from the least stain of sinne, which made it fit for the habitation of the only begotten Son of God. And 3. by *the covering of it of purple*; *the form of a servant*, under which the glory of his Godhead was covered or hidden from the eyes of men, especially with respect to his bloody passion, for which it is said to be *of purple*; and 4. by *the midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem*; the heart of Christ, fully fraught with love, which made him undertake the work of the redemption of Gods chosen ones, or the amiableness of his doctrine and conversation, which drew the people to love and admire him. But secondly, understanding thereby the word of the Gospel, whereby Christ is carried forth into all nations, then by these *pillars of silver* may be meant the firme and certain truths therein contained, pure as silver, Psal. 12. 6. or the severall Articles of the Christian faith: and by *the bottome of gold*, the Covenant of grace contained therein, more precious then gold, which is the ground-work of Christs love to the Saints, and that whereon the Saints rest for life and salvation, as on a sure foundation; and by *the purple covering*, the rich and pleasant promises of the people, which are comfortable coverings to them to shelter them from all evil; and by *the midst paved with love*, those many Scripture-Stories, the whole scope whereof is to set forth the love of Christ to his Saints, and the love which they likewise have shown to their Lord Christ. And thirdly, Understanding thereby the Church, then by *the pillars of silver* may be meant, the stability of the Church, and the perseverance of the Saints; or the goodly graces wherewith the Church is adorned; or rather, the Prophets and Apostles,

fles, Eph. 2. 20. and so also other the faithfull Ministers of Christ (*wisdomes seven pillars*, see the Note, Pro. 9. 1.) who by the doctrine of the Gospel are to beare up the Church, and by the purity of their lives to be an ornament to her; according to that of the Prophet, Mal. 3. 3. *He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purifie the sonnes of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, &c.* And by the *bottom thereof of gold*, the faith of Believers, much more precious then gold, 1 Pet. 1. 7. or the purity of their hearts, or the peace and quiet of their consciences, by meanes of their reconciliation with God thorough Christ; and By the *purple covering*, the heavenly power wherewith the Church is protected, or their hope of heavenly glory, or rather their outward conversation, which is Prince-like, holy and heavenly, those robes of righteousness, which are also washed in the blood of the Lamb, Revel 7. 14. and many times made the more glorious thorough their sufferings for Christ; and by the *midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem*, the shedding abroad of the love of Christ in the hearts of the faithfull, and the ardent love which this fetches back from them both towards God and Christ, and their brethren, yea indeed toward all men whatsoever, all tending to the glory and delight of the elect of God, *the daughters of Jerusalem*. Some referre these last words to all that is said before concerning this chariet, to wit, that it was wholly made for the use of the daughters of Jerusalem, or that they might be pleased with the sight of it, or that they might be wonne highly to love and esteeme Solomon. But most Expositors apply it to the last branch only.

Vers. 11. *Goe forth, O ye daughters of Zion, &c.*) This may be taken as spoken, together with that in the foregoing verses, by the Bride-groomes friends, or rather by the Bride her selfe, who upon occasion of that which was said in the foregoing verses concerning the magnificence of her Beloveds chariet, the true Solomon, doth call upon others to goe forth and behold that goodly sight, yet not to gaze so much upon the richnesse of the chariet, as to behold the magnificence of him that sat in it: *And behold king Solomon, with the Crowne wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladnesse of his heart*: which may be meant of the Royal Crowne, and his mother Bathsheba may be said to have crowned him herewith, because it was by her meanes that he, rather then any other of Davids sonnes, was crowned King, 1 King. 1. 16. or rather it may be meant of some garland or crowne which his mother provided for him against his nuptials; for though no such thing be expressed in the Scripture, yet it may well be that there was a custome in those times, that mothers at the marriage of their sonnes amongst other ornaments provided garlands, wherewith they crowned their heads, and so the mothers of Princes provided crownes of gold for them: In allusion whereto this may be spoken, *Behold king Solomon with the crowne wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, &c.* As if the Bridegroomes friends, or the Bride her selfe had said, Consider of Solomons state in this his chariet, and compare it with that of our Bridegroom, and you will find that his was as nothing in comparison; Or thus, You that never saw Solomon with the crowne on his head in the day of his espousals, come forth and behold his expresse image in this our Solomon, and you will find the glory of our Solomon doth farre surmount his. As for the spirituall sense of these words, we must consider,

1. that Zion being the most eminent part of Jerusalem, and so a type of the Church, as Jerusalem was, (see the Note, Psal. 2. 6.) *the daughters of Zion*, are the same that were before tearmed the daughters of Jerusalem, chap. 1. 5. for which see the Note there. 2. That by the going forth of these daughters to behold king Solomon is meant, that Christians should goe out of themselves, out of all their sinnes, their worldly intanglements and carnall confidences, and out of the false Church, Zion transformed into Babylon, and should by the eye of faith behold Christ, the true Solomon, the King of heaven and earth, and more peculiarly the King of Zion, and to their astonishment and joy, observe and consider how much his magnificent state did excell that of Solomon, which is much the same with that, Zach. 9. 9. *Rejoyce greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee.* 3. That by the crowne wherewith his mother crowned him is meant, either those faithfull soules that by the preaching of the Gospel are wonne and converted to Christ; or the glory and honour, which the Church hath in all ages yielded to Christ by owning his sovereignty, by placing all her hope of salvation in him, and spreading abroad throughout the world, by the preaching of the Gospel the glory of his person and kingdome, the great love he hath showne to his people, and the great things he hath done for them. Both which we may the rather pitch upon. 1. Because the Scripture speakes of the Church, the Congregation of the faithfull, as the mother of Christ, Revel. 12. 1-5. and in the Church by the word of faith Christ is conceived, Gal. 4. 19. *My little children, of whom I travel in birth againe, untill Christ be formed in you;* and Christ himselfe did professe, whilst he was upon earth, that he esteemed and honoured them, as his mother, Matth. 12. 50. 2^{ly}, Because Christ is indeed by the faith of the Saints honoured in the world, as the king of Israel, Job. 1. 49. When Christ ruleth in his Church by the scepter of his word, and people submit to his law and government, they then set the Crowne upon his head; and thence it is that Christ said of his Disciples, Joh. 17. 10 that he was glorified in them. And 3^{ly}, Because the Scripture doth speake of the faithfull that are by the Church converted and wonne unto Christ, as his glory and crowne; as Isa. 62. 3. *Thou shalt also be a crowne of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.* And indeed if a people converted to Christ may be tearmed the Crowne of that Minister by whom they are converted, as the Apostle calls the Philippians his joy and crowne, Phil. 4. 1. and a good wife may be tearmed a crowne to her husband, Pro. 12. 4. well may the faithfull, who are the Spouse of Christ, a chosen generation, and a royal Priesthood, 1 Pet. 2. 9. be said to be the crowne, wherewith his mother crowned him: yea and the rather haply may Christ be said to be crowned by his mother, the Church of the Jewes, because his first converts were gathered there. And 4. By the day of his esponsals, and the day of the gladnesse of his heart, is meant the time when a people are by the Gospel wonne to the faith, whence is that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have espoused you unto one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;* for then doth the Lord begin to rejoyce in such a people, even as a Bridegroom rejoyceth over the Bride, Isa. 62. 5. Yea and some doe apply this particularly to the glory and dignity wherewith Christ was crowned after his resurrection, Heb. 2. 9. which might also be called the day of his esponsals, and of the

the gladnesse of his heart, because he had then procured his Church to be presented to him as a glorious Spouse, (even as Eve after Adam awoke from sleep was presented unto him) which was to the Lord a matter of great triumph and joy.

CHAP. IV.

Verf. 1. **B**ehold, thou art faire, my love, behold thou art faire.] Here it is cleare that Christ the Bridegroom doth extoll the beauty of the Church, his Spouse, and that by way of a kind reply to that discovery she had made of her high esteeme of him, if the later part of the foregoing Chapter be, as it is by many, understood of her: We had the very same expreffion before, Chap. 1. 15. for which see the Note there; yet some apply this particularly to the Church of the Jewes.

Thou hast doves eyes within thy locks.] Having extolled the Spouses beauty in generall, he proceeds to set forth her beauty in many particulars, the severall members of the Church, or the manifold graces, wherewith she is adorned; And accordingly begins with her eyes, the most eminent and beautifull part: The first words, *Thou hast doves eyes*, were also opened before, Chap. 1. 15. But here they are repeated with an addition, *Thou hast doves eyes within thy locks*; haply, in allusion to the custome of Brides having their haire hanging loose about them, which made their eyes shine forth from between their locks with the more beauty and lovelinesse. Now first because by these dove-like eyes, I conceive, the Churches Teachers are here principally meant, (though some understand thereby faith, the first and chiefe of all Christian graces, without which it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. and others adde Magistrates to Ministers, to make up the Churches two eyes.) and 2. Because the *locks* seeme to be mentioned here as an ornament to the eyes, therefore it seemes most probable that the drift of this expreffion, *Thou hast doves eyes within thy locks*, is to shew, 1. that in the publick assemblies of Gods people the Teachers, as the eyes and lights of the Church, are most conspicuous; and 2. that such full assemblies, when they receive the word into believing hearts, and thrive under their teaching, are as the locks to the eyes, a great ornament unto their Teachers, Phil. 4. 1.

Thy haire is as a flock of goates that appeare from mount Gilead.] Or, *that eate of mount Gilead*, as it is in the margin, that is, that feed on mount Gilead, a fruitful soile, where the cattell, that were bred, were fat and faire. The Spouses beauty is farther here set forth by shewing that her haire, which indeed the Apostle tearms a womans glory, 1 Cor. 11. 14. was as great an ornament to her head, as such a flock of goates were to mount Gilead, in the eye of those that from asfarre did look up and behold them grazing there; and that because her haire was thick and long, fine and soft, and bright, and curled, and kept in neate and good order; and therein like to a long flock of goodly goates going close together, whose haire also, especially when they were fat and in good liking, used to be curled and long, (whence it was that they made coverings or curtaines for the Tabernacle of goates haire) for which also see the Note, 1 Sam. 19. 13. In all which, as likewise in the following similitudes, it is very observable, how Pastoral-like the expreffions still are. And hereby is meant spiritually, either the Churches outward profession of religion, which is indeed a great

ornament

ornament to her, or her good workes, or more particularly, the pure and holy thoughts and meditations in the minds and heads of the faithfull, still ascending heaven-ward, which though they be innumerable many, yet by the watchfulnesse of the Saints, are kept in good order, as a flock of goates by the shepherd, or rather the multitude of believers, numberlesse as the haire upon a mans head are, who when they meet together in full assemblies to waite upon God in his ordinances, are as goodly a sight as a flock of goates upon mount Gilead.

Vers. 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep, that are even shorn, which came up from the washing, &c.*] Because the teeth are many, and their comeliness consists much in the whiteness, cleanness, brightness, and evenness of them, therefore it is that the teeth of the Spouse are here compared to *a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing*: yea and there may be an allusion in this expression to the usuall meanes of keeping the teeth white and sweet, which is often washing. And then for the following words, *whereof every one beare twins, and none is barren amongst them*, I conceive the maine thing intended thereby is, that a flock of sheep doe never make a more goodly shew, then when each ewe hath her lamb, especially when they have each of them two twin-lambs going along with them, and so that this is added to set forth in generall the handsome comeliness of her teeth; yet if there be any thing farther intended by this branch of the comparison in reference to the teeth, I should think it is, 1. the correspondence of the upper and lower teeth one to another, one answering the other, and being as like as twins one to another. And 2. the fulnesse of their number, and their orderly standing close and even together, when there is not a tooth wanting, and so no gap to be seen amongst them, which is meant in that last clause, *and none is barren amongst them*. And now for the spirituall application of this; Some by these teeth understand the Ministers of the Gospel, who are, 1. many in number, 2. doe receive their strength from Christ, as teeth doe receive their strength from the head; 3. are by their place to prepare and chew the strong meate of the word, the deep and harder truths of religion, *ὁρθολογικῶς*, *rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. that it may be the better understood, received, and digested for the nourishment of the whole body, (so that as before Ministers were mentioned as the eyes of the Church, in relation to their watching over the people, so here as the Churches teeth, in regard of their feeding the soules of Gods people by their preaching and teaching) a work so needfull that a people without Pastors and Teachers are like a mouth without teeth, uncomely to behold, and which may well indanger the pining and consuming away of the whole body; for *where there is no vision the people perish*, Pro. 29. 18. 4th, of equall authority, power and jurisdiction, Matth. 20. 25, 26, 27. like teeth of equall size, and none of them exalting themselves above their fellowes, and of sweet accordance amongst themselves, united in love together, as twin-brethren, and of one tongue, and one heart. 5. Men of singular purity and holiness, not only washed white by the blood of Christ from the guilt of all their finnes (which was signified by their washing in Baptisme) but also exemplary for the innocency and purity of their lives and conversations: and 6. fruitfull in their ministry, like sheep that beare twins, as being instrumental for the conversion of many. And some add too, that they are compared to *shorn sheep*, to imply that they above o-

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thers must be willing to be stripped of all, or at least that they must put off all love of the world, and respect to earthly things, that they may be the freer to follow Christ, and to serve him. Againe others by the Churches teeth understand her studying, meditating and ruminating on the word of God, the bread of life; and therewith also her judging, discerning, and applying by faith both the word and seales of the Covenant, which is the meanes whereby the faithfull doe feed on Christ, and the promises, to the spirituall nourishing of their soules; see the Note, Psal. 22. 26. all which holy actings of the soule, are for their purity, cleannesse, order and comeliness, compared to *a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing*: and to *sheep bearing twins*, with respect to the manifold good, which they produce in the faithfull, as namely, knowledge in the mind, and holy resolutions in the will, love to God, and love to man, &c. And indeed both these applications of the Metaphor in the Text are justly approved by the best Expositors.

Verf. 3. *Thy lips are like a threed of scarlet, &c.*] That is, fine, soft, round, and small, and for colour cherry-red. And first hereby may be meant the Pastors and Teachers of the Church, by whom God speakes to his Church, and the Church makes knowne her desires to God. As before they were tearmed the Churches eyes, with respect to their watching over the body of the people, and her teeth because they prepare the food of life for the nourishment of their soules, so here againe they are called the Churches lips, in regard that they declare to the people the sweet Oracles of God, and likewise doe mightily prevaile with God by prayer on their behalfe: in which holy imployments they may well be compared to *a threed of scarlet*, 1. Because they expresse not themselves with big swelling words of vanity and humane eloquence (though withall their speech must not be loose and negligent, but prepared with skill, care, and diligence) according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 4. *My speech and my preaching was not with enticing mords of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power*; see also ver. 13. 2^{ly}, Because their words are yet withall, as it were, dyed in graine with the royal Majesty, power and authority of Christ, by whom they are commissioned to preach in his name. 3. Because in their teaching they are in a manner continually sounding forth the doctrine of Christ crucified. And 4. Because they discharge their work in these holy services with much ardency of zeale for the glory of God, and of love and charity to the soules of Gods people. Or secondly, By these lips of the Church, may be meant the speech and communication of Christians in generall, their prayers and praises, their confessions, and professions of their faith, &c. which should not be lofty and full of vaine ostentation, but holy, pure, and gracious, breathing forth continually their fervent love to God, and to their brethren; according to that of the Apostle, *Let your speech be with grace*, Col. 4. 6. and being made acceptable unto God through the scarlet tincture of Christs precious blood, may well upon that account also be compared to *a threed of scarlet*. And so the following words may seeme to be added by way of explaining these, *and thy speech is comely*; that is, elegant, sweet, and amiable, for because though a woman be never so beautifull, yet if her voice and speech be rude and harsh, and any way unpleasent, that disgraceth all, therefore is this added to the praise of the beauty of her lips, that her voice and speech is comely. But, I say, hereby is meant

the gracefulness and loveliness of the language and speech of Gods people, as it is said particularly of the praises that they daily give to God, that they are *pleasant and comely*, Psal. 147. 1.

Thy temples are like a piece of a Pomegranate within thy locks.] That is, Thy temples, (under which the cheeks may be included too, that are joynd to the temples) are beautiful and ruddy, and so appeare thorough thy locks, which hang upon them; see the Note above, vers. 1. Even the outward rinde of the Pomegranate is often, in some parts of it especially, of a reddish colour, (whence it was, as some conceive, that the Pomegranates in the high Priests Ephod were ordered to be made of *purple and of scarlet*, Exod. 28. 33.) and therefore the words may referre to this. But yet because it is said, *Thy temples are like a peice of a Pomegranate*, to wit, when it is cut asunder, therefore I rather think the comparison is taken from the glorious rosey-redness of the inside of the Pomegranate, when it is cut or broken in pieces. However because the temples and cheekes are the seates of modesty and shamefacednesse, and are thereby frequently died with a comely blush, therefore by these temples and cheekes of the Spouse, may be meant the reverend and modest face of the Church, the discreet, humble and modest conversation of Gods people, who are full of love and good workes, as a Pomegranate is of ruddy kernels, fearing to doe or speake any thing that is not seemly for them, and blushing through shame, when they have failed, and who being quickned by the same Spirit, and adhering to their Pastors, doe much set forth the Churches beauty. Yet some by these *temples* and cheekes of the Church, doe againe understand the Preachers of the Gospel, who are most conspicuous in the Church, and in regard of their ministry her greatest ornament. Yea and some, not without good probability, doe understand it of the Ruling Elders, and Ecclesiasticall Governours, who lie hid amongst the people, as *the temples doe within the locks*, and may the better be compared to *a piece of a Pomegranate*, that is in Physick of great use for the restraining and healing of sundry diseases, not only because this Aristocratical Government in the Church doth notably resemble the many goodly kernels that are united together in a Pomegranate, but also especially because the chiefe work of these Officers is to be healers in the Church, to restrain and cure all dissoluteness and sinfull distempers amongst the people.

Vers. 4. *Thy neck is like the Tower of David, builded for an armory.*] That is, streight and round, strong and beautifull, and high, lifted up above the rest of her body, as that Tower of Davids was above the rest of the City. And by this *Tower of David* may be meant, either that *strong hold of Zion*, which he took from the Jebusites, and which it seems he enlarged and fortified; See the Note, 2 Sam. 5. 9. or rather that great Tower, which David built at the end of his house, for a Cattle of defence, mentioned, Neh. 3. 25, 26, 27. and which is also there ver. 19. called *the armory*; for which see the Note upon that place; to which some conceive the Prophet doth allude in calling the Church, Mic. 4. 8. *the tower of the flock*. But now by this neck of the Church, 1. Some do againe understand the Preachers of the Gospel, by whom spiritual food is conveyed to the rest of the body for their nourishment, and who do by strength received from Christ, hold forth Christ amongst the people, even as the neck by strength received from the head, doth bear up the head, and may well be

be compared to the Tower that David built for an armory, because they are in their places as in a watch-tower, men eminent above others for their employments and for their graces; and because they are appointed of God for the defence of the Church, and for the subduing of all that oppose themselves to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 6. and are as a spiritual *armory*, from whence the people are to furnish themselves with all things requisite for the well managing of their spiritual warfare. 2. Others, by this neck of the Church, understand the doctrine of life given us by the inspiration of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, whereby the Church doth excell in wisdom all the wisdom of the wise men of the world, and whence the people of God may be furnished with *the whole armour of God*, as the Apostle calls it, Eph. 6. 13. to make them more then conquerors over all their spiritual enemies. 3. Others do best, I think, understand hereby that most eminent grace of faith, (which knits Christ and the faithfull together, as the neck doth the head and the body, Joh. 17. 20, 21.) together with the fruits thereof; as namely, obedience to Christ as our Lord and King, called the *obedience of faith*, Rom. 16. 26. whereby believers do willingly submit their necks to the yoke of Christ, and to bear stoutly whatever afflictions God is pleased to exercise them with; but will not yield to be servants and slaves to Satan and sin; and likewise their invincible courage and constancy, their fortitude and holy boldnesse, whereby they fight the good fight of faith, and against which all the gates of hell are not able to prevail.

Whereon there hang a thousand bucklers &c.] That is, a huge multitude of bucklers, (a definite number being put for an indefinite) *All shields of mighty men*; that is, fit for the use of Princes, and great Commanders in the warre, or rather shields that had been hung up there by great souldiers, such as were Davids Worthies, who were men famous for their strength and valour, and are several times called, Davids *mighty men*, see the Note, 2 Sam. 23. 8. and had it seems a house, that was for their meeting, or for their armory, or some such like service, which was called *the house of the mighty*, Neh. 3. 16. to wit, either *the bucklers and shields*, which they had taken from their enemies, which were hung up as trophies of their victories; or else those which themselves had used in the war, and had hung up there, as the monuments of their valour, and the service they had done for their Country; in which regard some think that is spoken of the Souldiers in Tyre, Ezek. 27. 11. *They hanged the shield and helmet in thee: they set forth thy comelinesse*. Some conceive that the weapons of warre kept in this armory, were afterwards removed by Solomon into the Temple, because the speares and shields, wherewith Jehoiada the high Priest armed the Levites for the destroying of Athaliah, are called *King Davids speares and shields*, 2 Kings 11. 10. But that is altogether uncertain. However, this I conceive is cleare, that having compared the Spouses neck to the tower of David, in allusion to the chaines of gold and pearle which women used to hang about their necks, as their chiefest ornaments, he addes these words, *Whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, &c.* And by these *bucklers and shields* are meant, either, 1. the many and manifold gifts and graces, wherewith God hath fitted his Ministers for the defence of his Church; together with the purity of their doctrine, their zeale in preaching, and holinesse of life, whereby the Church is very much beautified and strengthened; or 2. the divine sayings that are in
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the Scripture, the examples of the Saints in former times that are there recorded, and the many precious promises, which are there stored up, concerning the many severall wayes of defence, whereby God will surely protect his people against all dangers, as by the Ministry of the Angels, &c. Or 3. the Worthies that through faith should be a great defence to the Church, such as the Martyrs and others have been; or the heroicall acts that should be done by them, whereby the Church should become dreadfull, even to her enemies; or 4. that in the shield of faith, as the Apostle calls it, Eph. 6. 16. there is virtually the defence of a thousand shields.

Verf. 5. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes, that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*] That is, In fruitfull, pleasant and sweet pastures, see the Note, Chap. 2. 16. to imply, that they were little, plump, juicy, cleare, faire, and pleasant to behold; and they are compared to *two young roes, that are twins*, to imply, that they were of the same forme, size and proportion, every way as like, as twins use to be. And now by these *breasts* of the Church, (in the beauty whereof much of the beauty of the Church is said elsewhere to consist; Ezek. 16. 7. *Thou art come to excellent ornaments; thy breasts are fashioned*) Some againe hold, that the Pastors and Teachers in the Church are meant, and that with respect to their catechizing and instructing people in the Principles of Religion, their feeding of the younger and weaker Christians, those that are yet but babes in Christ, with *the sincere milk of the word*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to beare it;* and that 1 Thes. 2. 7. *We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.* And indeed well may Ministers be termed the Churches Breasts, because they are so affectionately desirous to nurse up those they have brought forth unto Christ. As a womans breasts will ake till they be drawne, so are Ministers even pained with earnest desires that people would be instructed by them in the word of life and salvation; *I long to see you*, saith the Apostle, Rom. 1. 11. *that I may impart unto you some spirituall gift:* and as the more a womans breasts are sucked, the more the milk encreaseth; neither doth any thing sooner dry up the breasts, then not giving suck: so it is with Ministers; the more they teach, the fuller and more able they are for the work of teaching; neither doth any thing sooner blast and dry up their gifts, then when they are negligent in teaching. And then likewise Preachers of the Gospel may well be compared to *young roes*, because the Gospel was by those that first preached it so speedily spread in most parts of the world: and to *young roes, that are twins*, &c. because they are so richly furnished with gifts and graces for the work of their pastorall office, and thereby such a goodly ornament to the Church, and because they are of one heart and mind, and doe carry on the work of the Lord unanimously, delivering nothing to the people but the pure words of Christ, whose *lips* are said to be *like lilies*, Chap. 5. 13. But then others againe understand the old and new Testament to be the *two breasts* of the Church, which are as like as twins one to the other, continually full of that sweet and saving doctrine of life and salvation, so that her children may alwayes *suck and be satisfied*, as the Prophet speakes, Isa. 66. 11. *with these breasts of her consolations*, and may be refreshed and nourished and grow up unto life eternall. These two, yea and some take these two breasts to be the two Sacraments; or the Word and the Sa-

Verf. 6.

Verf. 6. *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away, &c.*] Some learned Expositors will have this to be the reply of the Spouse; But unlesse there were some evident reason for it, (as indeed there is not) considering that both the foregoing words, and those likewise that follow, are clearly the words of the Bridegroom, I see not why these should not be taken as his words also. The Spouse, the Church, had desired, Chap. 2. 17. that Christ would upon all occasions visit her in much mercy, *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away: turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountaines of Bether*; for which see the Notes there. And therefore it seemes most probable, that here Christ answers that desire of his Spouse, *Until the day break, and the shadowes flee away, I will get me to the mountaine of myrrh, & to the hill of frankincense*; for the understanding whereof we must know, that it may well be that the Spirit of God doth here allude to certain mountains and hills, that were replenished with all kinde of odoriferous trees, (the same perhaps, which were before called *the mountaines of Bether*), neere to which Solomon had a vineyard, whether he used to retire himselfe. 2. That by *the mountaine of myrrh, and the hill of frankincense*, may be meant, either, 1. the Temple at Jerusalem, where myrrh and frankincense were daily offered unto the Lord; which some think the more probable, because the word (*Mor*) in the Hebrew, (which we translate *myrrh*) may seeme to have some allusion to the Mount *Moriah*, (which might be so called at first, because it was a place where much myrrh grew) where it is cleare the Temple was built, 2 Chron. 3. 1. Or 2. the heaven of heavens, and that because in this mountaine Christ is exceedingly delighted with the service that is there done him by the glorified Saints, and the holy Angels: or 3. the Church and kingdome of Christ upon earth, whereof the Temple was a type, see the Note, 1 Kings 6. 1. and which is called, Eph. 2. 21. *A holy Temple unto the Lord, and the holy hill of Sion*, see the Note, Psal. 2. 6. where the incense of prayers and praises are continually offered unto the Lord, which are acceptable unto him thorough the mediation of Christ, yea where God doth continually powre forth of the graces and consolations of his Spirit, by reason whereof the whole conversation of Christians doth breath forth nothing but the sweet savour of holinesse and purity, which makes the Lord take exceeding great delight in them. And some adde hereto, that by *the mountaine of myrrh*, is meant the Church Catholick, and by the *hill of frankincense*, particular Congregations. And lastly, that the meaning of this place may be accordingly, either, 1. that till the day-breake of the Gospel, and till the coming of Christ in the flesh, (when indeed the legal shadowes should all flee away) he would make his residence in the Temple of Jerusalem, and would there dwell amongst them, where sweet odours were continually offered up unto him; he would make that his resting place, though in the Tabernacle he had formerly removed from one place to another, unto the time that the shadowes of all Mosaical types and ceremonies should by the light of the Gospel be driven away. Or 2. that untill the day of his second coming he would retire himselfe, (in regard of his bodily presence) into that place of his rest in heaven, where the praises and Hallelujahs of those glorious spirits about him should be his delight; and this he mentions (as some conceive) thereby to allure his Spouse to goe thither along with him. Or 3. that though he did thus withdraw himselfe in regard of his bodily presence,

yet he would be ready upon all occasions, even unto the day of his second glorious appearance, to come in to the help and comfort of his Church, that *mountaine of myrrhe, and hill of frankincense*, where his people would be continually offering to him those pure evangelicall offerings, that were farre sweeter in his esteeme then the sweet odours, that were offered unto him in the time of the Law.

Verf. 7. *Thou art all faire, my love, there is no spot in thee.*] As if he should have said, Not to insist any farther in particulars; as in those parts of thy body I have particularly mentioned, so indeed in thy whole body throughout, thou art perfectly faire, without the least spot or blemish that may impaire thy beauty. And this he addes, that by this discovery of the high esteem that he had of her, he might assure her of his tender care over her; and might perswade her, as the words in the following verse seeme to imply, to goe along with him. What is meant by that spirituell beauty of the Church, whereof Christ here speakes, we may see in the Note, Chap. 1. 15. Nor need we stumble at that which is said of the perfection of her beauty, because there is so much amisse in the soules of the holiest of Gods servants here in this world; for, 1. This may be spoken of the Churches future perfection in heaven, and the expressing of it in the present tense, may be only to imply the certainty of it; and with respect to this place it may well be that the Apostle useth in a manner the very same expressions, Eph. 5. 25, 27. where he saith, that *Christ loved the Church, to wit, as his Spouse, and gave himselfe for it, — that he might present it to himselfe a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish.* And 2. It may be said truly of all the faithfull, even here in this world, that they are *all faire*, immaculate and spotless, though not in themselves, yet as they are justified before God through the imputation of Christs righteousness, cleansed from all their sinnes, both greater and lesser, by his blood, 1 Joh. 1. 7. and made perfect by his beauty put upon them; for this is that the Apostle saith, Col. 2. 10. *Ye are compleat in him; and Chap. 1. 22. Holy and unblameable, and unreproueable in his sight.*

Verf. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon (my Spouse) with me from Lebanon : &c.*] The literal meaning of this place seemes clearely to be this, that the Bridegroom doth here invite his Spouse to goe along with him from Lebanon (where he found her, or where it is supposed she was feeding her flock) to a place farre more fertile and pleasant, namely, *to the mountaine of myrrhe, and the hill of frankincense*, whether he had before said that he would betake himselfe, ver. 6. neither is there indeed any other place mentioned, to which he invites her. And observable withall it is, 1. that he twice together repeates this his invitation, *Come with me from Lebanon, with me from Lebanon*, to set forth how vehemently he desired, that she would harken to him herein. And 2. that he gives her here a Title, which he had never given her before, (though after this he repeates it againe and againe, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. & Chap. 5. 1.) namely, that of his Spouse, *Come with me from Lebanon, my Spouse*, either by this loving compellation the more to allure her to goe along with him; or else to imply, that as his Spouse she was bound to doe what he required of her. And the same he requires, I conceive, of her in the following words, *Look from the top of Aman, from the top of Shenir and Hermon; for these are mentioned either as other places, where she*

she used to be with her flocks, or as places over which she was to passe, that she might goe along with him to the mountaine of myrrhe; and accordingly he meane^s that she should look forth, appeare and shew her selfe, coming along with him from those places; or else, that from these high mountaines he desired she would looke, to view the exceeding delightfullnesse of that place, whether he invited her to goe along with him. And then in the close of the verse that clause is added, *From the Lions dennes, from the mountaines of the Leopards*, to imply the danger of those places, where she was, or over which she was to passe, that she might be the more willing to hasten to the place, whether he now invited her. But now for the understanding of the spirituall sense of these words, we must consider, that for these mountaines; 1. It is agreed by all Writers that Lebanon was a mountaine on the North of the Land of Canaan, see the Note, Josh. 1. 7. and though it was a pleasant and fruitfull place (whence are those expressions, *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars*, Chap. 5. 15. And *the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it*, Isa. 35. 2.) yet in comparison of other places it was looked upon as a wilderness or Forrest, as those words imply, Isa. 29. 17. *Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitfull field, and the fruitfull field shall be esteemed as a Forrest?* and it was a haunt of wild beasts, as appeares by that parable of Jehoash, 2 Kings 14. 9. *The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my sonne to wife. And there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle.* And then 2. for *Shenir and Hermon*, it is generally thought that they were mountaines, or at least two severall tops or parts of a mountaine, without Jordan in that which was the land of the Amorites; see the Note, Deut. 3. 9. All the question is, 3. concerning *Amana*; for some say that this was a mountaine in Cilicia, others that it was in Syria, whence the valley also with the river that ran therein was likewise called by the same name, 2 Kings 5. 12: *Are not Abana, (or Amana, as it is in the margin there) and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better then all the waters of Israel?* And others againe that it was a mountaine bordering at least on the west of the land of Canaan; so that, say they, here is a mountaine mentioned on each quarter of that Country, *Lebanon* on the North, and *Shenir* on the South, *Hermon* on the East, and *Amana* on the West. And accordingly doe Expositors differently understand these passages, as they are the words of Christ to his Church; for 1. Some conceive that hereby is set forth Christs calling of his chosen ones to himselfe, and into the number of his Church and people, implying a promise, that none of them should be lost, but that they should be all gathered in to him in due time. And many particulars concerning this may be implied in the figurative expressions here used; as 1. that they should be gathered not from among the Jewes only, but also from amongst the Gentiles, the most barbarous, savage and brutish people, (which they say is implied by mentioning some mountaines within the confines of Judea, and some without, as likewise by the dennes of Lions and mountaines of the Leopards) yea from all the corners of the world; which they say is hinted by naming the mountaines in every quarter of the Land of Canaan. 2. That the efficacy of their calling should be such that no pleasures here below (signified by the delights of Lebanon) nor no feare of the rage of men, (Lions and Leopards) should keep them from Christ. 3. That

by their coming in to Christ, a way should be opened to them for the knowledge of many mysteries concerning God and the way to life eternall, yea an entrance should be given them into the true land of promise, Gods kingdome of glory; which is signified (say they) by calling the Church from those mountaines, from which men might look, and by which they were to enter into the land of promise. 4. That being called in unto Christ they were to abandon all the brutish corruptions that were in themselves and others, and to forsake the society of wicked men, that they might follow him and walk with him in newnesse and holinesse of life. And 5. that Christ will be sure to deliver those that come to him from all dangers whatsoever. But then againe, 2. Others hold that Christ here calls his Church from their militant condition on earth, where they are usually amongst cruel and bloody persecutors, *Lions and Leopards*, (as David speakes, Psal. 57. 4. *My soule is among Lions*) to follow him into that true *mountaine of myrrhe, and hill of frankincense*, his kingdome of glory: and that to this end, that she might be the more willing to follow him thither, he adviseth her to *look from the top of Amana*, &c. that is, by the eye of faith to behold the place of their rest in heaven, as from those mountaines men might see the pleasantness and beauty of the land of Canaan, and to observe what glory God hath there prepared for his people; which is judged the more probable, because the time of the faithfulls entrance into the heaven, is the time indeed when they are manifestly declared to be the *Spouse* of Christ, by his carrying them home, as his Spouse, to his fathers house.

Vers. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my Spouse;*] Or, *Thou hast taken away mine heart*, as it is in the margin, to wit, with the love thy beauty hath wrought in me, and the delight which thereupon I take in thee; The Bridegroom here renders a reason why he had so earnestly solicited his Spouse in the foregoing verse to goe along with him from Lebanon, &c. namely, because he was so exceedingly transported with love towards her. Never was love like the love of Christ to his Church; He speakes here as a man overcome with love, *Thou hast ravished my heart*, implying, that her beauty had made such a strong impression upon his heart, that he was not himselfe, he had not the command of his own heart, it was so wholly gone out after her; as indeed love of Christ to his Church made him regardlesse of himselfe. As for the title of sister here added, *my Sister, my Spouse*, we must know, that besides that this is an usuall expression of tender love, see Matth. 12. 50. and may be used to signify, that whatsoever was amiable, either in Sister or Spouse was to be found in her, the Church may be truly called Christs *sister*, 1. with respect to Christs Incarnation, by reason whereof they were both descended from the same stock, and partakers of the same flesh and blood, Heb. 2. 14. and she is said to be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, Eph. 5. 30. And 2. with respect to her adoption, whereby she became the daughter of his father, and co-heire with him of his kingdome of glory: and 3. with respect to her regeneration, as being borne of God, and made *partaker of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. all which the Apostle might intend in that, Heb. 2. 11. *For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

Thou hast ravished my heart, &c.] This repetition implyes the vehemency of his affecti-

affection, and how exceedingly he was taken with her; *With one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy neck*; As if he had said, Out of modesty thou seemest afraid to look on me, and thinkest not thy selfe beautifull enough, nor sufficiently adorned for me; but alas a cast of one of thine eyes, (I need not look on both, thy beauty is so great in one) or any one chaine of thy neck, is enough to ravish me. Yet withall in this exprestion, *with one of thine eyes*, there seemes to be an allusion to that custome of womens covering their faces so with a veile (as they doe in Spaine and other Countreyes at this day) that they look out only with one of their eyes, that they may see their way before them; and so only one of their eyes can be seen by others. And by this one eye may be meant faith, without which no man can please God, Heb. 11. 6. Or, sincerity, whereby we singly aime at God and Christ in all that we doe; Or any one holy thought and affection. And so by one chaine of her neck is meant, any one of the graces wherewith Christians are adorned. But see the Note, Chap. 1. 10.

Vers. 10. *How faire is thy love, my Sister, my Spouse!*] That is, How glorious and excellent, how amiable, pleasant and delightfull is thy love to me? to wit, as it was manifested in the fruits thereof, her readinesse to doe his will (according to that, Joh. 15. 14. *Ye are my friends, if you doe whatsoever I command you*) and to suffer for his sake.

How much better is thy love, then wine! and the smell of thine ointments, then all spices!] Which yet are exceeding sweet and costly. The meaning is, that the discovery of the graces of Gods Spirit in her, by the holiness of her conversation in every regard, was exceeding delightfull both to God and men; and that the fame thereof was spread abroad farre and neare; as the Apostle saith of the Romans, *Your faith is spoken of thorowout the world*; see also, 1 Thes. 1. 6, 7, 8.

Vers. 11. *Thy lips, O my Spouse, drop as the honey-comb, &c.*] That is, Thy speech is fluent and exceeding sweet and pleasant, see the Note, Pro. 16. 24. And this may be meant both of those heavenly and sweet Gospel truths, which the Ministers of Christ doe with all readinesse of mind impart unto the people; (being fully stored herewith themselves, as the honey-comb is with honey, they doe with all willingnesse freely impart them unto others; according to that, Matth. 10. 8. *Freely ye have received, freely give*;) as likewise the sweet and gracious speech that doth upon all occasions flow from the mouthes of Gods people in generall, as in their confessions, prayers and praises, their holy conferences, exhortations, consolations, &c. As the words of Christ are most sweet and pleasing to the faithfull, see Psal. 119. 10. & 119. 10. so are the words of the faithfull also to Christ. And the very same thing, I conceive, is intended in the following words, *Honey and milk are under thy tongue*; yet this may farther imply, that their speech is also wholsome and nourishing, such as may minister grace unto the hearers, Eph. 4. 29. being like wholsome food for the nourishing both of Christs little ones, and those also that are of riper yeares, and physical for the curing of the spirituall distempers of mens soules.

And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.] This is said, because Lebanon was full of sweet, odoriferous trees, and all kind of sweet spices grew therein; the very name of it seemes to be taken from *Lebonah*, which in the Hebrew signifieth frankincense; upon which ground also the like exprestion is used concerning

Israel, Hof. 14. 6. *His beauty shall be as the Olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon.* And indeed so huge a quantity of ground, as Lebanon contained, being full of such odoriferous spices, must needs send forth a very strong fragrant smell afarre off. Now by these sweet perfumed garments of the Church, may be meant, 1. the imputed righteousness of Christ, that rich robe, wherewith the Church is clothed, (whence is that expression, Rom. 13. 14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*) and whereby she becomes perfectly beautifull in Gods sight: 2^{ly}, Those spirituall gifts and graces, wherewith the Church is adorned, which must needs savour of the holy Spirit of God, who is the author of them, and which the Apostle exhorts us to put on, as so many glorious ornaments, Col. 3. 12. And 3. the gracious conversation of Gods people, wherewith they adorne the Gospel of Christ. And it may well be that in this expression here used, *the smell of my garments is as the smell of Lebanon*, there may be an allusion to that speech of Jacob to his Sonne, Gen. 27: 27. *See, the smell of my Son is as the smell of a field, which the Lord hath blessed*; for which see the Note; as likewise, Psal. 45. 8.

Verf. 12. *A garden inclosed is my Sister, my Spouse.*] It is not improbable which some say, that the Bridegroom in these words might have respect to the custome of Country damsels adorning themselves with plenty and variety of flowers; and that having spoken in the foregoing verse of the sweet smell of his Spouses garments, he takes occasion from thence to adde this expression, wherein he compares her to a garden. Now for the Church, the Spouse of Christ, she is compared to a garden, to set forth, 1. that she is very beautifull, in regard that she is replenished with many holy men and women, in severall ranks and conditions, of choise and lovely spirits, adorned with variety of the goodly gifts and graces of Gods Spirit, which like so many goodly flowers and plants make them glorious in the eyes both of God and men; as likewise in regard that all things are orderly disposed in the Church, *I am with you in the spirit*, saith the Apostle, Col. 2. 5. *joying and beholding your order*; this being the great beauty of a garden, when beds, and borders, and knots, and walks are all disposed in most exquisite order. 2. That there is much care used and paines taken to preserve her in her purity and beauty, according to what is required to keep a garden neate and handsome; and 3^{ly}, that she is to Christ as his Eden for pleasure and delight, where he loves to walke and enjoy sweet communion with his people, *I will walk among you*, saith the Lord, Lev. 26. 12. & 2 Cor. 6. 16. *I will dwell in them, and walk in them*: whence it is that the Church is called, Isa. 62. 4. *Hephzibah*, that is, *my delight is in her*. And then againe she is compared to a garden enclosed; 1. Because as gardens are lesser parcels of ground, taken out and severed from some larger field, so is the Church, Christs little flock, taken out and separated from the world for Christs peculiar service, Joh. 16. 19. All the world besides is as a vast wilderness, full of uncleane beasts, but the Church is separated from them to be Gods peculiar portion; *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, — and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you*, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. 2^{ly}, Because as gardens are alwayes hemmed in with some fence, that beasts may not break into them, and that passengers that goe by may not goe into them at their pleasure, and so spoile and marre their beauty, so the Church is continually secured from being defaced and de-

filed by the hedge of divine Providence ; yea and by the watchfull care which God works in the faithfull for the securing and preserving of themselves ; see Job 31. 1. Psal. 140. 3. Pro. 4. 23. & 13. 3. And 3. Because this doth notably set forth the Churches spirituall chastity, in that she is wholly for him alone, to love, worship, and serve him, and him only ; she doth not give her heart to the world, or to any base and filthy lust, as if she were a common, into which all beasts might freely come and take their pleasure ; but she reserves her selfe purely for Christ ; according to that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ* ; see the Note also, Num. 24. 6.

A spring shut up, a fountaine sealed.] As before the Church was compared to a garden enclosed, so here, 1. to a spring, or a fountaine, to wit, either with respect to the word, the doctrine of salvation, those waters of the Sanctuary, wherewith the Church is plentifully watered ; whence is that of the Prophet, Isa. 35. 6. *In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streames in the desert* ; and that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollo watered* : or else with respect to the spirit of grace, which is in her as a fountaine of living waters, as it is called, Joh. 4. 10. & Joh. 7. 38, 39. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, &c.* those waters, wherewith our spirituall thirst is quenched, Isa. 44. 3. our spirituall filth is washed away, Ezek. 36. 25. and we become fruitfull in good workes, as trees planted by the waters ; see the Note, Psal. 1. 3. And upon this account it was that the Prophet long since used the same expressions in a manner concerning the Church, that are here used, Isa. 58. 11. *Thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters faile not.* So that we must still remember that the Church is not said to be a spring or fountaine, as if these waters of life did spring originally from her, (for this is the peculiar privilege of Christ) but only to signifie, that thorough Christs presence in her, she is so abundantly replenished with these waters of life, as if she were all over a spring or fountaine of waters, and that it is from her, that these waters must flow forth unto others ; see also the Note, Psal. 87. 7. And 2. to a spring shut up, a fountaine sealed, as in allusion to the care that was taken in former times in those hot Countries to keep their choicest springs and fountains covered and shut up, (as we reade of a Well, where the inhabitants used to water their sheep, Gen. 29. 3. that was covered with a great stone) that hereby they might keep them cleane and pure, that no unclean thing might be cast into them to defile them, and that beasts might not goe into them and mud them with their feet, or any other way pollute them ; yea and perhaps that the waters therein might be preserved for the owners, and not drawn out and wasted by others ; whence haply is that expression that Solomon useth, Pro. 5. 15, 17. *Drink waters out of thine own cistern — Let them be only thine owne, and not strangers with thee.* And hereby is signified, either, 1. that these heavenly treasures of Gods word and sanctifying Spirit doe peculiarly belong to the Church, and that no other plants or gardens are watered with these waters ; yea that none doe partake of the word in it's lively efficacy, but only those that are Gods chosen ones, the true and living members of the Church ; these waters are sealed up for them, and hidden from others ; Isa. 8. 16. *Binde up the testimony, seal the law among my disci-*
ples ;

ples; and if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 3. see also Isa. 29. 11. Or 2^{ly}, that God by his Providence will both preserve his Church from being defiled with the abominable pollutions of the world, and likewise the Scripture, and the doctrine of the Church from being corrupted and mudded by the feet of ungodly men. Or, that the Church shall by the Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption, Eph. 4. 30. be kept as a chaste and pure virgin unto Christ, so that none shall have her heart and love, but Christ only.

Verf. 13. *Thy plants are an Orchard of Pomegranates, &c.*] By the Churches plants here are meant the severall members of the Church, that thorough the grace of God doe spring and grow up in her: see the Notes, Psal. 1. 3. & 92. 13. And they are said to be an orchard of Pomegranates, that is, like to an orchard (or paradise) of Pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, that is, yielding those and divers other severall sorts of choice dainty fruits, such as those that are afterwards in this and the following verse, particularly mentioned, some of them trees, some lesser shrubs, and some hearbs, as camphire, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cynamom, myrrhe and aloes, &c. hereby signifying, both that the Church should be fully fraught with holy men and women, of severall ranks and conditions, as an orchard with trees, and other plants, and likewise that thorough the manifold graces of Gods Spirit, they should be as beautifull, and send forth as fragrant a savour, and yield as sweet and pleasant, as wholesome and medicinall fruit in their lives and conversations, as such trees and hearbs did, for camphire, spikenard, and myrrhe, see the Notes, Chap. 1. 12, 13, 14. and for aloes, see the Note, Num. 24. 6.

Verf. 15. *A fountaine of gardens, &c.*] Very many of our best Expositors doe take these to be the words of the Church, acknowledging Christ to be the only true fountaine of saving knowledge and grace, and that if she were a fountaine, (as Christ had called her, ver. 12.) it was only because she conveyed those waters of life to others, which were derived to her from him, who was the spring from whence all her beauty and glory proceeded; and accordingly they render the words thus; *O thou fountaine of gardens, &c.* But it is better, I conceive, rendered by our Translators, as a continuation of Christs speech to his Church, wherein he farther enlargeth that glorious title he had before given her, ver. 12. that she was a spring shut up, a fountaine sealed, tearming her, 1. *A fountaine of gardens*, to shew that she was not so shut up and sealed, but that she did with those spirituall waters, wherewith she was abundantly replenished, water all her gardens, that is, the severall Congregations of the Church, and the severall members thereof. 2. *A well of living waters*, that is, of springing, running water; for that the Scripture calls, *living water*, as is evident, Gen. 26. 19. where that which is translated, *a well of springing water*, is in the Original, *a well of living water*; and so also doe the heathen Poets, as we see in that, *Donec me flumine vivo, Abluero*. And hereby is signified, the purity, sweetness and perpetuity of the Churches doctrine and graces; and some adde too, that by tearming her a well, the profundity of Gospel-mysteries is also implied. And 3. *Streames from Lebanon*, that is, streames watering all the Israel of God, as pure, cleare, wholesome and sweet; as those that came running down from Lebanon; (as it is said that Jordan and divers other brookes and rivers did) and so watered the whole land of Canaan; And indeed

if these waters had any tast of the sweetnesse of Lebanon (as it is said that the waters that runne from those places, where cloves and cinamom grow, have some kind of tast of the cloves and cinamom) they were the fitter to represent the sweet doctrine and graces of the Church, and that too with their first issuing from Christ, as those did from Lebanon.

Verf. 16. *Awake, O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, &c.*] See the Notes above, ver. 12, 13. Because of those words, *blow upon my garden*, very many Learned Expositors take these to be the words of Christ, commanding the breathings of his Spirit upon his garden, the Church. But seeing in the last clause of this verse, it is unquestionable that the Church speaks, *Let my beloved come into his garden, &c.* neither is there indeed any impropriety of speech in it, that the Church speaking of her self, should use these tearms, *my garden*, (for by reason of the union that is betwixt Christ and his Spouse, what belongs to one, must needs belong also to the other) I see not why this first branch of the verse, may not also be taken as the words of the Spouse, *Awake, O Northwind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden*; that is, oh that all possible occasions might be given to make known to my beloved what ever might allure and draw his affections to me. And understanding it spiritually of the Church, it is as if she had said, Since my Lord is pleased to tearm me a garden, oh that he would by his holy Spirit breath upon me with quickning efficacy; that the spices thereof may flow out, that is, that the gifts and graces he hath conferred upon me, may be stirred up and quickned, that they may spring and grow up, and bring forth fruit abundantly, and that the sweet savour thereof may be spread abroad to the delight of my Lord and others. The working of Gods Spirit upon the hearts of men, is often compared in the Scripture to the blowing of the wind; see Ezek. 37. 9. & Joh. 3. 8. and thence it was that Act. 2. 2. the Spirit descended upon the Apostles in the sound of a sudden and a rushing wind; and that 1. Because it blows freely, when, and where, and how it pleaseth, even as the wind doth, which no creature can raise or restrain. *The wind bloweth where it listeth* (saith our Saviour, Joh. 3. 8.) *so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* 2. Because, as the wind, it works quickningly; vitally, refreshingly, opening the heart, awakening the affections, chearing the soul, and making Gods people fruitfull in good works. 3. Because as the wind blows many times with mighty force, so that nothing almost can stand before it, so doth the Spirit work with unresistable power upon the hearts and consciences of men. 4. Because it is, as the wind, of a cooling nature, allaying the heat and extremity of all our temptations and afflictions: and 5. Because it is of a purging nature, purging away the corruptions of mens hearts, as the wind doth the air of noysom vapours. Now in desiring the holy Inspirations of Gods Spirit, the Church calls both upon the Northwind to *awake*, that is, to rise, and the Southwind to come and blow upon her garden. 1. Because, as both the Northern and Southern winds are usefull for gardens, the one to purge and cool the air in extreimity of heat, and by dispelling the clouds to bring fair weather, and the other to warm and water the earth with sweet and refreshing showers; so the Spirit doth by contrary operations, further the work of grace in the souls of his people; sometimes refreshing the scorched soul with a sweet breath of comfort, and sometimes enflaming it with heat

and fervency of zeal : sometimes it rouseth men by sharp and piercing terrors of wrath, death and judgements, and softneth hearts hardened in sin, and sometimes it cheareth them again with promises and comforts : and 2. Because she desired that by the manifold operations of Gods Spirit, the sweet savour of her graces and good works might be spread abroad every way, so that Christ might in every regard take delight in her, even as the blowing of the wind from several quarters, doth carry the sent of the spices in a garden to all that come neare it on every side.

Let my beloved come into his garden, &c.] That is, Let him manifest his favourable presence in me more and more, and still and still take delight in me ; As if she had said, My beloved did ere-while invite me into his garden, his *mountaine of myrrhe*, &c. (see the Notes above, ver. 6. & 8.) but rather let him come and dwell in me, for even here he hath a garden too : *and eate his pleasant fruits* ; that is, let him accept of, and delight in, let him be honoured and glorified by the graces and good works which by his Spirit he hath wrought in me ; for she calleth her selfe *his garden*, and all her graces and holy conversation *his pleasant fruits*, because he it is that plants the Church, and makes her fruitfull ; see Isa. 5. 7. & 26. 12. & Joh. 15. 4, 5. and because the faithfull consecrate themselves, and all that they are and can doe, wholly to Christ, even to him alone.

CHAP. V.

Verf. 1. *I Am come into my garden, my Sister, my Spouse, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 4. 10. This may be taken as Christs assent, or his making knowne that he had assented, to his Churches request, expressed in the close of the foregoing Chapter, *Let my beloved come into his garden* ; concerning which see the Note there. It is as if he had said, Though thou questionest my favourable presence, yet I am, and have been long since, in thee and with thee : But yet there is another Exposition given by some very good Expositors, which seemes to me very probable, which is that Christ doth here give a reason why he could not come to her, as she desired, namely, because he was ascended into his garden in heaven, which was his chiefe garden and paradise of pleasure, and wherein he was to abide till their marriage-day was come ; so covertly againe pressing her, (as he had before, Chap. 4. 6.) that she should rather prepare to come to him into his garden there.

I have gathered my myrrhe with my spice, I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk.] As if he had said, I have not only gathered the sweet fruits of thy garden, *My myrrhe*, &c. (for which see the Note, Chap. 1. 13.) but I have also eaten of the feast thou hadst there provided for me ; and observable it is, how (Pastorall-like) the dainties here mentioned are such, as Country damosels are wont to provide for their lovers, honey-combes, and wine, and milk. And what is meant by Christs feeding on these dainties, and why he calls them his honey-comb and honey, &c. we see in the Note upon the last clause of the foregoing Chapter ; *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eate his pleasant fruits* : The graces and services of the faithfull are to Christ as sweet as honey, and wine, and milk. But then againe (according to what is said in the foregoing Note) some understand this with re-
ference

ference to his garden or Paradise in heaven; *I have gathered my myrrhe with my spice, I have eaten my honey with my honey-comb*, &c. that is, pure honey, even fresh in the honey-comb; meaning thereby, that he was delighting himselfe in the praises and services of his holy Angels and glorified Saints, and in those transcendent joyes and pleasures which there they injoyed together; (and indeed the joyes of heaven are often in the Scripture compared to a feast, both to set forth the abundance of delight that shall be there, and because hereby it is that the soules of the faithfull live unto all eternity) And so this may be added still to presse the Spouse to come thither to him, that she might tast of his dainties there; to which end he so often repeates this word (*my*,) *I have gathered my myrrhe with my spice, I have eaten my honey with my honey-comb*.

Eate, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.] By these friends of the Bridegroom may be meant his Companions, or his Bridemen; And in reference to Christ, these may be his holy Angels, or his faithfull ones, especially his Ministers; for so Abraham is called *the friend of God*, Jam. 2. 23. & Isa. 41. 8. & Job. 15. 14. *Ye are my friends*, saith our Saviour to his Disciples, *if you doe what ever I command you*. And accordingly, either the Angels, and the Saints and faithfull servants of God are invited here to rejoyce with Christ for the holy fruits which his Church militant did bring forth to him; (as indeed it is said, Luk. 15. 7. that *there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth*; and the faithfull doe alwayes exceedingly rejoyce in seeing their brethren walk holily and righteously before God; see Joh. 3. 29. & 1 Joh. 4. & 2 Joh. 3. 4.) Or else his glorified Saints are invited to take their share with him, in the blisse and delight of his heavenly kingdome; according to that, Luk. 22. 29, 30. *I appoint unto you a kingdome, as my father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eate and drink at my table in my kingdome*. The last clause, *Yea drink abundantly, O beloved*, may be read, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and be drunken with loves*. But even so the meaning is the same, to wit, that he exhorts them to be ravished with the mutual love, which Christ and his Church did manifest to each other, or with considering the glory, which Christ in his kingdome had provided for his people.

Verf. 2. *I sleep*, &c.] Here begins the Relation of a new passage betwixt the Spouse and her Beloved (which therefore cannot with any probability be made to depend upon that which went before; see the Note, Chap. 3. 1.) where the Spouse sheweth how unkindly and unworthily she had used him, and what thereupon befell her: And some would have these first words, *I sleep, but my heart waketh*, to be understood dis-junctively of the Spouse and her Beloved, as if she had said, *I sleep, but my heart*, that is, my Beloved (so lovers are wont to call one another) waketh; and accordingly whilst I was sleeping, he came to visit me. But rather in both clauses the Spouse speaketh of her selfe; and sheweth in what a condition she was, when her beloved came to visit her, namely, that she was asleep in her bed, but yet not so fast asleep, but that her heart was awake, in that her mind was buisied with thinking of her beloved, according to that of the Poet, *Herent infixi in pectore vultus, Verbaq; nec placidam membris dat cura quietem*; whence it was that as soone as he knocked and called at her dore, she presently heard him. Now hereby the Spirit of God sets forth the spirituall sluggish and slumbering condition, halfe asleep and halfe awake,

wherein Christ often finds his Church and faithfull servants. Sleep, is usually caused,
 1. from fulnesse of feeding; when the belly is full, the bones would be at rest; and
 2^d, from wearinesse, Isa. 5. 27. *None shall be weary — none shall slumber nor sleep.*
 3. from sorrow, as we see in the Disciples sleeping, Luk. 22. 45. And 4. from sloath
 and want of exercise, Pro. 19. 15. *Slothfulnesse casteth into a deep sleep:* and many
 other things there are that help it forward. And when men are asleep, the instru-
 ments of sense and motion are bound up, and men are troubled with many dreaming
 fancies, Isa. 29. 8. Now because the state of the Church, and the faithfull, when the
 flesh prevailes against the Spirit, is much like that of men asleep, they become negli-
 gent, dull, and littleesse in doing their duty, not minding the power and purity of Re-
 ligion, are over-borne with sensuall and sinfull security, and doe usually deceive them-
 selves with vaine hopes and groundlesse fancies, which are no better then dreames;
 and because this proceeds much from the same causes, as from mens glutting them-
 selves with worldly delights, and over-toying themselves about earthly things,
 from sloath and ease, &c. therefore the Scripture doth usually speake of men in such
 an estate, as of men asleep, as Rom. 13. 11. *Now it is high time to awake out of sleep;*
 & 1 Thes. 5. 6. *Let us not sleep, as doe others, but let us watch and be sober.* And so
 doth the Church here speake of her selfe: but withall she addeth, *but my heart wak-
 eth,* to wit, because, say some, the Church never falls into such a sleep, but that she
 discernes and holds fast the vitals of Religion, both for doctrine and practice; or ra-
 ther, because her faith and grace is not extinct, though it be oppressed; in the faith-
 full there is alwayes a regenerate part, that doth sincerely mind and love Christ, and
 the way of Christianity; in their greatest neglect and security, their conscience doth
 check them for sleeping, they have a sincere desire to withstand it what they can,
 and according to that, Gal. 5. 17. of the Spirits lusting against the flesh, and their
 eares are still open to discern and harken to the voice of Christ; as is expressed in
 the next words.

It is the voice of my beloved, that knocketh, &c.] See the Note, Chap. 2. 8. When
 the faithfull are overcome with sleep, Christ is wont to come to waken them, and to
 call and knock at the dore of their hearts; according to that, Revel. 3. 20. *Behold, I
 stand at the door and knock:* whereby is meant, 1. the pressing importunities of his
 Word and Ministers: 2. the motions and importunities of his Spirit: 3. the terrors
 wherewith he troubleth their consciences: 4. the speciall mercies which he affords
 them: and 5. the afflictions wherewith he correcteth them, which tend indeed to wa-
 ken secure sinners; Mic. 6. 9. *Hear the rod, and who hath appointed it;* and may be
 the rather here intended, because they are mentioned together with Christs knock-
 ing, Rev. 3. 19, 20. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. — Behold, I stand at the
 doore and knocke.* And observable it is, that the Church, notwithstanding the slumber
 of security wherein she lay, yet heard the voice and knock of Christ, and did even
 then own him to be her only beloved, and by relating this doth aggravate her folly
 in neglecting him, as she did, *It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open
 to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled;* that is, Receive me into thy heart by
 a renewed act of faith, and give admittance to my graces and vertues; for the loving
 Titles which Christ here gives to his Church, which is the maine rhetorick of his love,
 see

see the Notes, chap. 2. 2. & 14. & 4. 7. 10. That which is most observable is, that Christ manifests such fervent affections to his Church, notwithstanding her deadnesse and faylings, and was as earnest for admision as if it had been for his own good, whereas it was meerely for hers; and that all this the Church alledgeth by way of condemning her selfe.

For my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.] To wit, whilst in the night season I have stood long waiting without doores, in expectation of being let in by thee. Some conceive that Christ doth here plead for admision by mentioning the spirituall gifts and graces, that he brought along with him for his love, to wit, the refreshing showers of his Word, and the comforting and cooling dew of his Spirit; according to that of the Prophet, Hos. 14. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel.* But questionlesse, as in allusion to the inconveniences that lovers undergoe whilst in cold and frosty nights they waite at the doores of their lovers, in hope at last to be let in by them, Christ speaks here either of the contempt and hard usage that he met with out of the Church, all the world over, that he was there locked out of doores and despised, and that as a motive to perswade the Church to let him in: or else rather of the great affronts and hard usage he underwent, to wit, in his servants the Ministers, whilst he waited so long to bring his chosen ones unto repentance. And in relating this the Spouse still seekes to aggravate her base usage of her beloved, that was willing to endure so much for her sake.

Vers. 3. *I have put off my coate, &c.*] This may be understood, either as spoken softly to her selfe, by way of arguing with her selfe why she was loth to doe what her beloved desired, or else as the answer which she returned aloud to his request; and that either to intimate her discontent against him for coming so unseasonably, or meerely by these frivolous pretences to excuse her not coming to open the dore to him; *I have put off my coate, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* These last words are grounded upon the custome of those hot Easterne Countries, where they used to goe bare legged, and in a great measure bare footed, and so were constantly wont to wash their feet when they went to bed, both to wash off the dust and sweat, and likewise to coole their feet, that they might the better compose themselves to a quiet and settled rest. And both clauses imply, that being laid in her bed, it would be too much trouble to dresse her selfe againe, that she might goe to open the dore and let him in; all which she still relates by way of judging her selfe for this her folly and unkindnesse. Now that which is spiritually signified hereby is, that when Christ calls the best to repentance, to a couragious profession of the truth, and to a holy Gospel-like conversation, they are hardly perswaded hereto, and are wont to make many vaine delayes, and to pretend many foolish excuses; *I have put off my coate, &c.* As if the Church had said, I have put off and given over that strict and forward profession I formerly made of Religion, and have laid my selfe down in the soft and warme bed of sensuall ease and security, I have freed my selfe from all those griefes, and feares, and troubles, wherewith I formerly perplexed my selfe, and am quite rid of those persecutions and afflictions I formerly underwent, and lie snugging covered over head and eares with worldly delights and contentments; and must I againe betake my selfe to these hard duties of Christianity, re-
tance.

tance and mortification, and such like? and must I againe expose my selfe to the sufferings I am now freed from to follow thee? This is hard to flesh and blood. Corrupt courtes never want fleshly shifts and excuses; see Luk. 11. 7.

Verf. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the dore.*] That is, Because I opened not the dore to let him in, my beloved assayed to open the dore himselfe, namely, by putting in his hand, that is, the finger of his hand at the key-hole, or some chink or cranny thereabouts, or by putting in his hand, at some little window or hole, that was in or neare the dore, that so he might lift up the latch, or thrust back the lock or the bolt, whereby the dore was barred against him. And the spirituall meaning of this is, that Christ by the effectuall motions of his Spirit, conveyed secretly into the heart of his Spouse, did seek to open her heart, even by removing that selfe-love, or that love of worldly things, or any other lusts and corruptions, that had been the bolt whereby her heart had been locked against him. And indeed the Spirit is called in Scripture the finger of God; that which in Matth. 12. 28. is expressed thus, *If I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God*, in Luk. 11. 20. is expressed thus, *If I with the finger of God cast out Devils*: And so likewise the hand of God, as in Act. 11. 21. where it is said of the Disciples that preached the Gospel, that *the hand*, that is, the Spirit of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed.

And my bowels were mooved for him.] That is, When I saw how earnestly desirous he was to get in, and how to that end he stood striving in the cold night to open the dore, I was inwardly much mooved, to wit, with pittie and strong affection towards him, and with shame and sorrow for my keeping him out so long. And that which is hereby intended is, that by the strong and effectuall workings of Christs Spirit in the hearts of the faithfull, they are usually brought to repent of their former neglect of him, and to be carried out with strong affection toward him.

Verf. 5. *I rose up to open to my beloved, &c.*] To wit, as her Beloved had desired her to doe; see the Notes above, ver. 2. & Chap. 3. 1. *And my hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrhe, upon the handles of the lock.* The word in the Original which we translate *sweet-smelling myrrhe*, doth properly signifie *myrrhe passing or running about*, so called, either, 1. Because the best and purest myrrhe is such as flowes freely of its own accord; or 2^{ly}, Because it is such as will passe readily in way of traffique, as we call that money, which is no way like to be questioned, *currant money*, Gen. 23. 16. Or 3. Because it was myrrhe, the smell whereof would passe out and spread abroad every way. Now Expositors goe two severall wayes in expounding this, which the Spouse here saith concerning the dropping of her hands and fingers with myrrhe; for 1. Some conceive that she would hereby set forth, that to render her selfe the more welcome to her beloved, who might be offended with her delaying to let him in, she did sodainly anoint her hands with ointment of myrrh, or that she snatched up a box of this ointment, intending (according to the custome of those times) to powre it upon her beloveds head, that was now wet with the cold dew of the night, which being casuall broken, or the myrrhe swelling as she went along, it ran downe upon her fingers as she was opening the lock. And if we thus conceive of it the mystical sense must needs be, that when the faithfull are once awakened out of their fits of spirituall slumber and disregard of Christ, they are wont to shew

shew the more affection to him afterwards, yea and to manifest it in their works, (which may be the myrrhe upon the hands and fingers) and withall to repent and mourne much for their former drowfinesse and neglect of him, (the bitter myrrhe, say some, that is here intended, which to our Lord Christ is most sweet and acceptable) yea and to mourne over those corruptions, and those things especially, which have been as the locks and bolts, whereby they have formerly shut out Christ: But then 2^{ly}, againe, Others think, that her drift in these words is to set forth the exceeding sweetnesse of her beloved, and of his love to her, in that when she came to the dore, her beloved, (whom she had before tearmed *a bundle of myrrhe*, Chap. 1. 13.) had left such a plentiful pleasant smell behind him, that the savour thereof fell upon her in such abundance, as if her hands and fingers had dropped with pure myrrhe; or that his endeavouring to open the lock, had left such pure myrrhe there behind him, that when she came to touch the handles of the lock, pure myrrhe did distill, as it were, from his hands and fingers. And if we thus take it (which I conceive the most probable) then the spirituall meaning is, that when the faithfull doe, after some neglect of Christ, begin to open their hearts to him, with much penitent sorrow for their former misdemeanors, it is the sweet love of Christ, shed abroad in their hearts, that is the cause of it; or that it is the grace of Christ accompanying these their first motions and endeavours, that makes them the more active in all the works of repentance and obedience, even as a lock that being anointed with oyle doth moove the more glibly: and that even when Christ doth seeme to forsake his faithfull servants, he alwayes leaves such impressions of his grace upon their spirits, that thereby their affections are quickned towards him; And this still tends to aggravate her unkindnesse in refusing to give admittance to the former tenders of love that he had made to her.

Verf. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawne himselfe and was gone.*] The Spouses using these two expressions, *my beloved had withdrawne himselfe and was gone*, may be all one in effect, as if she had said with a great deale of passion, He was gone, he was gone; her grieve being the greater, because this had befallen her through her own folly. Or, the drift of this expression may be rather to imply, that he had not only withdrawn himselfe a little way, secretly and silently, putting up the injury quietly that had been offered to him, and only to try her what she would doe, but that he was quite gone away from her. And indeed Christ doth many times thus withdraw his presence of grace from his Church and people; see the Notes, Chap. 2. 8. & 3. 1. To punish their drowfinesse and lukewarmnesse, and their neglecting those tenders of grace, that have been made to them, he doth afterwards many times withhold those communications of his grace and Spirit, that he had formerly offered them, so that for the time they are ready to conclude that he hath quite forsaken them.

My soule failed when he spake.] Some conceive that the Spouse doth in these words condemne her selfe for her stupidity in disregarding her beloved when he so lovingly called to her, ver. 2. *My soule*, saith she, *failed when he spake*, as if she had said, I was stupified, and as one voyd of all reason and understanding, in that I layd not to heart those sweet expressions of his love when he spake to me, *Open to me my sister,*

sister, my love, &c. It is much the same with that the Psalmist saith, Psal. 73. 22. *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.* And indeed this expression of the soules fayling is used much to this purpose, Isa. 19. 3. *The spirit of Egypt shall faile in the midst thereof, and I will destroy the counsell thereof.* But doubtlesse the words may be understood of the fayling of her soule at present, when she saw her beloved had withdrawn himselfe, *My soule failed when he spake*; that is, My soule melted, and dyed away within me, I was as one in a swoone, half-dead through griefe and feare, when I saw he was gone, and that especially for the words he had formerly spoken to me, (and therefore we see that afterwards she speakes, ver. 8. of her being *sick of love*) Or else thus, *My soule failed*, my heart was even ready to dye within me, as melting through love, when he so earnestly begged that I would open to him, and much more must it needs be so with me then, when I saw he was gone.

I sought him, but I could not find him, I called him, but he gave me no answer.] And thus Christ deales even with his faithfull servants in their own kind; when he sought them, and called upon them, they would not mind him, and therefore afterwards when they seek him, and call upon him, he will not heare them; as we find it expessed, Mic. 3. 4. *Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not heare them; he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.* But see the Notes, Chap. 3. 1, 2.

Verf. 7. *The watchmen that went about the City found me, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 3. 3. *They smote me, they wounded me*, to wit, because by her wandring about in the night they took her for a harlot, and because she made a disturbance in the City by calling and crying out in the night time for her beloved, or haply because when they layd hands on her, not minding them, she strove to get away, that she might goe on in the pursuit of her beloved. Now (according to that which is noted before, Chap. 3. 3.) if by these watch-men be meant the faithfull Pastors, and Teachers, and Governours of the Church, whose office indeed it is to look to the keeping of good order and peace in the Church, then by their smiting and wounding her, must needs be meant their smiting and wounding her heart with that sword of the Spirit, the word of God, to wit, by just and sharp reproofes for her evill carriage of her selfe towards Christ; according to that of the Prophet, Hos. 6. 5. But if by these watch-men be meant false Teachers, wicked men that are in the place of Pastors and Governours of the Church, but are indeed of an Antichristian spirit, then by their smiting and wounding the Spouse is meant, either their wounding the faithfull with their scandalous and wicked lives, or else rather the bitter reproaches and cruell persecutions wherewith they wound the faithfull, and that for no other reason, but because they seek after Christ; (for indeed reproaching is tearmed smiting in the Scripture, Jer. 18. 18. and so are all other wayes of persecuting and afflicting the children of God, see Isa. 53. 4.) And that this is here meant, is methinks evident, because the Church seemes to bewaile her sufferings herein, which she would not have done, if the wounds she speakes of had been only the reproofes of her faithfull Pastors; and because these calamities seeme to be mentioned as brought upon the Church by way of punishing her for her former neglect of Christ, and as a meanes to quicken her in the way of repentance.

The keepers of the wals took away my vail from me.] Either the same persons, that were before called *the watch-men that went about the City*, are here called *the keepers of the wall*; or if we understand it of others, that had more peculiarly the charge of looking to the walls, it must be supposed, either that upon the outcry made these came in to the ayde of the other, or else that the Spouse, having gotten from the watch-men, fell afterwards into the hands of the keepers of the wall, and that striving with them, she was forced to leave her vaile behind her: Now by these *keepers of the walls*, may be meant againe, as before, the faithfull Pastors of the Church, who are said to take away the Spouses vaile; either because when they reprove the faithfull, they are wont also to take from them all the excuses and pretences, wherewith they are wont to palliate their offences; or because they may by over-harsh censures condemne the faithfull as false-hearted hypocrites, and so strip off their vaile, the good esteeme they formerly enjoyed. But rather by these keepers of the walls, may be meant civil Magistrates, that are by their place to defend the Church against outward enemies; or, as before is said of *the watch-men*, wicked Pastors and Governours in the Church. And because vailes were worne by women as an ornament, Isa. 3. 23. as a token of the modesty of virgins, and therefore an honour to them, Gen. 24. 65. and the signe of wives subjection to their husbands, see Gen. 20. 16. & 1 Cor. 11. 5. &c. therefore these persecuting tyrants, because they stripped the Church of her outward estate, and by the foule reproaches they cast upon her, charging her with heresie and schisme, and all manner of evill, they did what in them lay to bereave her of her good name and repute, yea of her innocency, which was her honour; and by pressing upon her false doctrines and humane inventions, did seek to strip her of the purity and integrity of her doctrine and discipline, wherein consisted her subjection to Christ, they are said to have taken away her vaile from her.

Verf. 8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, &c.*] See the Notes, Chap. 1. 5. & 2. 7. It seemes that these *daughters of Jerusalem*, hearing the noise that was made by the Spouses calling for her beloved, or upon the tumult that was made by the watch-mens apprehending of her, came forth to see what the matter was, and thereupon she spake thus to them. Or else it must be supposed, that having with much adoe gotten away from the keepers of the walls, not discouraged with the hard usage she had met with, she went on in her search and enquiry after her beloved (as indeed the faithfull are never more zealous for Christ, then in times of persecution, and in an houre of desertion, occasioned by their former neglect of Christ) and so meeting with these daughters of Jerusalem, pressed them to help her in finding out her beloved, *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.* It is in the Original expressed very emphatically, with an earnest and passionate kind of speech, *If you find my beloved, what will ye tell him? why truly, not what injuries have been offered me (that I mind not so much) but that which you may easily discern in me, to wit, that I am sick of love, that is, for want of him; for which see the Note, Chap. 2. 5. It is an expression much like that, Hos. 9. 14. Give them, O Lord; what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts:* and that the drift of it is all one, as if she had said, I doe not desire to conceale from you the cause of my troubled soule, nor doe I desire that you should conceale

ceale it, but rather that you should freely impart it to him, namely, *that I am sick of love*. And so the meaning is, that the Church desires her particular members and friends, or that the faithfull desire of all the Saints and servants of God, that if they enjoyed the light of Christs countenance, or that when they found his presence with them in their private prayers, or private resortings, that they would then spread her, or their cause before him, and plead with him on their behalfe.

Verf. 9. *What is thy beloved more then another beloved, O thou fairest among women?* &c.] See the Note, Chap. 1. 8. The daughters of Jerusalem, mentioned in the foregoing verse, doe make this enquiry of the Spouse concerning her beloved, that they might hereby minister an occasion to her to set forth his praise, and that either thereby to give a vent to her affection, which might be some ease to her heart, that seemed to be almost overwhelmed with trouble for him; or rather, that they might receive full satisfaction from her concerning him; as wondering at her love, and being fully perswaded, that there was something considerable in it, that she, *the fairest among women*, should be so vehemently carried out in her affection to him, and should lay such a solemne charge and adjuration upon them concerning him; which is expressed in the following words, wherein to shew how earnestly they desired to be informed herein, their inquiry of him is againe repeated, *What is thy beloved more then another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?* That is, What excellencies are there in him more then there are in others, that are by their friends esteemed also worthy to be beloved? And severall things are here observable, as this relates to Christ and his Spouse, the Church; as namely, 1. That the beauty of his Spouse is no whit impaired, when she is beaten, wounded and unveiled, because the graces of Christians doe shine forth with greatest brightnesse in times of persecution and affliction. 2. That the faithfulls earnest seeking after Christ is a singular meanes to put others upon enquiring after him: and 3. That Christians will be earnest to have the excellencies of Christ set forth to them; 1. That they may thereby better their knowledge of him, whom indeed we can never know enough, Eph. 3. 19. and may be delighted to heare his praises (as indeed men love to heare others talke of those they greatly affect) and be stirred up the more to love him, and the more industriously to seek after him. 2. That those that doe set forth his excellencies to them, may thereby find their own affection the more inflamed towards him: and 3. That others also hearing his praises might be wonne to love him, and to seek by faith to be united to him. And besides this makes way to raise up our attentions, the more heedfully to observe that glorious description that is immediately given us of Christ.

Verf. 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, &c.*] Thus the Spouse sets forth the beauty of her beloved, as one of a sanguine complexion, covertly thereby to condemn her former folly in disregarding such a one as he was, and withall to quicken her own affection towards him, and to represent him as one that deserved to be beloved of all. And indeed it is the office of the Church thus evidently to set forth Jesus Christ crucified before the eyes of men by the preaching of the Gospel, Gal. 3. 1. Expositors doe severall wayes apply this, as, 1. that Christ was *white* in regard of his Godhead, as being the brightnesse of his fathers glory, Heb. 1. 3. and therefore when at his transfiguration the glory of his deity did shine forth thorough the veile of his body,

body, it is said, Matth. 17. 2. that *his raiment was white as the light*; and *ruddy* in regard of his humanity, being made of the same substance with Adam, who had his name from the red earth from whence he was taken, Gen. 2. 7. and therefore is called the *second Adam*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. 2^{ly}, that *white* might denote his innocency, holiness and spotlesse purity; and *red* the imputation of the bloody scarlet sinnes of men unto him, 2 Cor. 5. 21. or the merit of his death and bloody passion, whence he is described, Revel. 19. 13. as *cloathed with a vesture dipped in blood*. And indeed the mixture of this *white and red* was admirable in that great mystery of his passion, when he that had not the least staine of sin in him, had sin notwithstanding in a way of justice charged upon him, and was *numbred with the transgressors*, Isa. 53. 12. And 3. that *white* might betoken his mercy and grace to penitent sinners, as likewise his victory, triumph and joy, Revel. 19. 8, 14. and *red* his justice in executing vengeance upon his enemies. Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3. But I think that the drift of the words is only in generall to shew, that the excellencies that are in Christ and the great things that he hath done and suffered for his Church, doe make him most beautifull and lovely in the eyes of his people: And to the same purpose is the following clause, where it is said, that he is *the chiefeft* (or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *A Standard-bearer, among ten thousands*: (because usually the tallest, stoutest and goodliest men are chosen to be Standard-bearers) for hereby is signified that Christ doth transcendently excell in the loveliness of his glorious excellencies all the children of men, see the Notes, Chap. 3. 2. & Psal. 45. 2. Yet some adde also that he is called a *Standard-bearer*, with respect to his leading his people in their way, and Christians marching and fighting under his Colours; for which he is also called the *Ensigne* of his Church, Isa. 11. 10.

Verf. 11. *His head is as the most fine gold.*] Some conceive that this is spoken with reference to the golden Crowne, which Solomon wore on his head, of which mention was made before, Chap. 3. 11. But because of these words, *as the most fine gold*, I rather think the Spouse intends hereby to signifie, that his head was exceeding goodly to behold, or that there was a kind of splendor of beauty and majesty in it; or it may be, that his intellectuals were exceeding precious and excellent. And so mystically this may signifie; 1. The transcendent excellency of his Godhead; according to that, 1 Cor. 11. 3. *The head of Christ is God*: Or rather, 2. The surpassing excellency and glory of his government and kingdome above all other kingdomes whatsoever; because spiritual, heavenly and eternall; see Joh. 18. 36. & Dan. 7. 14. as likewise the al-sufficiency that was in him for the exercise of this his Regal power, as that in him were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and that he was still ready to powre forth the riches of his goodnesse and mercy for the enriching and adorning of his people.

His locks are bushy (or, curled) and black as a Raven.] To wit, as the feathers of a Raven, which are also smooth and shining, and therefore the more beautifull. And this is added because black haire hath been ever esteemed most beautifull in men, whence was that of the Poet, *Spectandus nigris oculis, nigroq; capillo*. Now mystically, I conceive, these words doe import, as the exceeding spirituall beauty, so also the invincible fortitude and strength of Christ, black and curled locks being signes of a hot and

and strong constitution. Some by his locks doe understand the innumerable company of Angels that attend upon Christ; and others the Saints and servants of Christ, especially as gathered into Congregations, which are an ornament to Christ; and others againe, his hidden and unsearchable counsels, and his secret profound judgements, which are so intricate, that they cannot be fully known, and so black and formidable, that they may well strike men with astonishment; and this last seemes the most probable.

Vers. 12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves, &c.*] Thus Christ had before set forth the beauty of his Spouses eyes, Chap. 1. 15. & 4. 1. (for which see the Notes there) and here now the Spouse useth the same expression concerning Christs, only it is with an addition, that his eyes were *as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters*; that is, doves, that have their abiding place where they have plenty of pure and cleare water to wash themselves and their eyes in; as indeed cleare running water hath been alwayes esteemed good to refresh and cleare the eyes. Now though this may be not unfitly applied to the Ministers of Christ in regard of their purity and sincerity (see the Note, Chap. 1. 4.) and their being so continually conversant in the Scriptures; and, as some think, to the most pure and spotlesse wisdom and prudence of Christ, as man; yet I rather think they are meant, either of the carefull and affectionate respect that he hath alwayes to his Church, (and so as the Church was before said to have doves eyes, because of her faith and loyalty to Christ; so the same is here said of Christ, because of his faithfullnesse to her) or else of the beauty of his divine wisdom and providence; according to that, Habak. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evill, &c.* even in the ordering and disposing of the vildest actions of the creature, the Lord is blamelesse and pure; And for the same reason it is farther added concerning his eyes, that they are *washed with milk*; that is, in milk-white water, or as white, as if they were washed in milk; which is spoken only with respect to the white of the eyes, and *fitly set*, which is in the Hebrew, *sitting in fulnesse*, which though some understand as spoken in relation to doves sitting by full streames of water; yet the meaning rather is, that his eyes were fitly set in the holes of his head, exactly filling up those hollow places, neither sunk into the head too low, nor staring out too much, even as a precious stone that is neatly set in the foile of a ring; as indeed nothing can be more fitly disposed and ordered, then it is by divine providence.

Vers. 13. *His cheekes are as a bed of spices, &c.*] That is, they are like to garden-beds and borders, curiously set with flowers and plants that beare spices; and the ground of this figurative expression is, because there is in the cheekes a little rising above the rest of the face, as there is in the beds and borders of gardens above the rest of the earth; and because the sprouting forth of the haire on his chinne and cheekes, did resemble the springing up of spice-plants, in such beds and borders. All this tends to set forth that his cheekes were beautifull and sweet, amiable and lovely, though withall full of manly gravity and majesty. And to the same purpose also in the following words they are said to be *as sweet flowers*, or (as it is rendered in the margin of our Bibles) *towers of perfumes*; whereby may be meant, either aromaticall flowers or plants growing up like towers or turrets; which indeed agrees best with our Translation and the foregoing words; or else such kind of boxes, as are
spiring,

spiring, like little turrets or towers, wherein men were wont to carry any sweet spices, powders, or perfumes. However, by these cheekes of the Lord Christ, beautifull and sweet, may be meant most probably the favourable countenance of Christ, shining into the hearts of believers; or more generally the aspect or sight that we shall have of him in heaven, which shall yield fulnesse of life and joy, see the Notes, Psal. 16. 11. & 17. 15. and which is represented to us here in the Gospel, and apprehended by faith, as a sweet Saviour, and a Redeemer, mighty to save his people against all bodily and spirituall enemies.

His lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrhe.] For *sweet-smelling myrrhe*, see the Note above, ver. 5. Her meaning is, that his lips were as beautifull, and did breath forth as sweet a smell, as doe the lips of lilies, yea the sweetest lilies, that yield as fragrant a smell, as if the oyle of myrrhe did drop down from them. Or else it may be meant of the sweetnesse of his speech. And observable it is, that whereas her beloved had told her, that her lips did *drop as the honey-comb*, Chap. 4. 11. she now returns the like praise to him, that his lips were *like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh*. And this doth notably set forth the purity and sweetnesse of the Word, and how the Gospel of Christ being freely distilled by the lips of Gods Ministers, doth convey grace to the hearers, and thereby rejoyceth and reviveth their hearts.

Verf. 14. *His hands are as gold rings set with the Beryl.*] *The Beryl* is a precious stone, as they say, of a Sea-green colour; and indeed the Hebrew word is *Farshish*, by which in Psal. 48. 7. some say is meant the great Ocean Sea; (from which some think the word *Turkois* is derived) and on this stone in the High Priests breast-plate, Exod. 28. 20. was Asher engraven, who dwelt neare the Sea. However, hereby the Spouse intended that her beloveds hands were very faire, goodly and precious; And it may be that by comparing his hands to *gold rings set with the Beryl*, she might have respect to the bright shining nayles on the tops of his fingers. Now hereby spiritually is meant that all the works of Christ are pure, rare, precious and glorious, and most acceptable both before God and men: whence it is said of his miracles and other his glorious works, that he was *a Prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people*, Luk. 24. 19. and that glorious testimony was by the people given concerning him, *He hath done all things well*, Mark 7. 37. Yet some, I know, would limit this more particularly to his bounty and liberality in bestowing the precious gifts and graces of his Spirit, together with other spirituall blessings upon his Church and people.

His belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires.] This is much like that description of the Nazarites, Lam. 4. 7. *They were more ruddy in body then rubies, their polishing was of Saphir*. Now as the Church is here represented speaking of Christ, under the person of Solomon, (and still also under a Pastoral-parable of a shepheard and a shepheardesse) though it may be spoken with reference meerely to the pure whitenesse of his skin (because some Saphirs are white and glister like a Diamond,) or to the whitenesse of his skin, together with the branches of blew veines therein, because some Saphires are of a blew sky-colour; yet I rather think it is intended as a description of the garments he wore on his breast and belly, to wit, that they were very beautifull and glorious, shining white, as the brightest polished Ivory, but adorned

dorned with some trimming, or bound about with some girdle of blew; and that because the Spouse intends here to give directions how the daughters of Jerusalem, to whom she speakes, might know him, when they saw him; all which notwithstanding is to be mystically understood of Christ; and is usually applied by Expositors, either to the purity of his humane nature, and the adorning thereof with divers precious heavenly graces; or more generally to his inward, tender and hearty bowels of affection (because the belly is indeed the seate of the bowels) the love, mercy and pity, which he outwardly manifests to his Church and people; which are indeed pure and sincere, precious and heavenly.

Verl. *His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold.*] By comparing his legs, under which his thighs are also comprehended, to *pillars of marble*, she intends to set forth that they were full, straight, strong, white, and every way proportionable and handsome, (to which some adde also, that his gate was grave, stately and Prince-like) and by comparing his feet to *sockets of fine gold*, upon which those pillars of marble were fastened, she intends to shew, that they also were firm, steadfast, comely and glorious: Or this last may be spoken with respect to the golden shoes which he wore on his feet: for of the Spouses wearing such gorgeous shoes, mention is afterward made, Chap. 7. 1. *How beautifull are thy feet with shoes, O Princes daughter!* Now because the legs and feet are those instruments and members of the body, whereby the whole body is upheld, and moved from one place to another, therefore by these legs of Christ, that are as *pillars of marble*, and feet that are as *sockets of gold*, whereon these pillars stand, must needs be meant, his strong, firm and faithfull, his pure and glorious managing and carrying on all the works of his Mediatorship, as in treading down all his enemies under his feet, Psal. 110. 1. in carrying on his Gospel where ever he pleaseth, breaking through all the opposition that is made against him, in bearing up, supporting and helping his mysticall body the Church, so that the gates of hell are not able to prevail against them, &c. in all which he never treads awry, nor fails of doing what he hath undertaken, by means whereof his Kingdom and Government must needs be pure and upright, full of Majesty and Glory, and unchangeably constant and durable; as likewise that the foundation of all these is his divine Almighty strength and power, and his unchangeable truth and faithfulness. I know that some Expositors do somewhat otherwise apply this, as namely, that the Apostles doctrine, whereby Christ was carried forth into all the world, and whereon the Church is firmly founded, Eph. 2. 20. is these firm, and stable, and beautifull legs, that are as marble pillars, whence it is that the Apostles are called pillars, Gal. 2. 9. and of them principally is that spoken, Rom. 10. 15. *How beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, &c!* and that these pillars are said to be set on *sockets of gold*, because they are grounded upon the writings of the Prophets, which are pure and precious, *a sure word of prophecy*, as the Apostle calls them, 2 Pet. 1. 19.

His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.] By his countenance, is not meant his face only, but the whole form and appearance of his person; and so that which the Spouse intends hereby is, that her beloved was a tall, goodly, personable man, and that his aspect was stately, and withall pleasant and delightfull. And hereby

hereby was signified the largeness, glory and eminency of Christs Kingdome (as elsewhere upon the same account it is compared to a little stone, that became a great mountain, Dan. 2. 35.) and that in regard of the multitude of believers it should be as a forrest, and that alwaies flourishing and continuing in its freshnesse and vigor: yea that whatever of himself Christ is pleased to discover to us, is excellent and glorious.

Verf. 16. *His mouth is most sweet.*] Here again the Spouse useth the same loving expressions concerning her beloved, which he had formerly used concerning her, as Chap. 2. 14. *Sweet is thy voice*; and Chap. 4. 11. *Thy lips, O my Spouse, drop as the honey-comb, &c.* And this is generally understood of the exceeding sweetnesse of the words, speeches and sayings of Christ, his doctrines, comforts and promises. See Psal. 19. 10. & 119. 103. And some understand it too of the Ministers of the Gospel, who are as it were the mouth and the voice of Christ, whereby he dispenceth these sweetnesse of the word of grace unto his people; as the Baptist is called the *voice of one crying in the wilderness*, Joh. 1. 23. But because the Spouse had mentioned this before in commending his lips, verf. 13. *His lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrhe*; and because this clause is in the Original, *His palate is most sweet*, I see not why this may not be particularly meant of the motions of the Spirit (which is as the breath of Christ) conveying the comforts and promises of the word with much sweet delight unto the souls of beleivers. And indeed it is only those that are admitted to the spiritual kisses and embraces of Christ, that do ever discern the sweetnesse of these breathings.

Yea, he is altogether lovely.] As if she had said, Not to insist further on particular parts, I may well wind up all briefly in this, that *he is altogether lovely*, amiable and desirable, to wit, in his Person, Offices, Ordinances, Graces, Providences and Members, and therefore is he called, *The desire of all Nations*, Hag. 2. 8. which the word in the Original doth here also import.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.] See the Note, Chap. 1. 5. It is as if she should have said, According to this description which I have given you of my beloved, you may easily know him, there is not such another; and considering seriously of what I have said, you will not blame me for being sick of love, for being transported with such a violence of affection in seeking after him, or for laying such a solemn charge and adjuration upon you.

CHAP. VI.

Verf. 1. **V***Whither is thy beloved gone? &c.*] These are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, to whom the Spouse had made that large description of her beloved, Chap. 5. 8.-16. and concerning whom, see the Note, Chap. 1. 5. As pitying the Spouse for her sad condition, because of the absence of her friend, so exceedingly worthy indeed to be beloved by her; and being themselves, by the high commendation which she had given of him, enflamed with the love of him, and with a strong desire to see him, to enjoy his presence, and to get an interest in him, they offer to joyn with her, or to help her in seeking him out, if she could but tell them which

which way he was gone or where he used to be, and where they might be like to find him; for so much this question of theirs imports, *Whither is thy beloved gone?* which out of the vehemency of their affection, and to shew how forward they were to do it, they repeat again; only by that phrase of his being *turned aside*, they imply their hope, that he was not gone farre, nor would be long absent, *O thou fairest among women*, (See Chap. 1.8.) *whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?* All which is to signifie, either that the Jews shall one day be brought to seek after Christ, by the high commendation given of him by the Church of the Gentiles; or else more generally, that when Gods Elect people are once by the Preaching of the Gospel brought to know the transcendent worth and excellency of Christ, they will seek after him, nor will be scared nor beaten off by the hard usage, which the Church, his Spouse, hath alwaies met with in the world. And withall observable it is, which is here implied, that they that desire to seek after Christ, must be sure to go along with the Catholick Church, or they are never like to find him.

Verf. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, &c.*] Because immediately before it was said that the Spouse was greatly distressed, because she could not find her beloved, and yet here now she tells the daughters of Jerusalem whicher he was gone, therefore some conceive, that here there begins a new Relation of another passage between the Bridegroom and the Bride, and that it hath respect to another time & state of things; according to what is noted before, Chap. 3. 1. But I rather think this is an answer to the Question propounded to her in the foregoing verse by the daughters of Jerusalem; and it seemes that bethinking her selfe of the gracious disposition of her beloved, and the experience she had alwayes had of his gentlenesse, and the constancy of his love to her, and it may be taking occasion from that which they had hinted, that perhaps he was but only somewhere a little *turned aside*, she thus determines concerning his going from her, *My beloved is gone down into his garden*, As if she had said, Surely so it is; he is but only gone down into his garden, there to refresh himselfe; where in that expression of his going *down* to his garden, there is an allusion to Solomons gardens in Jerusalem, which were beneath in the fruitfull valleys, whilst his Palace was in the upper part of the City; and to these the Spouse saith her beloved was gone; *to the beds of spices*; that is, to delight himselfe with the pleasant sight and smell thereof, as men doe that walk in such gardens; *to feed in the gardens*, that is, to eate of the fruits growing there in the severall divisions of his garden, which were as severall gardens, or of some other dainties there provided for him; or to feed his flock in pastures neare to his garden, or within the hedge of it; see the Note, Chap. 2. 16. *And to gather lilies*, to wit, to please himselfe therewith, or to make garlands for himselfe, or for his Spouse. And accordingly that which is spiritually here intended is, that the faithfull in their desertions have still this seed of comfort abiding in them, that they know Christ can never forsake his Church; and that after their desertions they are wont to recover some comfortable evidence of his favourable presence againe, and are ready still to communicate what they know of Christ unto others; for by *his garden*, here is meant, either, 1. the paradise of heaven; see the Note, Chap. 5. 1. where the Church teacheth every true believer to seek Christ.

And

And then by his going to the beds of spices, his feeding in the gardens, and his gathering lilies, must be meant the delight that Christ takes in the joyes and services that are yielded him; see that Note againe, Chap. 5. 1. Or 2^{ly}, the place where his Church abides on earth; see the Note, Chap. 4. 12. And then we must understand, 1. By the beds of spices, the variety of sweet Christians, or their graces and good works, that are most delightfull to Christ; and 2. By his feeding in his gardens, either that he there feeds the soules of his people with the choicest dainties, for which see the Note, Chap. 2. 16. or else the delight that he takes in the fellowship, the graces, and the services of his Saints; see the Note, Chap. 4. 16. And 3. by his gathering lilies, either his gathering to himselfe his elect and chosen people, who are often in this Song compared to lilies; see the Note, Chap. 2. 2, 16. & 4. 5. or else his gracious acceptance of, and delight in both their persons and graces, and the great delight he takes in their holy services.

Vers. 3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 2. 16. The Spouse may be supposed to have broken forth into these words, when she found her beloved in his garden, or met him as they were going thither to find him, & that by way of glorying in the assurance of the love of her beloved, notwithstanding her former disrespect of him, and the recovery of her peace and joy thereby after all her sufferings and sorrowes; yea it may also imply her resolution never againe to slight him, as she had now done, but to give up her selfe wholly to him. All which doth notably set forth how the faithfull are affected, when they have recovered the light of Gods countenance after a time of desertion. As for the following words, *Who feedeth among the Lilies*, see the Note, Chap. 2. 16.

Vers. 4. *Thou art beautifull, &c.*] The Spouse having found her beloved, and having (as must be supposed) bewayled her neglect of him, and acquainted him what she had since done and suffered in seeking after him, he thereupon makes known in these words, hereby to cheare her up, what precious account he made of her, that she was no lesse beautifull, pleasing and delightfull in his eyes, then she was before; to manifest which he useth afterwards many of the same expressions, which he had used before in the fourth Chapter: & all this tends to set forth, that when Christ doth manifest himselfe from heaven after times of desertion to the faith of his penitent people, he doth never a whit the lesse love and esteeme them, because of their former miscarriages, if they come to seek him againe in a right manner: for the Churches beauty, see the Note, Chap. 1. 5, 8. & Psal. 45. 11. It is here set forth by three elegant similitudes; 1. *Thou art beautifull, O my love, as Tirzah*; which was a goodly City in the tribe of Manasseh, for which see the Note, 1 Kings 14. 17. The word signifieth *well-pleasing*, or *acceptable*, and therefore was it fit to set forth the spiritual beauty of the Church, who is made faire & acceptable in and thorough Christ, her beloved, Eph. 1. 6. & 5. 27. 2^{ly}, *Comely, as Jerusalem*, which was indeed esteemed in those times the most gallant and stately City for the glory of her buildings, and especially the Temple there, that was in those Easterne parts of the world, and therefore it is called, Psal. 48. 2. *Beautifull for situation, the joy of the whole earth*, & Psal. 122. 3. *A City, that is compact together*, yea and Lam. 2. 15. *The perfection of beauty*: and the Church, we know, is usually with respect thereto called Jerusalem:

lem : and 3^{ly}, *Terrible as an army with banners* ; which expreffion, as it is not unfit to fet forth the praife of a woman (as the Church is here perfonated,) it being very commendable in them, when the gravity and fobriety of their countenances doth ftrike a terror into wicked men ; fo it doth notably fet forth the Majefty of the Church, in that ſhe is to her enemies, and to the wicked, terrible *as an army with banners*, that is, as an army that with banners displayed is going forth to fight with their enemies, and that becaufe of her invincible faith and ſtrength, againſt which hell-gates are not able to prevaile. And indeed observable it is, that (as in an army) it is the order and union of the Church, their diſcipline for the puniſhing of thoſe that walk diſorderly, but eſpecially the preſence of the Lord of hoſts amongſt them, as their Captaine and King, alwayes ready to help and defend them, that makes the Church ſo dreadful ; according to that, Iſa. 52. 12. *The Lord will goe before you, and the God of Iſrael will be your rereward* ; ſee the Note, Chap. 1. 9. & 4. 4.

Verſ. 5. *Turn away thine eyes from me, &c.*] Taking occaſion perhaps from the Spouſes fixing her eyes upon him, out of the exuberancy of her love to him, and delight in him, now that after a time of deſertion ſhe had recovered his preſence againe, the Bridegroom breakes forth into theſe paſſionate tearmes, *Turn away thine eyes from me* ; which muſt not be taken, as if he deſired not ſhe ſhould look on him any more, (for there was nothing he deſired more, as he had ſaid before, Chap. 2. 14. *Let me ſee thy countenance, &c.*) but as a poetical expreſſion, wherewith he would fet forth the ſurpaſſing beauty of the Church, and the extreame vehemency of his affection, namely, that her beauty, eſpecially of her eyes, was ſuch, that he was not able, as it were to endure the brightneſſe of them ; *for they have overcome me* ; It is in the Hebrew, *they have puff'd me up, or liſted me up*, to wit, with joy and gladneſſe, or with a rapture of love ; but the meaning is, that her beauty had transported him beyond himſelfe.

Thy haire is as a flock of goates, &c.] See the Note, Chap. 4. 1.

Verſ. 6. *Thy teeth are as a flock of ſheep, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 4. 2.

Verſ. 7. *As a piece of a Pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.*] See the Note, Chap. 4. 3.

Verſ. 8. *There are threeſcore Queens, &c.*] This is ſtill added to cheare up the Spouſe, by letting her ſee how highly he eſteemed her ; *There are threeſcore Queens, and foureſcore Concubines*, (which how they differed from thoſe that were legal wives, and therefore called *Queens* ; ſee in the Notes, Gen. 22. 24. & 25. 6. & Judg. 19. 1.) *and Virgins without number* ; that is, hand-maids, and maids of honour, that attended upon the Queens and Concubines ; ſee the Note, Pſal. 45. 14. Some conceive, that this is ſpoken indefinitely with reſpect to the Court of any Prince, and that a definite number is alſo put for an indefinite, as before, Chap. 3. 7. *There are threeſcore Queens, &c.* which, they ſay, is all one as if the Bridegroom had ſaid, Suppose there be, or, Though there ſhould be in a Princes Court never ſo many Queens, and Concubines, and Virgins, which are uſually of the moſt beautifull women and moſt gorgeouſly attired ; yet alas amongſt them all there would not be one found, that were to be compared to my love. But then others againe underſtand it of the women in Solomons family ; for, ſay they, becauſe the Virgins are ſaid to be indefinitely *without*

number, therefore it seemes most probable, that by *threescore Queens and fourescore Concubines* is meant, that there was of them just that definite number, and this can therefore be meant of no other, but Solomons Court, though afterwards indeed in his old age it is said that he had *seven hundred wives, and three hundred Concubines*, 1 Kings. 11. 3. for which see the Note there. And if we thus take the words, the drift of them must needs be to shew, that amongst these there were none, that equalled the beauty and loveliness of his beloved Spouse. And however, some understand by these *Queens, and Concubines, and Virgins without number*, the severall Nations and Assemblies in the world pretending an interest in Christ, some better by many degrees, and some worse, and so make this passage to be the same in effect, As if Christ had said, Let there be never so many Nations, Churches and Assemblies, that call themselves by my name, and challenge an interest in my love, and that by their outward prosperity may seeme to have much respect from me, and much worth in themselves, yet they are all not worthy to be mentioned in comparison of my true Spouse: yet, I think, the meaning may be rather taken to be plainly this, that how excellent soever the beauty and bravery might be of the Queens, and Concubines, and Virgins in any Princes Court, (or particularly in Solomons) yet in such an innumerable company, there would not be one found, that could match the spirituall beauty and glory of the Church; and this is that which is added in the following verse.

Verf. 9. *My dove, my undefiled, &c.*] See the Notes, Chap. 2. 14. & 4. 7. is but one, that is, she is the only one whom I own as my Spouse; as there are none fit to be ranked with her for beauty, so there is none that are so deare to me, nor that stand in so neare a relation to me as she doth; there is no other people joyned to me by a Covenant of peace. This is meant of the Catholique Church, who as she is but one, because all the particular true Churches that are on earth, are so united together, that they make but one body, Eph. 4. 4. *There is one body, and one spirit, &c.* and because of their brotherly love and unity amongst themselves, so also because though there are many Assemblies and bastard Churches, that in the worlds judgement, and their own esteeme, are as Queens and Ladies, Revel. 18. 7. & Isa. 47. 7. yet there is but one true legitimate Church, which Christ doth own as his Bride and Spouse.

She is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her.] That is, of the heavenly Jerusalem, *Which is the mother of us all*, Gal. 4. 26. whose darling she is, as being her only Child, see Judg. 11. 34. and exceeding beautifull, as resembling her mother in her heavenly gifts and glorious excellencies. Yea and some take this as spoken by way of comparison, to wit, that the Church was as deare to Christ, as an only daughter useth to be to a tender mother; *Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people*, saith the Lord to the Church of Israel, Exod. 19. 5.

The daughters saw her and blessed her, &c.] That is, particular Churches or believers (for in the Hebrew dialect, the common body of any company of people are usually called the mother, and severall members the daughters) when by the preaching of the Gospel they came fully to understand her state and condition, did admire her beauty and her happiness in the love of her beloved, and did pronounce her blessed; see 2 Sam. 7. 23. & Psal. 143. 15. *Yea the Queens, and the Concubines, and they praised her*; that is, all sorts of people, high and low, even the most honourable

and mighty Nations in the world, both did and shall admire and extoll her spirituall beauty and glory. Deut. 4. 6, 7. it is said that the nations should say of the Israelites, *Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people, &c.* see also Deut. 26. 18, 19. & 33. 29. & Psal. 126. 2. and of the Christian Churches it is said, Act. 5. 13. *that the people magnified them.* Yea, this may be intended to imply, that those that here pretend themselves falsely to be the Churches of Christ, shall find, if they repent not, at least at the day of Judgement, that there is but one true Church, and how happy they were that joynd themselves thereto.

Verf. 10. *Who is she that looketh forth, &c?*] Very many Expositors hold, that here begins a new passage of this Pastoral, that hath no connexion with that which went before, see the Note, Chap. 3. 6. Wherein it must be supposed that as the Bride was going up from her garden, a company of Virgins espying her, did break forth into the admiration of her beauty, *Who is she, &c?* But it seemes farre more probable, that the Bridegroom having said in the foregoing verse, that the Queens and Concubines praised his Spouse, these are inserted as the words, wherewith they praised her, *Who is she that looketh forth, &c?* and it is spoken by way of admiration, thereby to set forth her surpassing excellency; as when David saith, Psal. 24. 8. *Who is this king of glory?* and Psal. 77. 13. *Who is so great a God, as our God?* and when the people were astonished at Christs marvellous works, Mark 4. 41. *What manner of man is this, that even the winde and the sea obey him?* so here, *Who is she?* that is, What manner of woman is this? *that looketh forth as the morning;* that is, that appeareth as the morning doth after a dark night, fresh and faire, lightsome and chearfull? see Isa. 58. 8. *Faire as the Moone, cleare as the Sun, and terrible, as an Army with Banners:* By all which similitudes, the beauty and glory of the Church is set forth; see Isa. 60. 1, 3. The last of them is explained above, ver. 4. But for the other, observable it is, 1. that by comparing her to these Lights of heaven, there is an intimation given that the Churches beauty is not such as is the glory of this world, but spirituall and heavenly; in that she is adorned with heavenly excellencies, and that her *conversation is in heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. And hence it is that she looseth not her beauty, when she is in the saddest condition; in the darknesse of persecution she is *faire as the Moone*, as well as *cleare as the Sun*, in the dayes of peace and prosperity: and though she may suffer an eclipse, or be under a cloud for a time, yet it is not long ere she alwayes shines forth againe gloriously. 2. That by saying she is *faire as the Moone*, which hath her light from the Sun, and *cleare as the Sun*, which is the fountaine of light, there may be also a hint given, that the Church hath all her beauty from Christ, who is *the Sun of righteousness*, Mal. 4. 2. and that her beauty consists chiefly in this, that she hath by faith *put on Christ*, Gal. 3. 27. and so is clothed with his righteousness, as the Church is described, Revel. 12. 1. *Clothed with the Sun;* and 3^{ly}. that the ranking of these in this order, by comparing her, 1. to the morning; 2. to the Moone; 3. to the Sun, may seeme to imply a gradual increase in the Churches beauty and glory; for so it is with believers severally; the light of their knowledge and grace, is at first but like the light of the morning in the dawning of the day, but by degrees it *shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Pro. 4. 18. And so it hath been with the Church in her severall ages, before the Law, and under the Law, and in Gospel

spel times; her brightnesse was still greater and greater. The beginnings of the Church of Israel were meane, and obscure; and so were the beginnings of the Christian Church; but by degrees they both did rise to a great height of brightnesse and glory; in so much that the light of the Church did at length shine forth gloriously throughout the world; and shall at last be made perfect in heaven, *when the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdome of their father*, Matth. 13. 43. I know that many understand this place of the conversion of the Jewes to the faith of Christ in the latter dayes; and that because the words imply, that people should wonder at the suddaine and unexpected rising up of a new Church, that should be glorious, even to the astonishment of those that should behold it. But I conceive it may be better understood of the Church in generall, as an acknowledgement of her glory by those Queens and Concubines mentioned in the foregoing verse, *Who is she that looketh forth, &c?* As if they should have said, Is this the Church that we did so despise and reproach? certainly her glory is now so apparently great, that it is wonderfull in our eyes.

Verf. 11. *I went down into the garden of nuts, &c.*] By *nuts*, (which is in the Hebrew a word that is no where else found in the Scripture,) we must, I conceive, understand some choicer sort of nuts, such as used to be planted in gardens, as wall-nuts or filberds, or nutmegs rather, because the Bridegroomes and Spouses gardens are still noted in this book to be planted with all kind of aromatics, as we may see, Chap. 4. 12, 13, 14. of which the nutmeg is a chiefe, and under which all other aromatical plants may be here comprehended. Now very many learned Expositors doe take these to be the words of the Spouse, wherein she gives an account why she came downe after her beloved to his garden, namely, that having found him there, they might delight themselves with beholding the sweet springing of the severall plants that grew therein; which may be implied in the following words, *to see the fruits of the valley, &c.* And accordingly they hold the meaning is, either, 1. that the Church doth thorough faith mount up after Christ to heaven, (Christ's garden of nutmegs) *to see the fruits of the valley, &c.* where in those hot Countries their gardens used to be, to wit, to tast by a lively faith the first fruits of life eternall, and by raising of her heart in holy desires to advance her selfe toward heaven, whether her beloved Saviour is gone before her; or 2^{ly}, that she visited the holy Assemblies, that finding Christ there, they might delight themselves with seeing the graces of Gods Spirit springing and growing up amongst his people. But because the Spouses going to the garden was to seek her beloved, (and of this there is no expresse mention here made) therefore I rather think that it is the Bridegroom that still here continues his speech unto his Spouse; and that having professed his constant love to her in the foregoing verses, here he makes knowne that he did not goe away from her in wrath and indignation against her, but only went a little to his garden, to see how things thrived and prospered there. *I went, saith he, downe into the garden of nuts, &c.* And the mystical meaning of the words must be, either that Christ did only delight himselfe in the pleasures of his heavenly garden, his kingdome of Glory; or else, that he did by this his hiding himselfe for a time, goe as it were to see and visite his Church, to make tryall whether after the winter of some tribulation and affliction, there were any

Spring of grace to be discerned amongst them. Now in expressing this, 1. he calls his Church, *the garden of nuts*, as some think, because as the nut seemes outwardly to be nothing but dry wood, but yet hath a sweet and pleasant kernell therein; so the Church seemes despicable and worthlesse outwardly, but yet inwardly it is full of grace and goodnesse; or else, (if by *nuts* we understand nutmegs,) because it yields fruit, so odoriferous and pleasing to God. 2. He tearmes her *the valley*, saying that he went down to see the fruits of the valley, to imply thereby, either the humble spirits of his people, or how low and base they are in the eyes of the world, or rather how abundantly they are watered with his word and Spirit; and 3. the last clause, *And to see whether the Vine flourished, and the Pomegranates budded*, by the vine and the Pomegranates, he meanes his people in his Church, whose good works and holy life are as the sweetest of fruits to him; and by their flourishing and budding, he meanes their first inclinations to good, the first discoveries that are made of grace wrought in their hearts, which Christ would have us know he much lookes after in his people, as that which gives hope of ripe and pleasant fruit in time to come. But now againe, all this some apply to the conversion of the Jewes, who for the hardnesse that is upon their hearts, Rom. 11. 25. and the bitterness of their spirits against Christ, may well be compared to a *garden of nuts*, because the nut, the wall-nut especially, hath a hard shell, and a bitter rind; and concerning whom Christ hath made known in his word, that in the last dayes he will visite them, to see whether there be any inclination in them to heare and believe the Gospel, yea that he will againe receive them to be his Church and people.

Vers. 12. *Or ever I was aware my soul made me like the charets of Amminadib.* That is, I made my self like the charets, &c. It is an Hebraism frequent in the Scripture, the soul being put for the whole man, See the Note, Psal. 6. 4. yet sometimes it implieth also the doing of a thing with much earnestnesse and vehemence of affection; and so it may do here. See the Notes, Chap. 1. 7. & Eccles. 7. 28. That which we translate, *Or ever I was aware, &c.* is in the Hebrew thus, *I knew not, my soul made me like the charets of Amminadib.* But this is all one in effect with our Translation; for the meaning is, I knew not how it came to passe, before I knew of it, or thought of any such thing, my soul made me like the charets of Amminadib. There are two things that make this place the most difficult that is in all this mystical Song; 1. Because it is so hard to determine who this Amminadib was, of whose charets Solomon here speaks: And 2. because it is as hard to say, whether these words must be taken as the Bridegrooms or the Brides. For the first, we must know, 1. That we read in the Scripture of several men called by the name of Amminadab, as Numb. 1. 7. & 1 Chron. 6. 22, &c. and to some of these some Expositors do apply that which is said heer. But because there is a clear difference between *Amminadib* and *Amminadab*; and because there is nothing recorded in the Scriptures concerning the charets of those Amminadabs, and it cannot be well questioned, but that Solomon speaks here of the charets of *Amminadib*, as very famously known in those times, therefore I conceive it farre most probable, that this Amminadib was some famous Chariot-driver in those times, that used to out-drive all men in the races they ran with their charets, or else some Prince or great man that in Solomons daies delighted in charets,

as Absalom did, 2 Sam. 15. 1. and had charets that were above all other mens, famous for their speed: Yea and because *Amminadib* is translated by some, *the Prince of my people*, therefore some think that by *the charets of Amminadib* may be meant Solomons charets. And again we must know, 2^{ly}, that this clause may be rendred, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *My soul set me on the charets of my willing people, or, my noble, or, princely people*; and if we read it so, I know not what can be meant thereby, but the *charets* either of the Princes of Israel, or of the neighbours or friends of the Bridegroom or Bride, who being of an ingenuous and noble spirit, were willing and ready any way to afford them any help or assistance. And then secondly, for the party by whom this is spoken; I deny not but that they may be taken as the words of the Spouse, giving her beloved an account how she came to follow him to his garden, namely, that not knowing that he was gone down to his garden for the reasons mentioned by him in the foregoing verse, but fearing that he was departed in anger, she did thereupon follow him with as much speed, as if she had been carried upon the charets of *Amminadib*; or, that missing him, though she knew not whither he was gone, yet ere she was aware, being transported with the vehemency of her desires after him, she became as the charets of *Amminadib*, and was carried, she knew not how, to the garden where her beloved was, with as much speed, as such charets are wont to run: Yea and it may imply also, that her affection made her so courageous, that she was in that regard too, like the charets of *Amminadib*, in that not fearing the dangers of the night, even when she had been already so barbarously used, she never gave over till she had at last met with her beloved. And if we take the words thus, they serve to set forth, either how unexpectedly and sodainly the soules of the faithfull are sometimes caught up into heaven, in a manner they are not able to expresse; or else, with what speed and vehemency of spirit Christians are often carried to seek after Christ, when he hath withdrawne himselfe from them, and with what a strange impulse of spirit they are sometimes carried to the use of those meanes, whereby they are brought at last to enjoy his favourable presence. But because the foregoing verses, as is formerly noted, seeme most likely to be the words of the Bridegroom, I see no reason why this should not also be so taken; to wit, that he doth here make known to his Spouse, either how he was sodainly carried away, not out of wrath against her, but with a strong desire of visiting his garden, which seized upon him he knew not how, and posted him away as if he had been set upon the charets of *Amminadib*; or else how having visited his garden, he was sodainly he knew not how, stirred up to make hast back again to the comfort of his Spouse, being carried with such an unexpressible and unresistible violence and speed therein, that he seemed to himselfe to be as *the charets of Amminadib*, or as if he had been set upon the charets of his willing people. And taking the words thus, they set forth, either how exceeding desirous the Lord Christ is to see the garden of his Church to sprout out and flourish; or rather how very forward he is to shew himselfe with comfort to his penitent people; As the father of the Prodigal ran to meet his penitent sonne, Luk. 15. 20. so doth Christ hasten, as if he were carried upon charets, to the comfort of his penitent Spouse; when his people are willing in the day of his power, Psal. 110. 3. then Christ is carried out as upon the charets of this his willing people, to meet & embrace them;

them; Or, then by the Ministry of his servants, who are as *the charers of Israel and the horsemen thereof*, 2 King. 2. 12. he brings them to the enjoyment of his gracious presence; see Isa. 66. 20. This is, I conceive, the meaning of this hard place. But yet withall it may not be unusefull to take notice, that this also some understand of the conversion of the Jewes, namely, that through the forwardnesse of the Gentiles to promote their conversion, they shall be brought in speedily, as *upon the charers of a willing people.*

Verf. 13. *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return, &c.*] This name *Shulamite* is derived partly from *Salem*, the ancient name of Jerusalem, Psal. 76. 3. And hence it is that divers Expositors hold, that it is the Synagogue or Nation of the Jewes, that is here called the *Shulamite*, and doe therefore look upon this as a cleare prophecy of that calling and conversion of the nation of the Jewes, whereof the Apostle speakes, Rom. 1. 25. But I question not but that it is the Spouse, of whom Solomon speakes all along in this Song, that is here called the *Shulamite*; and that she is so called either from her City Salem; (as Ruth of Moab is called the Moabitesse, Ruth 2. 2.) for even Pharaohs daughter, (to whom Solomon may allude in this Song) might well enough be expressed by this name, after she was incorporated into the Church of the Jewes, and so became a daughter of Jerusalem; see the Note, Psal. 45. 10. or else from her husband Solomon, wives being usually called by the names of their husbands, according to that, Isa. 4. 1. *Let us be called by thy name.* And so as Christ is in this Song called Solomon, which signifieth *peaceable*, (as *Salem* also signifieth *peace*, Heb. 7. 2.) so the Church, the Spouse of Christ, is here called *Shulamite*, to signifie the communion she hath with him, and the peace she enjoyeth with God thorough his grace; as likewise because the Church of Christ did at first come forth out of the City Jerusalem. The greatest difficulty in this passage is to know by whom this is spoken to the Spouse, and what is intended thereby. Many Expositors hold that it is *the daughters of Jerusalem*, mentioned before, Chap. 5. 8, 16. that went along with her to seek her beloved, Chap. 6. 1. that did thus call and cry after her, when being made *like unto the charers of Aminadib*, as was said in the foregoing verse, she posted away to seek her beloved, and left them behind her; or that did, as by an acclamation of joy, invite her to returne to Jerusalem, now that she had met with her beloved, *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return, that we may look upon thee*, that is, that we may acquaint our selves with thee, enjoy thy company, and behold thy beauty. And accordingly they say, that it is to be understood mystically thus, that those nations and persons, who were well affected to the Church, doe here desire, either that she might not be gathered up into heaven without them, but might stay here on earth, till they were admitted into her fellowship; or else, that she would return to her wonted carriage of her selfe towards Christ, from which she had swerved, that so they might have the more abundant cause to admire her and rejoyce in her. But then others judge, (and that most probably, as I conceive) that it is the Bridegroom that still speakes to his Spouse, to wit, Christ to his Church, and that having hitherto professed his constant love to her, notwithstanding her late disrespect of him, he doth now invite her to returne to her first love, and to her former respective carriage of her selfe towards him, offering to receive her into his grace and

and favour againe; *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return; that we may behold thee*; He ingeminates this word *return* foure severall times, to signifie the speed, that he required in her return, the vehemency of his love, and the earnestnesse of his desires after her return; and hardly even the faithfull themselves after their strayings are brought home to Christ. And then he addes, *that we may look upon thee*, to wit, with delight and joy; which he speakes in the name of himself, and his companions and friends, the holy Angels, or his faithfull Ministers; for *the Angels desire to look into the things imparted to the Church by the Gospel*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. and rejoyce in the penitent returns of poore sinners, Luk. 15. 10. Neither doth any thing more cheare the hearts of Gods faithfull Ministers, then to behold the spiritual welfare of his Church and people.

What will ye see in the Shulamite? &c.) Some take this as the words of the Spouse, humbly abasing her selfe, as if she had said, Alas, what is to be seen in the poore Shulamite? In me there is not the least thing that is worth the looking on. And so also the following answer may be taken too as hers, *as it were the company of two Armies*; As if she should have said, I am but a sad spectacle to be gazed at, a poor persecuted people, like a company of two Armies, covered over with dust and blood; And what delight can there be in such a sight? Or else thus, If you look upon me, you shall find the Spirit and the flesh, like *two Armies* fighting continually one against the other; and there's but a poore deale of beauty and delight in such a sight. But the Question is better taken as propounded by the Bridegroom, the more to stirre up his companions to the admiration of his Spouses beauty and glory, *What will ye see in the Shulamite?* And then the answer is made by himselfe, *as it were the company of two Armies*; that is, you will see in my Spouse an awfull grace and majesty, such as is in a well-marshalled Army ready to goe out against an enemy. And thus Christ sets forth the spirituall beauty of his Church; see the Notes above, ver. 4. It is in the Original, *as it were the company of Mahanaim*, wherein there may be an allusion to that story, Gen. 32. 1. implying that the Spouse and her retinue, the Church with all her members, were as goodly a sight, as were the two hosts of Angels, that appeared there to Jacob for his defence; especially that she shall be so, when the Jewes and Gentiles shall be united into one Church, Eph. 2. 15. and so shall goe forth in great pomp and state, like two gallant Armies, to meeete the Lord Christ, their Bridegroom.

C H A P. VII.

Verf. 1. **H**ow beautifull are thy feet with shoes, O Princes daughter!] For this Title given the Spouse, see the Note, Psal. 45. 13. Many Expositors hold that it is the daughters of Jerusalem, that doe here set forth the beauty of the Spouse in the severall parts of her body; and their maine reason is, because they judge it not proper that Christ should speak of himselfe that which we find, ver. 5. *The king is held in the Galleries*. But nothing is more frequent in the Scripture, then for men to speak of themselves in a third person: I make no question therefore but that it is the Bridegroom, that gives this following large description of the Spouses beauty,

beauty; for who else indeed was fit to speak of those parts mentioned in this and in the following verse, but he who was both her *maker* and her *husband*, Isa. 54. 5. And for the order that he observes herein, in that he begins here with the *feete*, and so goeth upward, whereas before, Chap. 4. 1. he began with the *head*, and so went downward; the ground of this, I conceive, is, not only that by this variety this Song might be made the more delightfull, but also especially because intending in the first place to praise her for that which did at present chiefly commend her to him, to wit, her returning to him after her late straying, under this expression, *How beautifull are thy feet*, &c? Upon this mention of her feet, he takes occasion from thence to proceed by degrees upward in describing the other members of her body. Now for the understanding of the first clause, *How beautifull are thy feet with shooes*: we must know, 1. That by *feet* in the Scripture, is usually meant the motions or goings of the feet; see Eccles. 5. 1. and consequently that as by the beauty of the Spouses feet, may be meant literally the modesty, gravity, and majesty of her gate, and particularly the loveliness and acceptableness of her present return to Christ; so also spiritually may be meant thereby the admirable progresse of the Gospel, by reason of the zeale and diligence of those that preached it, the welcome they should find amongst the people; according to that, Rom. 10. 15. *How beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace*, &c! as likewise the amiable conversation of Christians, their careful walking in the truth and obedience of the Gospel, and zeale in running the wayes of Gods Commandements. And 2. that in the beauty of the Spouses shooes there is an allusion to the costly trimming, wherewith women in those times used to adorne their shooes; whence it is, that we read, Isa. 3. 18. of Gods threatening to take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet; as likewise, that the wearing of shooes was in those dayes a signe of those that were in a free, and joyfull and prosperous estate and condition, as going barefoote, was on the other side a signe of bondage and affliction; see 2 Sam. 15. 30. & Isa. 20. 4. So that by the beauty of the Churches shooes is meant, the blisse and comfort of Christians walking in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, Gal. 5. 1. having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, Eph. 6. 15. in that being assured of reconciliation by the Gospel of peace, they shrink not for any sharpnesse or troubles they meet with in their way; as it was now with the Spouse: before every small thing discouraged her, Chap. 5. 3. *I have put off my coate, how shall I put it on?* whereas now nothing could hinder her from following after Christ.

The joynts of thy thighs are like jewels, &c.] That is, neate and comely; the work of the hands of a cunning workman; that is, one that is a choice workman for making such things. By the joynts of the thighs is meant, either the bones that turn and move in the hollow of the thighs, or rather the hollownesse wherein the hip or thigh-bone is moved or turned about. And indeed the word in the Original, which we translate *joynts*, is derived from a word that signifieth turning, or turning about. Now this signifieth the straight and comely stature of the Spouse, and her ready and decent mooving of her body in her going in a due and comely posture. And so likewise it may signifie the Churches strength and concord, and her upright dealings and Gospel-like conversation. As for the last clause, *the work of the hands of a cunning*

workman,

workman, that hath in the mystical sense respect to God, who as he hath with incomprehensible wisdom most curiously framed all the joynts in our bodies, so he is also the author of his peoples new being; and therefore he calls Israel, even as they were a righteous people, a branch of his planting, and the work of his hands, Isa. 60. 21. and it is he that workes *all our works in us*, and *for us*, Isa. 26. 12. see 1 Cor. 12. 6.

Verf. 2. *Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor.*] It is in the Hebrew, *which wanteth not mixture*, for which see the Notes, Pro. 9. 2. & Cant. 5. 1. And he meanes a goblet full of some precious liquor, even to the very brim, like Davids cup, that is said to *run over*, Psal. 23. 5. which makes such a bowle the more lovely and beautifull; for the drift of the Bridegroom in this comparison, is not only to imply the plenty of nourishment, which from the navel is conveyed to a child in the mothers womb (to the hinting whereof even the roundnesse of the goblet is significant, because that makes it the more capacious) see the Notes, Job 40. 16. & Pro. 3. 8. but also to set forth the beauty of the navel, which God hath made to be an ornament to the belly, and such that in regard of its curious shape, the roundnesse, hollownesse, and the windings and circlings in it hath some resemblance of a goblet, that is artificially wrought, and turned with roundlets for the adorning of it. And hereby, as all Expositors agree, that vertue is meant whereby new converts are formed, and nourished, and cherished in the womb of the Church, which may be applied severally: either, 1. To the grace of Regeneration it selfe, whereby those that are begotten againe and made new creatures, are secretly fed and nourished, as the child is in the mothers womb by the navel, being made carefull to cherish those principles of grace and good desires that are wrought in their hearts; which may well be compared to a *goblet, which wanteth not liquor*, because this grace is never quite lost, but it is as a *well of water, springing up into everlasting life*, Joh. 4. 14. see also, Joh. 7. 38. 2^{ly}, To the Ministers or Ministry of the Gospel, whereby the first beginnings of grace are cherished and encreased, Gal. 4. 19. *Which wanteth not liquor*; in that the Church shall never want that liquor of saving doctrine, wherewith the work of grace must be cherished in her children, Matth. 28. 20. And 3^{ly}, To the Sacrament of Baptisme, which is the outward seale of our Regeneration; of the laver whereof it may well be said, that it *wanteth no liquor*, because from thence plenty of instruction and comfort may be fetched for poore Christians upon all occasions.

Thy belly is like an heap of wheat, &c.] That is, say some, a stack of wheat-sheaves, or rather a heap of wheat-corne, that is round and rising, broad beneath and narrow above. And hereby is signified, either, 1. the Churches fruitfulness, in regard of the multitude of children, which she continually brings forth unto God; in regard whereof, as she may be well compared to a woman big with child, Revel. 12. 2. whose belly may be well said to be *as a heap of wheat*; so her numberlesse issue may also be said to be as a heap of wheat in the floore of the Church, which keep close together, being united together by one and the same faith, and the bond of charity and love one to another. And 2. The abundant provision, wherewith the Church is stored for the feeding of all that belong to her charge. And hence it is that some have applied this particularly to the Lords Supper, (as they did that before of the Spouses navel to the

Sacrament of Baptisme) because this Ordinance is appointed for the strengthening of the faith of true believers. As for that last clause, *set about with lilies*, some think, that there is an allusion therein to the custome of making hedges about their stacks of wheat, and that the intention of these words is to shew, that Christians are as a heap of wheat, fenced about, not with briars and thornes, but *with lilies*, that is, by their innocency and blamelesse conversation. But I rather think that in this expression, there is an allusion to a custome of adorning their heapes of new wheate in the joyfull time of harvest with flowers and garlands; and that accordingly the drift of this clause is to shew, either, 1. That Christians are gloriously adorned with the gifts and graces of Gods Spirit: or 2^{ly}, That the food of the Church is sweet and pleasant, and the meanes of much spirituall joy to Gods people. Because the belly is the seat of the bowels, therefore some understand that which is said here of the Churches bowels of compassion and sweet tender affections, which she sheweth to others in seeking their spirituall good. But the former Exposition is justly preferred.

Verf. 3. *Thy two breasts are like two young Roes, &c.*] See the Note, Chap. 4. 5.

Verf. 4. *Thy neck is as a tower of Ivory.*] Some understand hereby Solomons throne of Ivory, 1 Reg. 10. 18. being the rather induced to think so, by comparing this place with that in Neh. 8. 4, where *the pulpit of wood*, whereon the Levites expounded the Law unto the people, is in the Hebrew tearmed *a tower of wood*. But 1. Because we reade in the Scripture of Ivory houses, 1 King. 22. 39. & Amos 3. 15. and of Ivory palaces, Psal. 45. 8. And 2. Because in the following branches of this verse, the comparisons that are used, are taken from places that were famously known in those times, I see not why it may not be very probably thought that it was some particular *tower of Ivory*, that is here intended. The Bridegroom had before compared the neck of his Spouse to *the tower of David*, Chap. 4. 4. for which see the Note there: But here now to *a tower of Ivory*, and that to shew how exceeding pure, and white, and smooth, and bright it was. And accordingly hereby is noted, either the purity and glorious beauty of those graces, which were before intended by the Spouses neck, as faith, &c. or else of the persons intended thereby, namely the Ministers and Governours of the Church, See the Note, Chap. 4. 4. how pure and precious their doctrine should be, and how holy and blamelesse they should be in their conversation.

Thine eyes like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim.] Heshbon was a goodly City in the Country of the Reubenites, Numb. 32. 37. that was formerly the royal City of Sihon, King of the Amorites, Numb. 21. 26. and here it seems there were very goodly fish-pools, that were a great ornament to this City, and for the plenty and pure clearnesse of the waters, and for their curious and artificial making, were very famous throughout the Land of Israel; and they were, as is noted here, *by the gate of Bathrabbim*, which is by interpretation, *the gate of many*, so called, it seems, either because it was the place of Judicature, or the Market place, and so multitudes of people resorted thither; or rather, because such multitudes of people were still going in and out at this gate, fetching water from these fish-pools. Now to these *fish-pools by the gate of Bathrabbim*, the Bridegroom compares his Spouses eyes, as before to *doves eyes*, Chap. 1. 15. & 4. 1. to shew how clear, and bright, and love-ly

ly her eyes were. And if by the Churches eyes, (according to what is before noted in those forecited places) we understand the faith and knowledge of Christians, this signifieth how rich and plentiful their knowledge is, how quick-sighted they are to see the truth, and to look into their own and other mens actions: Or if hereby we understand those that are Teachers in the Church, then hereby is signified, how usefull and gracefull they are to the Church; they are abundantly replenished with wisdom, that so the people may flock to them for instruction and counsell, as men do to such pools to draw water; and by them may receive clear and full satisfaction, and be abundantly replenished with saving knowledge, as with the waters of life. Some adde that the Churches eyes are compared to these pools of Heshbon, with respect to her frequent powring forth of abundant tears, both for her own sinnes, and the sins of others. See Jer. 9. 1. & 31. 9. & Zech. 12. 10. And others say, that the Scriptures are the Spouses eyes, that are here compared to *the fish-pools of Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim*, because every man may freely go to them, to draw from thence of the water of life, and may therein, as in a glasse, Jam. 1. 23. discover the spots in his spirituall face, and so wash them off. But I take the first applications of the similitude, to be farre most genuine and agreeable to the intention of the Holy Ghost.

Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus.] Though there might be a tower in that house which Solomon built in or nigh unto Jerusalem, which was called *the house of the forest of Lebanon*, 1 King. 7. 2. (for which see the Note there:) yet because Lebanon was a mountain in the utmost North-border of the Land of Israel, and Damascus lay North-ward from Lebanon, I doubt not but that there was a tower also built by Solomon in that mountain. See the Note, 1 King. 9. 19. and that it was purposely built, that it might be a watch-tower and Frontier Garrison, to secure the Land against the incursions of the Syrians from Damascus, which was their chief City, Isa. 7. 8. And this, I conceive, is *the tower of Lebanon* that is here intended; and that those words, *which looketh toward Damascus*, are added purposely to distinguish it from the other tower of Lebanon, which was in or nigh unto Jerusalem. Nor need it seem strange to us, that the Bridegroom should here compare his Spouses nose, that is indeed one of the chief ornaments of the face, to a tower; if we consider 1. That it is not with respect to the greatness of that tower, that this comparison is made, but with respect to the beauty of that building, to imply a nose fair and beautifull, not crooked but strait, well-featured and well proportioned: 2. The nature of this Poem, which being a Pastorall, the language therein is suited to that of shepherds, and country people, who are wont to compare their loves to any thing that is strange, wonderfull, and glorious in their eyes: And 3. That the mysticall and spirituall sense of every passage must be principally respected, as they have respect to Christ and his Spouse, the Church; for so here the Churches nose is compared to *the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus*, the use whereof was to observe and discover the first motions of their enemies, the Syrians, that so they might in time be armed against them, thereby to signifie, 1. The watchfull care of the Church for the preservation of her self and children against all the attempts of her enemies, and that especially, by the

vigilant care of her watchmen, the Ministers of the Gospel, who are for this end set in places of eminency above others, that they may be as towers of defence for the securing of the people. 2. The Churches wonderfull sagacity in discovering the secret frauds of her enemies, and the dangers that are coming upon her: The nose is the instrument of smelling; and suitable hereto God hath given his Church such an eminent gift of solid judgement and discretion, and discerning of spirits, 1 Cor. 12. 10. that his people are able to smell out Satan his errors, and cunning stratagems, even when he appears outwardly as an Angel of light, see 2 Cor. 2. 11. & Rev. 2. 2. and so by this means they are inabled to arm themselves against approaching dangers; yea and hereby they can discern things that differ, and so do only favour the things above, and bend all their force to make sure to themselves things eternall. And 3. The Churches courage and magnanimity in standing out against dangers, and resisting the attempts of her enemies thus discovered, manifested in her outward carriage and behaviour.

Verf. 5. *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel.*] Carmel was a high mountaine in Phœnicia, exceeding glorious and beautifull, because of its fruitfulness; whence is that, Isa. 33. 9. *The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed, and hewen down: Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.* And hence it is, that the Bridegroom compareth the head of his Spouse to Carmel; And this some think he doth with respect to some curious tire or ornaments, it may be some garland of flowers, after the manner of Country Brides, she wore upon her head, which made her head like unto Mount Carmel; But rather it is spoken with reference to her head it selfe; *Thy head upon thee is like Carmel*; That is, Thy head which stands above the rest of thy body, is as goodly and beautifull as Carmel; or, it as farre excels all other womens, as Carmel is above all other Mountaines. Some reade this, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *Thine head upon thee is like crimson*; and this also may referre to the costly and beautiful attire, which she wore upon her head, fit for her that was a *Princes daughter*, ver. 1. or it may rather imply, that her head was stately and full of Prince-like Majesty. But however that which is principally intended is, that the mind of the Church is filled with all wisdom and knowledge, and adorned with all the goodly graces of Gods Spirit; or that through the grace of God in Christ crucified, she is very lovely and amiable in Gods sight.

And the haire of thine head is like purple.] This also some referre to the purple-filletings, or haire-laces, or some other such like trimming, wherewith her haire was adorned; Or, it may signifie that her haire was of a bright and lovely colour, or Prince-like beautifull; for scarlet and purple were usually worn by Princes. And according to the interpretation formerly given of the Spouses haire, Chap. 4. 1. this may spiritually signifie, 1. That the Churches outward profession is very glorious. 2. That her thoughts, and purposes, and affections, were holy and heavenly, and dyed, as it were, in the blood of Christ; yea and 3^{ly}, that Christians themselves are adorned with the righteousness of Christ, and many precious graces, and thereby made very comely and beautifull in Gods sight.

The King is beld in the galleries.] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *bound in the galleries.* So ne Expositors give this to be the meaning of these words, that there is no King in the

the world, but if he should once come to behold the beauty of the Church, he would be so ravished therewith, that he would desire continually to satisfie his eyes with the sight thereof, and despising all the glory of the world in comparison of her beauty, would mind nothing else but the beholding of that. But I rather think that the Bridegroom, as it is usually in the Scripture, speaks here of himselfe in a third person, *The King is held in the galleries*; that is, when king Solomon, as he walkes in his galleries, espyeth thee, he is presently so captivated, and chained with thy beauty, that he cannot move but stands gazing upon thee, as not being able to satisfie himselfe with beholding of thee. The galleries of Kings used to be hanged with rich purple hangings; and to these, it seemes, the Bridegroom doth here allude; affirming, that as her haire was bound in her haire-laces, so was he bound in those galleries by beholding her beauty; see the Note, Chap. 4. 9. And so the meaning is, that Christ, the true Solomon, is so exceedingly delighted with the graces of his Spouse the Church, that he is even tyed to her with the bands and cords of such a firme conjugal love, that he cannot keep his eyes off her, nor cannot but abide with her for ever; he is held *in his galleries*; that is, say some, in the particular Congregations of his people, where his love will engage him to be still with them unto the end of the world; see Hos. 2. 19. Isa. 62. 4. Ezek. 37. 26. & 48. 35. & 2 Cor. 6. 16.

Vers. 6. *How faire and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!*] That is, for the manifold delights, which by reason of thy beauty, thou yieldest both to me, and to others that converse with thee; see Isa. 66. 10, 11. The Bridegroom having elegantly set forth the beauty of his Spouse in many severall parts of her body, here he winds up all in this patheticall expression of admiration, *How faire, and how pleasant, &c!* Thereby implying, that in regard of all the particulars before mentioned, and so in regard of all the rest of her body, which he had not named, her beauty was so wonderfull great, that there were no words whereby he could expresse it, *How faire, and how pleasant, &c!* And so withall there may be in these words a reason couched, why he had said in the foregoing verse, that the King was held in the galleries, namely, because her beauty being so admirable, it was no wonder, though the king was captivated with a constant desire of beholding her; see the Notes, Chap. 1. 15, 16. & 4. 7, 9.

Vers. 7. *This thy stature is like to a Palm-tree.*] That is, In regard of *this thy stature*, which I have particularly described, and which consists indeed in the due proportion of all the members, thou art *like to a Palm-tree*, to wit, in that thou art, 1. tall, as the Palm-tree is, as the Poet in a like expression sets forth the comeliness of a woman, *Longâ procerior alno*: 2. Straight and bolt-upright, which is alwayes esteemed very gracefull in women; and 3. Strong, fresh, and flourishing, and so likewise in other particulars; for which see the Note, Psal. 92. 12. where it is said, that *the righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree*. And in all this the Holy Ghost intends to set forth, not only the transcendent eminency of the Churches dignity, and beauty, and glory, but also the magnanimity and heavenly mindednesse of Christians, who are still looking upward, and have their conversation in heaven, Phil. 3. 20. and the continual progresse and growth of the Church, till they come at last, *Unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ*, Eph. 4. 13.

And

And thy breasts to clusters of grapes.] In the Original it is only *clusters*: and indeed it is generally said, that the fruit of the Palm-tree growes in *clusters*. But because in the following verse they are called *clusters of the Vine*, therefore, I conceive, was the word renderd by our Translators, *clusters of grapes*. And to shew that these *clusters of grapes* are not unfitly joyned with *the Palm-tree*, mentioned in the foregoing part of this verse, Expositors tell us, that in those Countries they used to plant their Vines by their Palm-trees, that so the Vines clasping about these trees might thereby be born up. However, having commended the goodlinesse of his Spouses stature, the Bridegroom takes occasion from thence againe to set forth the beauty of her breasts, (though of them he had spoken before, ver. 3.) because when women grow up in stature, then their breasts swell and grow great; And this is that which he intends in saying her breasts were *like to clusters of grapes*, to wit, that they were fair, and big, and full of milk, as those are of wine. Now whether we understand this, according to the exposition formerly given of the Churches breasts, Chap. 4, 5. either of the Pastors and Teachers in the Church, or the two Testaments, the old and the new, the meaning of the comparison is cleare, to wit, that the Scriptures are abundantly replenished with wholesome nourishment, and such as may be, like clusters of grapes, both for meate and drink to the soules of Gods people: and that Ministers must be alwayes as breasts full of milk, for the satisfying of the spirituall hunger and thirst of the children of God committed to their charge.

Verf. 8. *I said, &c.*] As if he should have said, I promised, and I will make it good; Or, rather, I did firmly hereupon resolve and determine thus with my selfe, *I will goe up to the Palm-tree*; that is, I will climb up into this my Palm-tree, I will converse with, and enjoy the love and delights of this my deare Spouse. And so the meaning is, that Christ would joyne himselfe to his Church, and be with her, and converse lovingly with her, as with his dearly beloved Spouse: *I will take hold of the boughes thereof*; that is, say some Expositors, that I may climb up thereby into this my Palm-tree. But because it is generally said, that the Palm-tree, though very tall, hath no boughes growing out on the sides of the body of it, but only on the top, and that all the fruit it beares groweth there, therefore I rather think that by laying hold of the boughes thereof is meant, either that he would prune them and dresse them, or else rather that he would take hold on them, and gather the fruit that was growing thereon. And so it implyes how tenderly carefull the Bridegroom would be over his Spouse for her good and welfare; or his resolution to delight himselfe in her beauty and love; which in reference to Christ, doth import two particulars principally concerning his dealing with the Church, to wit, 1. that he pruneth and purgeth every true Christian, and particular Congregation, (for these may be meant by the boughes of this Palm-tree) to make them the more beautifull and fruitfull; according to that, Joh. 15. 2. *Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit*; and 2. that he takes exceeding great delight in the gracious disposition and holy conversation of his Church and people.

Now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the Vine.] That is, Thou shalt become more and more fresh, and sweet, and lovely, both in mine eyes, and in the eyes of others. That which is promised here is, that by the presence of Christ in his Church,
and

and his tender care to doe her good, she should not be *barren nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 1. 8. but, should *blossome, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit*, Isa. 27. 6. and so should yield the more delight to him, and the more plentiful nourishment to her children.

And the smell of thy nose like apples.] This may be taken two severall wayes; namely, 1. Of the breath which came out of her nostrils, that this should be sweet as the most odoriferous apples; see the Note, Chap. 2. 5. so that all that approached neare her, should be delighted with the savour of her sweet breath. And if we take it thus, then the spirituall meaning may be, that the breathing of the Church in her Teaching and holy conference shall be exceeding sweet and delightfull; see 2 Cor. 2. 14. And so it is the same with that, Chap. 4. 11. for which see the Note there. Yea and look as the sweetnesse of the breath, is a signe that the inward parts are sound and good, so the sweet breath of the Church and people of God, is a signe that the hidden man of the heart is uncorrupt. And 2^{ly}, Of the sweetnesse of that which is smelt by her; *the smell of thy nose shall be like apples*, that is, thy nose by drawing in a pure, and sweet, and heavenly ayre, shall refresh thy inward parts, as when the spirits are refreshed with the smell of apples; meaning, that Gods people should by the sweet breathings of Gods Spirit be quickned and refreshed in the inner man; Or, *the smell of thy nose*, that is, that which thy nose smelleth, shall be *like apples*, thy graces and gracious conversation, (especially in regard of those graces for which the Spouses nose was, ver. 4. compared to the tower of Lebanon) shall yield a sweet fragrant savour to thy selfe; and consequently also both to me and others; yea thou shalt perceive that the sweet savour of thy good report and fame by reason hereof is spread abroad farre and neare. Thus, I say, I conceive, the Holy Ghost doth set forth the blessed effects of Christs drawing neare to his Church here in this world: though others, I know, take the whole verse to be a figurative expression of Christs perfect conjunction with his Church in the kingdome of heaven, and the unspeakable pleasure, which he will take in her there for ever and ever.

Verf. 9. *And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine, &c.*] The Spouse had formerly said of her beloved, Chap. 5. 16. *His mouth (or, his palate) is most sweet*; for which see the Note there; and here now he returnes a like expression of his high esteeme of her; *And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine*; meaning that her breath or speech was exceeding sweet and delightfull. And that which is spiritually intended hereby is, 1. That the doctrine of the Church is sweet and pleasant to poore sinners, full of spirit and life, chearing and refreshing the sad hearts of Gods people like wine, Pro. 3. 1. 6. see Pro. 9. 2. 2^{ly}, That Christ takes great delight in the faithfull dispensing of this word of his grace amongst the children of men, and in the prayers and praises which they offer up to God; and 3^{ly}, That the communication and speech of the faithfull is sweet and gracious, and such as tends to the edifying of others, like generous wine, gladding the hearts of their brethren, and exceeding delightfull to Christ; according to that, Pro. 23. 16. *My reins shall rejoyce, when thy lips speake right things*. As for the following words, *For my beloved, that goeth down sweetly*, it may be renderd according to the Hebrew, *which goeth straightly* (or, according to righteousnesses,) *to my beloved*; and they that thus read the words understand them

to be a description of the best wine, much like that, Pro. 23. 31. *When it moveth it selfe aright*; for which see the Note there. And indeed thus men are wont in these times to speak of wine, when it looks brisk and sparkles in the cup, *ay, this is right*. But who is meant in those words, *For my beloved*? I answer; This indeed makes this place very intricate; the rather because this is usually the expression, which the Bride useth concerning the Bridegroom; which hath made many Expositors take this whole verse as spoken by the Bride. But methinks it is most evident, that this, with all that went before from the beginning of this Chapter, is spoken by the Bridegroom in commendation of the Bride. And accordingly there are three other answers given by Expositors for the resolving of this Question; for, 1. Some take it thus, that when the Bridegroom had said, *The roof of thy mouth is like the best wine*, then the Bride interposed the following words, *for my beloved*, &c. As if she had said, If the roof of my mouth be like the best wine, to be sure it is only so for my beloved, no body else must drink or tast of it. 2^d, Others hold, that the whole verse is spoken by the Bridegroom, only in those words, *for my beloved*, he pleasantly mentions that loving expression which was so frequent in his Spouses mouth, as if he had said, *The roof of thy mouth is like the best wine*, as thou usest to say, *for my beloved*. And 3^d, (which I like the best) Others think that the meaning of the Bridegroom in these words is only this, that the roof of her mouth was like that choice wine, which at his banquets he used to bring forth for his choicest and best-beloved friends. Every way the intent of the words is much the same, namely, that the doctrine of the Church is acceptable to Christ; or intended for the making known of Christ, or for the chearing and refreshing of the beloved members of Christ. And then the last words, *Causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak*; that is an hyperbolical expression of the mighty efficacy of strong excellent wine, as if one should say, that such wine is able to revive a dead man, or to make a mans tongue run when he is fast asleep, or to make dull, stupid, sleepy-headed fellows, very fluent and eloquent in speaking; as indeed strong wine is wont to make men talkative, and to be given to babbling, as Solomon saith, Pro. 23. 29. *yea to affect a kind of finenesse and eloquence in speaking, Facundi calices quem non fecere disertum?* I know that some by wine, *causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak*, understand wine, that makes men overcome with the strength of it, to speak as if they were asleep. And some read the words, as they are rendered in the margin of our Bibles, *Causing the lips of the ancient to speak*, who are indeed sometimes by reason of weaknesse duller and heavier of speech. But the former both translation and exposition are clearly the best. To be sure such is the mighty efficacy of the doctrine of the Gospel, that it will quicken those that are dead asleep in sinne, and make even *the tongue of the dumb sing*, as it is, Isa. 35. 6. and even when Christians are most drowsie and sleepy, if the word comes once to have the word of life dwell plentifully in them, this will make their tongues as the pen of a ready writer, their language will be holy and pious, they will talke much of the things of God, and of Christ, and they will not be able to forbear, according to that, Act. 4. 20. *We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*

Verf. 10. *I am my beloveds, and his desire is towards me.*] As if she should have said, (for these are clearly the words of the Spouse) I see it is so, by these sweet expressions

pressions of his love, which I have now heard from him; I see we doe alike love one another. But see the Notes, Chap. 2. 16. & 6. 3.

Verf. 11. *Come, my beloved, let us goe forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages.*] The Spouse speakes here after the manner of those, that dwelling in the City doe sometimes walk out into the field, or goe to their Country-houses to take the ayre, and to take notice how the Spring comes forward, and how those things they have planted there doe thrive and prosper: And hereby is figuratively set forth the Churches care, 1. for the propagation of the Gospel throughout all nations, according to the commission given her, Matth. 28. 19. *for the field is the world*, Matth. 13. 38. 2^d, To visite those Churches that are already planted, according to that of the Apostle Paul to Barnabas, Act. 15. 36. *Let us goe again and visit our brethren in every City, where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they doe.* 3. In seeking the conversion of men, not to despise the simplest and meanest cottages, but to seek the saving of the soules of the poore in such obscure places, as well as others; for this may be implied also by the mention that is made here of *the field and the villages*; see Matth. 9. 35. & Mark 6. 6. & Isa. 43. 19, 20. &c. 4th, To beg of Christ, that he would goe along with her, to protect and prosper her in this work; because though Pastors and Teachers must labour in this work, and are therefore called fellow-labourers with God, 1 Cor. 3. 9. yet all their support and successe is from Christ, without whom they can doe nothing, Joh. 15. 5. And 5. Some adde also, To withdraw themselves sometime from the troubles and distractions of the world, that they may in private retired places, enjoy the sweet and heavenly delight of holy meditation, and of powring forth their soules in prayer unto God.

Verf. 12. *Let us get up early to the Vineyards.*] The Spouse having smarted sorely for her former sluggishnesse, when she refused to rise to her beloved, Chap. 5. 3. is now in a quite contrary temper of doing all things with all possible diligence, that might be acceptable to her beloved, *Let us get up early to the Vineyards*, to wit, because in the morning all things are sweetest and most pleasant in the Country. And this sets forth the Churches diligence in visiting and seeking the good of particular Congregations, (for these are Christs Vineyards, see Isa. 5. 1. and the Note, Cant. 6. 1.) according to a like expression of the Lords sending his Prophets early to his people, 2 Chro. 36. 15. & Jer. 25. 3. 4.

Let us see if the Vine flourish, whether the tender grape appeare, and the Pomegranates bud forth.] That is, To see what access there was made to the Church, and how the Christians therein, both young and old, did thrive and grow in grace; see the Note, Chap. 6. 11. for *the tender grapes*, see the Notes, Chap. 2. 13, 15. and for the Pomegranates, see the Notes, Chap. 4. 3, 13. & 6. 7.

There will I give thee my loves.] It is expressed in the plurall number to set forth the excellency, the plenty and abundance thereof. Some take this to be a modest expression of nearest consugal communion; But it may intend only, that she would there yield him all possible expressions of her unfeined love and affection to him. However, the spirituall meaning is cleare, that in the Vineyards of the Church, the Assemblies of the Saints, the Spouse would give up her selfe, soule and body, to Christ, and yield him the fruition of all her graces, and the fruits thereof in her profession

and good workes ; for which see those notable places , Ezek. 20. 40, 41. & Isa. 65. 9.

Verf. 13. *The mandrakes give a smell.*] That is, a sweet pleasant smell ; But for the mandrakes, see the Note, Gen. 30. 14. Whatever our mandrakes are, it is clear that those mentioned there and here, were rare, and beautifull, and sweet flowers ; and if they had a vertue to procure love, as it is said they had, or were generally conceived to have, and are therefore often by Writers called *Circea*, this may be one reason why these are here particularly mentioned : for this, with that which follows, is pressed by the Spouse as a motive to allure her beloved to go along with her, as she had desired, ver. 11. into the Country. And hereby is meant the sweet savour of the graces and good works of Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, which are very delightfull. For which see the Note, Chap. 2. 13.

And at our gates are all manner of precious fruits, &c.] See the Notes, Chap. 4. 13, 16. In this expression here used, there seems to be an allusion, either 1. To the old custom of adorning the gates, and strewing the doors of Bride-houses, with all kind of sweet and goodly flowers and fruits : Or 2^{ly}, To the manner of having all kind of delicious fruits planted by their wals, and elsewhere close by their gates, so that they were alwaies ready at hand for them that came thither. Or rather 3^{ly}, To the custom of their using to make the chambers or lofts over their gates, in country houses, the store-houses, where they kept the fruits of their gardens and orchards : And therefore doth the Spouse adde those following words, *New and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved* ; for the understanding whereof we must know ; first, that this may be spoken with reference to those trees, Orange-trees and others, that use to have, both old fruit that is fully ripe, and green fruit that is newly coming on, growing on them at the same time ; or else the new fruit of the present year, and old of the foregoing year, laid up in their store-houses ; or it may be an expression only intended to imply their variety and plenty of fruits, according to that which is said of the *householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure, things new and old*, Matth. 13. 52. See also Levit. 26. 10. Secondly, that by these fruits at their gates, both new and old, is spiritually meant, either young converts and old professors ; or else the first gifts and graces conferred upon Christians, and their first good works, Revel. 2. 5. and fresh and new supplies of gifts and graces, divers and many, which God conferres upon his faithfull ones, and their works more at the last then at the first, Revel. 2. 19. for so runs the promise to the sincere, that they shall persevere and grow in grace. Matth. 25. 29. *Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.* And these fruits are said to be at the gates, either to imply the readinesse and forwardnesse of the Saints to the fruits of obedience to Christ : The Lord can never come to visit his Church, but he shall finde her ready presently to entertain him according to his will ; or else to signifie the open profession, and clear discovery which they make of holinesse and righteousness in the sight of all men : And thirdly, that the Spouse is said to have laid up these for her beloved, because the Churches constant aim is to referre and improve all her gifts and graces to the glory and service of Christ.

CHAP. VIII.

Verf. 1. **O** *That thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother.*] To set forth the ardency of her affection to her beloved, and her desire of conversing constantly with him, with all freedom of familiarity and expressing their love mutually one to another, the Spouse here wisheth, that he were to her, as her brother, *that sucked the breasts of her mother*, meaning thereby, either a brother most faithfull and loving, a brother that had tumbled in the same belly, and sucked of the same breasts with her, a brother by the mothers side, because such use indeed to love one another most affectionately, as we see in Joseph and Benjamin, See the Note, Deut. 13. 6. or rather, a brother, that were yet a little child, sucking the breasts of her mother, with whom his elder sisters live continually in the same house, and are ever and anon taking him up in their arms, and sporting themselves with him; as seems most probable by the following words, *When I should find thee without, I would kisse thee, yet I should not be despised*, which seems to imply, that the Spouse desires that the marriage betwixt her and her beloved were fully consummated, that so she might as freely embrace and kisse him, as a sister doth her little sucking brother, even when she finds him abroad out of doors, because she knows no body will despise or reproach her for it, or count it any immodesty in her. And accordingly the spiritual sense of these words may be, either 1. That it is the Jews, that here desire to see the promised Messiah in the flesh; which how earnestly they longed for in the daies before Christ, that waited for this consolation of Israel, we may see Matth. 13. 17. & Joh. 8. 56. & Heb. 11. 13. Then Christ was to the faithfull as a brother, see the Note, Chap. 4. 9. yea as a brother that sucked the breasts of their mother, either because he sucked the breasts of mans humane nature, being suckled and nursed up by his mother, the blessed Virgin, as other children are; or else because he sucked the spiritual breasts of the Church, their mother, in that he attended upon the Ministry of John, and other Jewish teachers. And then too it might be said that he was found *without*, because then he came into the world, and was openly seen amongst men. Before his Incarnation he lay hid in the bosome of his Father, and was no other way revealed upon earth, but under the shadows of dark types and ceremonies; but when that was done, which Christ said, Joh. 16. 28: *I am come forth from the Father, and am come into the world*, then he was found openly abroad manifest in the flesh; and with reference to this time may those words therefore be taken by the faithfull, *when I should find thee without, I would kisse thee*, that is, I would by all possible means manifest my love and humble respect to thee, see the Note, Psal. 2. 12. *Yet I should not be despised*; to wit, as I am now, whilst thou delayest thy coming, and so I am scorned and despised, as expecting a Messiah that will never come. Or 2^d, that the Church doth here desire the consummation of her marriage with Christ in heaven, where she might for ever dwell with him, and familiarly and openly manifest her love to him, as brothers are wont to do that live together in one house, and that without any danger of being despised. Here the men of the world are wont to scorn and deride the faithfull for their love to Christ; but when they shall meet

meet with him out of the world in heaven, their exceeding glory there shall manifest, that they are not a people to be despised; yea there shall be no enemy there to despise them. Or 3^{dly}, that the Church doth in this patheticall wish, only set forth her longing desire, that she might yet enjoy a more intimate and familiar communion with Christ, that being mutually knit together by the same Spirit, the most affectionate brother and sister might not love one another, & delight one in another more then they did. And then in the following words, *When I should find thee without I would kisse thee, yet I should not be despised.* The Church promiset that she would openly embrace and own him, and make a free profession of him before all the world, as knowing that in the conclusion she should not be despised for it. Yea and lastly, some make this the wish of the believing Jews that should be converted in the latter dayes.

Verf. 2. *I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mothers house, &c.*] According to what is noted in the close of the foregoing Note, this may be also taken as a profession of the Jewish Church, that shall be converted in the latter dayes, how farre otherwise she would deale with Christ, then their forefathers had done, to wit, that they would not cast him out of their Synagogues, as they did, but would with all respect and joy, entertaine him into their Assemblies. But it is better understood of the Church in generall; and see therefore the Note upon the like expression, Chap. 3. 4. And indeed if it should be restrained to any particular, it may seem more probable, that the Church of the Gentiles doth here promise to bring Christ into the Church of the Jewes; because she might well call them her *mothers house*, in regard the Church of the Gentiles had her first Original from the Jewes. However, observable it is, that by expressing this with those severall tearmes, *I would lead thee and bring thee, &c.* the Spouse implies the joyfullnesse of the matter she was now speaking of, and her firme resolution that she would certainly doe it; she would carry her beloved into her mothers house; *who*, saith she, *would instruct me*, to wit, as in all other things, so also how I should carry my selfe towards thee, my beloved.

I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, &c.] That is, *Ipocras*; of the juice of my *Pomegranate*. The meaning is, that she would entertaine him there with the choicest drinkes she had. If this be restrained to the converted Jewes, as is said in the foregoing Note, it implies, that they would not give Christ gall and vinegar to drink, as their ancestors had done, but give him the best entertainment they could. But understanding this, as the former, of the Church in generall, the words shew, that the word should not be fruitlesse in her, because she would honour and serve Christ, with all her graces, and the fruits thereof, her praises and holy conversation, which are most sweet, pleasant and delightfull to Christ; see the Notes, Chap. 4. 10. & 5. 1.

Verf. 3. *His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.*] Herein the Spouse declares, how her beloved would cherish her, if he were once brought into her mothers house. But see the Note, Chap. 2. 8.

Verf. 4. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stirre not up, nor awake my love, until he please.*] To wit, When at any time, holding me in his embraces, he shall fall asleep. It is in the Hebrew, *Why should you stirre up, or, why should you awake*

wake my love, &c? As if she had said, It will be no way advantageous, either to you or us, to provoke and displease the Lord Christ, to interrupt his Rest and communion with his Sion, but rather it will be very dangerous. But this implies the very same that is in our Translation, And therefore I charge you doe not doe it. But see the Notes, Chap. 2. 7. & 3. 5.

Verf. 5. *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, &c?* For these first words, see the Note, Chap. 3. 6. But for the following words, *leaning on her beloved*, they are added here, with respect to the Spouses supposed loving and familiar carriage of her selfe to her beloved in her leaning upon him, as she went along with him; for that this was an expression of familiarity and love, is evident by the mention that is made of the custome of Kings leaning on the hands of their great favourites, 2 Kings 9. 18. & 7. 2. Very many Expositors take these to be the words of the Bridegroom; and accordingly conceive that Christ doth herein admire and extoll the faith and love of his Spouse, the Church, and rejoyceth and glorieth in her happy coming up out of her wilderness-estate, that she might thus associate her selfe with him her Lord and Redeemer. Again others think, that it is the Bride, the Church, that speaks this of her selfe in a third person, *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?* and that too, as admiring at, and rejoycing in her exceeding great happinesse, in that she enjoyed so neare and sweet communion with Christ her beloved, and propounding it to be considered, as a matter of wonder, by others. But I rather think, that as before, Chap. 3. 6. so here likewise, they are the words of the friends of the Bridegroom or Bride, or some others, that must be supposed to have met them by the way; and that therefore in our Bibles they are included in a parenthesis by themselves. And accordingly they must be taken as a joyfull acclamation of the holy Angels, or other the faithfull servants of Christ, wondering, either 1. at the neare conjunction and deare love that was betwixt Christ and his Church; or 2^{ly}, at the springing up of some new Church in some place where there had been no Congregation of believers before, and their being conducted by Christ thorough the wilderness of the world; or 3. at the former Churches growth and encrease, her strength and zeale for Christ, and her stedfast and unmoveable faith and patience, by reason of her neare union with, and constant dependance upon her beloved Saviour. But yet considering that the foregoing words and those which follow after, are most probably thought to be the words of the Spouse, methinks it is the clearest way to take this also (which some Expositors doe) as spoken by her, only in the name of others; *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?* As if she had said, Thus will people now again extoll my happinesse; Every one that beholds me will admire my blisse in that familiarity and love that is betwixt me and my beloved. However, by this phrase of the Churches *leaning upon her beloved*, the Holy Ghost doth imply, not only her entire love to Christ, but also her dependance upon him by faith; that the Church is weak in her selfe, (as the Vine that would sink and fall down to the earth, were it not that she clings fast to her wall or pole) only by casting her selfe upon his merits, and resting in all things upon him for help and assistance, he is a sure support to her, and doth strongly beare her up; see Joh. 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & Jer. 10. 23.

I raised

I raised thee up under the apple-tree : there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.] Very many learned Expositors doe take these also to be the words of the Bridegroom to the Bride. And accordingly they make the spiritual sense of the words to be, either, 1. that when the Church lay in a sad and deplorable estate, that naturall estate wherein she was conceived and brought forth by her mother, like a child cast out in the fields under a tree, unpitied and ready to perish (and indeed the Prophet compares man in his naturall estate to such a child *cast out in the open field*, and so left in a sad and desperate condition, Ezek. 16. 4, 5.) then Christ did by his free grace raise her up, and bring her to that glorious condition which at present she enjoyed : or 2^d, that when the Church lay under the tree of the forbidden fruit, that is, under the guilt of that first sinne, whereby all mans posterity were destroyed, then Christ did love her, and raise her out of that misery ; and by the Ministry of the Gospel in the Primitive Church, she was born againe. But because in the Hebrew pricked Bibles, the words are in the masculine gender, as spoken to a man, therefore the most of our Protestant Expositors do take them to be the words of the Spouse to her beloved. And so according to the letter of the Parable the Spouse may be supposed to speak this by way of putting him in mind of the place in his mothers house, where they began first to set their affections one upon another, to wit, that finding him asleep under an apple-tree there, she awakened him, and so upon that occasion their hearts from thence-forth were mutually knit together ; whereupon it is that as rejoycing in the very place where he was borne, she addes those words in a kind of rapture of joy, *There thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.* But now for the spirituall sense intended by the Holy Ghost with reference to Christ and his Church : 1. Some conceive that by *the apple-tree* here is meant the Paradice of God in heaven, the place of Christs repose in glory, and that it is said that the Church did there raise up her beloved, because by the prayers and zeale of the faithfull in those times Christ was moved to visit her from heaven ; and so *there*, that is, where the people of God did waken him by their prayer ; according to that expression used concerning prayer, Psal. 44. 23. *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord ?* the Sonne of God was incarnate, and brought forth by his mother the Virgin Mary. Again, 2^d, Some understand by *the apple-tree*, that tree of grace and life, to wit, the Gospel of Christ. The Spouse had before compared her beloved to an *apple-tree*, Chap. 2. 3. for which see the Note there. Now, it seemes, in allusion hereto, because in the Gospel the wonderfull love of Christ, and the hope of life and salvation is made known to poore sinners, the Church here tells Christ, that finding him there, she raised him up to come in to her help and comfort in her misery and sorrow ; and then she addes, *there*, that is, under this discovery of Christ, and the way of salvation by the Ministry of the Gospel ; *thy mother brought thee forth*, that is, the Primitive Church, did conceive thee, and by preaching, professing and practising of the word, and by suffering for the truth, did bring thee forth, as it were, into the world, and that not without many bitter throes and hard labour, as the word in the Original signifieth ; which may be referred, both to the anguish of true penitents that are brought in to Christ, and to the sad sufferings and sorrowes which they undergoe that by preaching the Gospel doe seek their conversion, see 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5.

& 4. 9, 10, 11. And how the Church may be said in this regard to be the mother of Christ, see before in the Note, Chap. 3. 11. But 3^{ly}, Others by *the apple-tree*, understand that tree of offence where our first Parents Apostatized from God; for because the Church did then first in our first Parents by faith lay hold upon Christ, in that promise made to them, That the seed of the woman should break the Serpents head, and did earnestly seek his love, and to get an interest in him, therefore, say they, it is said here that the Church did there raise him up; and that there his mother, that is, Eve the mother of this *promised seed*, or the Church in our first Parents, did first conceive and bring him forth. All which seemes here to be pressed by the Spouse, thereby to engage the heart of Christ the more to her.

Verf. 6. *Set me as a seale upon thy heart, as a seale upon thine arm.*] The same reason that is given the Hebrew Bibles, to prove the foregoing verse to be the words of the Bridegroom, doth also hold here; but see the Note there. Some think that in the expression here used there is respect had to the custome of great mens using to weare certain engraven tablets on their breasts, and signets or seale-rings on their fingers, which because they did highly esteeme, and had them continually in their eye, whence is that which the Lord said concerning Zorobabel, Hag. 2. 23. *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, — and will make thee as a signet;* and concerning Jeconiah, Jer. 22. 24. *As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim King of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;* therefore by these words the Spouse would imply her desire, that her beloved would keep her still in his eye, and make very precious account of her. But I rather think it is meant of the impression of a seale; *Set me as a seale upon thy heart, as a seale upon thine arm;* that is, Let me be deeply imprinted upon thine heart, and upon thine arm; meaning, that she earnestly desired, 1. That she might be nearely and dearly joyned and united to him; 2. That she might be deeply fixed in his heart and affections, never to be removed from thence; see 2 Tim. 2. 19. 3^{ly}, That he might keep her continually in his mind and thoughts; according to that which God saith to his Church, Isa. 49. 10, 22. *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palmes of my hands: thy walls are continually before me.* And 4. That he would outwardly manifest his love by his actions, by helping her, by supporting her in all her infirmities and afflictions, yea by causing all things to work together for her good; which may be principally intended in those words, *as a seale upon thine arm;* see Psal. 77. 15. & Isa. 40. 10, 11. So that there seemes to be an allusion in the words to the precious stones that were on the breast-plate and the shoulder-pieces of the Ephod of the High-Priest, whereon the names of the twelve Tribes were engraven, *like the engravings of a Signet*, Exod. 28. 10, 11, 29. and so hereby covertly is implied, that the earnest desire of the Spouse was, that her beloved would, as a faithfull High-Priest, be continually carefull of her salvation, mindfull of her himselfe, and ready to present a continual memorial of her before his father, as ever appearing before him as her Mediator and Intercessor.

For love is strong as death, &c.] That is, It is as able to kill those that are strongly transported herewith, if they cannot obtaine their desires, as any thing is; Or rather more generally, It is invincible and irresistible, as death is; As no oppo-

fiction can vanquish death, nor withstand the over-bearing power of death; so neither can any thing suppress, nor over-come the strong prevailing power of love; it will vanquish the strongest of men, see Psal. 89. 48. and will break thorough any resistance that is made against it for the obtaining of what it desires. And this the Spouse addes as a reason of that her foregoing passionate request, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart*; and so first it may be referred to the love of Christ; Therefore she desired that he might so affectionately love her, because she knew nothing would be then able to weaken his love to her, and that nothing would be able to stand in his way to hinder him from any manifestation of his love to her, no not death it selfe, as we see in the Jewes, for whom Christ prayed and dyed, when they were so furiously enraged against him, see Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8. Or, secondly, Rather it may be referred to the Spouses love; Therefore did she so eagerly beg that she might be imprinted on his heart, &c. because her love was strong as death, if he should not thus tenderly love her, it would be death to her; her love was so vehement, that she could not resist it, nor would any thing else satisfie her. And indeed true spirituall love will make men break thorough any losses, sorrowes and sufferings, yea death it selfe, that they may enjoy Christ; according to that of the Apostle, *Who shall separate from the love of Christ*, &c. Rom. 8. 35. And to the same purpose is the following clause, *Jealousie is cruel (or hard) as the grave*; where, by *Jealousie* is not meant the wrath which ariseth from vexing suspicion, or from discovery of falsenesse in the party loved, which is indeed cruell enough, see Pro. 6. 34. (for there can be no such jealousy betwixt Christ and his Church) but rather that vehement and fervent love, which we call zeale, which will not endure the least suspicion or feare of the cooling of that love that is betwixt them, and which is therefore said here to be *cruel as the grave*; either, 1. Because this love of the Saints to Christ, is inexorable, it will no more yield to part with Christ, then the grave will spare any man from being lodged in her house of darknesse; or 2^d, Because as the grave devoures all the bodies that are laid in it, so this fervent love will make the Saints mortifie their corruptions, and swallow downe any distresses or difficulties that stand in their way to hinder them from Christ, making them regardlesse of themselves; according to that, Psal. 69. 9. *The zeale of thine house hath eaten me up*; And 3. Because the faithfull can no more endure those that offer any indignity to Christ, then Christ can endure those that offer any wrong to his Church.

The coals thereof are coales of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.] That is, This spirituall love of the Church to Christ, this jealousy or zeale, is like coals of fire that yield a most vehement flame, to wit, because being kindled in the hearts of believers by the Spirit of God, as a spirit of burning, Isa. 4. 4. it doth even burne their hearts within them, it breaks forth into strong and ardent affections, and breathings after Christ, and doth burne up and consume all those cursed corruptions that would hinder their love, as the fire would lick up so much straw or stubble.

Vers. 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it, &c.*] Having in the foregoing verse compared love to a vehement fire, here he addes (the more to set forth the strange force of love) that it was a fire, which water could not quench, no not many waters, not whole floods of waters. Thus some doe give the sense

sense of these words. But rather by *many waters* here and *floods* of water are meant, as usually in the Scripture, many and sore afflictions, see 2 Sam. 22. 16. Psal. 32. 6. & 42. 7. And so that which is intended is, that no threatnings, afflictions, or persecutions, can beate off the Spouse from the love of Christ; see Rom. 8. 35. And therefore in the following words the contrary is added too, to wit, that as no terrors can beate them off from the love of Christ, so neither can any temptations by the proffer of the greatest wealth or rewards allure them from it; *If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned*; that is, if a man, though the wealthiest man in the world, should proffer a Christian all his wealth, to hire him to abandon his love and loyalty to Christ; he would look upon it with scorn and indignation, with contempt and detestation. A true Believer will part with all he hath for Christs sake; but he will not part with Christ for all the world. Some doe otherwise render the meaning of this last clause, to wit, that love cannot be purchased at any price; or that nothing can be given to the Spouse, which she will be contented with, without the love of her beloved; and so likewise that he will not value any thing we can give him, if we give him not our hearts, our love. But the first Exposition is questionlesse the best.

Vers. 8. *We have a little sister, &c.*] There being no convincing reason why we should think, that this is spoken by any other then the same party, that spake all along in the foregoing verses of this Chapter; I conceive that these are the words also of the Spouse to her Beloved, *We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we doe for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for?* wherein she propounds to him, the having a young sister, that was yet but little, and not grown up to yeares of being ripe for marriage, she would know of him, as an evidence of that cordial affection which she desired might be in his heart towards her, what they should doe for this their sister, when being grown up, any match should be propounded to her, or for her: and herein it may well be, that Solomon hath respect to the custome of Brides, being very ready at their own nuptials to talk much of the marriage of their younger sisters. So that clearly these are the words of the Jewish Church to Christ concerning the Church of the Gentiles; Before the coming of Christ in the flesh there were many Prophecies and promises, that at the coming of the Messiah, the Gentiles should be brought in and made one Church with the Jewes; which therefore the faithfull and righteous servants of God amongst them did believe and expect, see Psal. 2. 8. & Isa. 11. 10. And hence it is that the Jewish Church is brought in here pleading for the Church of the Gentiles; She calls her both hers and Christs sister, *We have a sister*, either with respect to that time, when she should be gathered in, as a sister Church, to the unity of the same faith, and to the priviledge of being made the children of God; (and how Christ also owns such as a sister, see in the Note, Chap. 4. 9.) or else because even in Solomons time she was already such in Gods decree, which being made known, he by faith speaks of it, as if it were done already. And so likewise she calls her a *little sister*, that had *no breasts*, that is, no breasts to speak of, no such breasts as Virgins use to have when they are grown up to yeares of marriage; of which the Prophet speaking saith, *Thy breasts are fashioned*, Ezek. 16. 7. either with respect to the present times before the conversion of

the Gentiles, when *the fulnesse of time* for the appearance of the Messiah not being yet come, Gal. 4. 4. they were yet in the state of a young maide under age, not ripe for marriage, without breasts, because they had not the Scriptures, nor any teachers to instruct them in the knowledge of Christ; or else with respect to the times when they were first newly converted, because then they were but few, *a little flock*, as Christ calls them, Luk. 12. 32. a young Church, and of little growth, and of little strength and courage, till the Holy Ghost, after the Ascension of Christ, was powred forth upon them, and without breasts, because without a settled Ministry; for such is the state of Churches in their first beginnings, Act. 14. 23. & Tit. 1. 5. And then for that which the Jewish Church propounds to Christ concerning this her sister-Church of the Gentiles, *What shall we doe for our sister, in the day she shall be spoken for?* I conceive the time hereby intended is, when Christ should make love to the Gentiles, and by winning them to embrace the Gospel, should take them to be his Spouse, and so the Calling of the Gentiles, which was *a mystery kept secret since the world began, was made known to all Nations*, Rom. 16. 25, 26. And that which she desires to know is, what course they should take then with this their sister for the encrease and strengthening of her faith, and what advancement, glory and dignity should be farther conferred upon her: which is propounded in the name both of Christ and the Spouse too, because though Christ can only work grace in the hearts of men, and all the good the Church enjoyes is wholly from him, yet his Ministers in the Church are instrumentally co-workers together with him. And by propounding this, wherein Christs glory should be so much advanced by the accessse of the Gentiles, the Spouse doth manifest the ardency of her love to her Beloved. I know that this is otherwise understood by some Expositors, namely, that it is the Church of the Gentiles that doth here speak to her Beloved concerning the Church of the Jewes, that shall embrace the faith of the Gospel in the latter dayes. But considering the time when this Song was written, I think the former Exposition is the best; and the generall streame of Expositors runnes this way.

[Vers. 9. *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver, &c.*] Some conceive that the Spouse having propounded that question concerning their little sister in the foregoing verse, *What shall we do for our sister, &c?* doth here answer her self. But it is farre more plain to take it as the answer of the Bridegroom, wherein he tels his Spouse, that as their little sister proved either strong or weak, they would suitably provide a worthy husband for her, that should be both an honour and a defence to her; for that I conceive (according to the letter) is meant by this figurative expression, *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver; and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of Cedar.* But that which is spiritually intended herein by the Holy Ghost concerning the Church of the Gentiles is that we are principally to mind. And for this there are different Expositions given, which are not altogether improbable. As 1. Some take it thus, *If she be a wall*, that is, If this Primitive Church of the Gentiles be furnished with a Christian Magistracy, that may be as a wall about her for her defence and safety, *We will build upon her a palace of silver*, that is, we will make her Government rich, and honourable, and glorious: *And if she be a door*, that is, if she be destitute of Magistrates, and have only Ministers and other

other Ecclesiastical Officers to take care of her, to open to some, and to give them admission into the Church, and to shut out others, according to Gospel rules, *We will inclose her with boards of Cedar*, a wood sweet and durable, that rotteth not, nor breedeth worms; that is, we will make this Government comfortable and strong for their defence, so that they may chearfully go in and out before the people, and keep them in peace and good order, and do the work of the Lord without fear amongst them, 1 Cor. 16. 10. 2^{ly}, Others explain it thus, *If she be a wall*, that is, if she be one of the two wals, whereof I am the Corner stone, joyning Jewes and Gentiles together, *We will build upon her a palace of silver*, to wit, that she may be the place of my abode in grace and everlasting glory; the purity and beauty, and lastingnesse whereof is signified, by tearming it *a palace of silver*: and if *she be a door*, that is, if she be by her Ministry the door of this palace, *We will inclose her with boards of Cedar*, that is, we will fortifie her with such durable strength, that the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail against her. 3^{ly}, Others set forth the meaning of it thus, *If she be a wall*, that is, if she be so strong and well-grounded in the truth, that she become as a City that hath wals, 2 Chron. 8. 5. to wit, through her faith and hope of salvation, according to that, Isa. 60. 18. *Thou shalt call thy wals, Salvation, and thy gates Praise*; then *we will build upon her a palace of silver*; that is, by the graces of my Spirit, communicated by the preaching of the Gospel, she shall be made yet more strong to resist her enemies, and more beautifull and glorious, that she may be still the fitter to be *an habitation of God through the spirit*, Eph. 2. 22. And if *she be a door*, that is, if she become yet more perfect and compleat, like a house or City, that hath the doors set up, (which is one of the last works in building, Neh. 3. 1.) then *we will inclose her with boards of Cedar*; that is, we will make her yet more beautifull, durable and strong, and to be highly esteemed for the favour of her sweet graces. 4^{ly}, Because by *a wall*, strength, and constancy, and perseverance is usually signified, as in Isa. 26. 1. *We have a strong City, salvation will God appoint for wals and bulwarks*; and that which God spake to the Prophet, Jer. 15. 20. *I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall*, (an expression not unlike that of the Heathen Poet, *Hic murus aeneus esto*;) therefore I take the meaning of the words to be all one in effect as if the Bridegroom had said, You are troubled at the poor and contemptible beginnings of the Gentile-Church; but be not so: *If she be a wall*, that is, if she be well grounded upon the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, and so she continue firm and constant in the worship of God, and the faith of the Gospel, not sinking under the heavy weight of afflictions, and constantly resisting all that shall seek to corrupt her, being herein like *a wall*, where though men knock never so loud, there is no entrance can be had; then *we will build upon her a palace of silver*, that is, we will strengthen and adorn her further with many precious gifts and graces, according to that, *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, Matth. 13. 12. And if *she be a door*, that is, if she be somewhat weaker, having embraced the faith, but not yet thoroughly established in it, only she doth not resist the Spirit, but is willing and ready to open her heart to the word of grace, and the motions of the Spirit, see the Note, Chap. 5. 2. then *we will inclose her with boards of Cedar*, that is, even in this case also she shall receive a further

increase of gifts and graces, for the further strengthening and beautifying of her; so that to be sure she shall be secured and preserved, till she come at length to be made partaker of an incorruptible Crown of glory. This I conceive is the true meaning of the words; yet there is another Exposition of the last clause of the verse, which seems also very probable: *If she be a door*, that is, if she be over-wavering and inconstant, easily tempted and overcome, too ready to open and entertain those that would seduce and corrupt her, yet we will not cast her off, but *we will enclose her with boards of Cedar*, that is, we will by a strong fence of affliction barre her up so, that she shall not go out to such corrupters, nor admit them to come in to her, which fully agreeth with that, Hof. 2. 6. *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.*

Verf. 10. *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers.*] Some take these as the words of that younger sister of the Spouse, mentioned by her, verf. 8. and that because the Bridegroom had said in the foregoing verse, *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver, &c.* therefore she replies, that she was, not a door, but *a wall*, strong and firm, and constant, and that her breasts were as towers, to wit, as towers built upon the wall of a City; that is, whatever they had been, they were now grown to be such, or a husband that loved her, would esteem them as such. But because it is very hard to reconcile this, with that which was said before of this little sister, I rather think that it is the Spouse, that takes occasion from that which her beloved had said concerning her little sister; to set forth her own estate, as every way fit for marriage, thereby implying her desire that their marriage might be consummated. And accordingly in regard of the spiritual sense, though these words may be taken as the words of the Church of the Gentiles, that *little sister* mentioned, verf. 8. professing her self to be every way capable of that honour, which the Bridegroom had promised to conferre upon her, in those words, *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver*; for which see the foregoing Note: yet I rather think it is the Spouse, the Jewish Church that here speaks; and that either with respect to her own present condition, *I am a wall*; as if she had said, I am such as thou requiredst my little sister should be, I am a wall, constant and firm in my love to thee, and consequently in me God dwells, as in a Prince-like silver palace, fit for the dwelling of so great a King; and *my breasts are like towers*, that is, my doctrine is fully enough for the nourishment of my children; or else rather with respect to that time, when the promise being accomplished, which her beloved had made concerning the Gentiles, both they and she should become one Church, and be joyntly together the Spouse of Christ: And accordingly she glories in that her expected glorious condition, speaking of that which was to be, through the assurance of faith, as if it were so already, *I am a wall*, as if she had said, Ay now I am indeed *a wall*, a strong, a goodly and glorious City; by the glory of the coming in of the Gentiles to me, my strength and splendor is much increased, and now indeed the great King of heaven and earth will dwell in me, as in a silver palace; yea and *my breasts are become like towers*, to wit, in regard of the strength, plenty and glory of my doctrine in the dispensation of the Gospel. For 1. Because the doctrine of the Gospel was soon spread abroad, and became famous and renowned throughout the world, as towers are seen afarre off: 2. Be-
cause

cause it is by the Gospel that the Church resists her enemies, and becomes invincible. And 3. Because God was pleased to bestow such abundance of knowledge and other gifts of the Spirit upon his servants in Gospel-times, whereby they were to nurse up multitudes of children in all Nations all the world over, therefore are the Churches breasts here, with reference to those times, said to be *like towers*. And in all this, I say, the Spouse intimates her hopes to her beloved, that now ere long there should be a full consummation of their marriage in heaven, because indeed the daies of the Gospel are so frequently called in the Scripture, *The last daies*.

Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.] This may be added (according to the different exposition of the foregoing words) as an acknowledgement made, either by the Spouse, or her *little sister*, mentioned, ver. 8. that it was meerey the favour of the Bridegroom, that he was pleased to make that promise, ver. 9. *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a Palace of silver, &c.* or that he was pleased to shew that respect, that he had shown, either to the one or to the other; or else as a declaration of the Bridegroome approving and accepting of that which was spoken in the foregoing words; *Then*, (to wit, when I had spoken those words, *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers,*) *I was in his eyes as one that found favour*; that is, I was very deare and precious in his eyes, he took much delight and contentment in me. And so also we must understand it as spoken by the Church, either that she acknowledgeth that it was meerey from Christs free-grace and favour to her, that she was in such a condition, as she had before described; or else that she glorieth in his acceptance of her faith and love, and the precious account that he made of her, and the assurance she received from him of his constant and everlasting love to her. The word in the Original which we translate *favour*, doth properly signifie *peace*; which the Spouse might use with respect to the names of *Solomon* or *Shulamite*. And indeed by nature we are all enemies to God, Rom. 5. 10. and it is only by Christ that the Church comes to be at peace with God, and to feele any peace, quiet, or contentment in her selfe.

Verf. 11. *Solomon had a Vineyard at Baal-hamon, &c.*] Some take this, with that which followes in the next verse, to be the words of the Spouse; and that to expresse her affection to her Beloved, she undertakes to shew how much she prized her Vineyard above Solomons, meaning by her Vineyard, either some particular Vineyard which she had, (and indeed before, Chap. 1. 6. she had spoken of a Vineyard, which she calls her *own Vineyard*) which she so highly prized, because of the precious fruit which she expected that would yield her, namely, the opportunity of many sweet retirements there with her Beloved; or else her Beloved himselfe, a Vineyard from whom she expected that comfort and delight that was farre above all the profit that Solomon reaped from his Vineyard; But methinks (considering this and the next verse joyntly together,) it is clearely the Bridegroom, that speaks here, and that with respect to that which his Spouse had said before, ver. 6. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, &c.* namely, to assure her that Solomon did not so highly esteem his choicest Vineyard, which yielded him so great a revenue, as he did esteem of her, his far more precious Vineyard. Concerning this famous Vineyard which Solomon had at Baal-hamon, all that can be said, is, 1. That the word *Baal-hamon* doth properly signifie,

the Master, owner, or, possessor of a multitude. 2^{ly}, That *Baal-hamon* might therefore be some place famous for Vineyards, (amongst which Solomon had one, eminent, as we may well think above the rest) and that it was so called either with respect to the multitude of Vineyards that were there, or to the abundance of fruit which they yielded, or to the abundance of people, that by reason of the exceeding fertility of the place, did live upon those Vineyards. Some hold it to be the same place that in Josh. 12. 7. is called Baal-Gad. And 3. That some think, that hereby is figuratively meant the Common-wealth of Israel, or the City Jerusalem, the Vineyard which God had committed to Solomons care and custody, (as indeed the house of Israel is tearmed Gods Vineyard, Isa, 5. 1.) and this is here called Baal-hamon, because the Israelites were a very numerous people, or because Jerusalem was such a populous City, Lam. 1. 1. *How doth the City sit solitary that was full of people!* And now according to this which hath been said, may we conceive of the spirituall sense of this place, to wit, that Christ doth here set forth his tender care over his Church, by comparing her to Solomons Vineyard at Baal-hamon. Some indeed doe here by Solomon understand Christ, and by his Vineyard, his Church, which is said to be in *Baal-hamon*, either with respect to the world, among the multitude of whose nations Christ hath his Church, which is his choice Vineyard; or with respect to the manifold fruit, which she yieldeth or ought to yield to Christ, being planted by him in a fruitfull soyle, and watered continually with his blessing. And accordingly we understand the following words, *He let out the Vineyard to keepers*; to wit, that Christ hath appointed his servants, the Prophets first, and afterwards the Apostles, and their successors, to watch over and to dresse his Vineyard, the Church; see Matth. 21. 33. & 1 Cor. 3. 9. *Every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver*; that is, they were all to bring as great an encrease in to Christ as possibly they could. But, I say, the words may farre more clearly be taken as spoken by way of comparison; and that Christs aime herein is to assure his Church, (and that by way of replying to that request of hers, ver. 6. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, &c.*) that he did far more highly prize her, then Solomon did that rich and goodly Vineyard, which he had at Baal-hamon. To which end, first he sets forth the excellency of Solomons Vineyard in this Verse; and then afterwards in the next verse, he sheweth what a far more precious and delightfull Vineyard his Spouse, his Church, was to him. Solomon, saith he, *had a Vineyard at Baal-hamon, he let out the Vineyard unto keepers*; that is, to severall farmers or officers, that were to dresse and manure it; *every one*, that is, every one of the keepers severally, *for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver*, where a thousand, as usually elsewhere, may be put indefinitely for a great number, see Chap. 4. 4. Isa. 7. 23. & Eccles. 7. 29. As if he had said, Every one of the keepers payd thousands for the fruits of it: all which is expressed to set forth the great fruitfulness of this Vineyard, which yielded so great a rent to Solomon, the owner, besides the profit which the keepers made of it, that hired it; And besides to imply the difference that was betwixt Solomons and Christs Vineyard, in that Solomon, though a King, could not keep his Vineyard himselfe, but was faine to set Officers or farmers to take care of it, as his father had done before him, 1 Chron. 27. 27. who therefore had their share in the fruit of it; whereas

Christ

Christ lookes to his Vineyard himselfe, and so all the fruit and benefit thereof belongs unto him alone; as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

Verf. 12. *My Vineyard, which is mine, is before me, &c.*] They that take these to be the words of the Spouse (according to what was noted on the foregoing verse) doe likewise therefore hold, that here she proves how much more highly she prized her Vineyard, then Solomon did his, to wit, because she did not let out her Vineyard to farmers, as Solomon did his, but had it continually in her own eye, dressing it her selfe, and reserving it wholly to her selfe, for her own peculiar use and delight. And accordingly they take the following words to be spoken by her, as in a kind of glorying over Solomon; *Thou (O Solomon) must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred;* As if she had said, Thou, O Solomon, must afford the keepers of thy Vineyard a fift share of the profit, which it yields, but the benefit of mine redounds wholly to my selfe. But, as was before said, the words doe appeare farre more clearly to be the words of the Bridegroom, and so the words of Christ concerning his Spouse, the Church; and that having in the foregoing verse set forth the excellency of Solomons Vineyard at Baal-hamon, here as by way of opposition, he shewes how farre inferior Solomons Vineyard was to his, and what far more precious account he made of his Vineyard, then Solomon did of that which yielded him so great a revenue, as namely, 1. Because Christs Vineyard is more peculiarly his, then Solomons was, which may be implied in those words, *My Vineyard, which is mine;* The Church was Christs by conquest, purchase, and donation, and that as an eternall inheritance, Psal. 2. 7. whereas Solomons Vineyard was his, only upon temporary and uncertaine tearmes. 2. Because Solomon was faine to have keepers to look to his Vineyard in his absence, but Christ is alwayes present in his Church, Matth. 28. 20. & Revel. 2. 1. and therefore, as likewise because it is so deare to him, and he takes such comfort and delight in it, he watcheth over it, keeps it and dresseth it himselfe; according to that which the Lord saith of his Vineyard, Isa. 27. 3. *I the Lord doe keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day;* for indeed though Christ imployes his Ministers to be under him keepers of his Vineyard, yet they are but as instruments in his hands, they do all they do by strength derived from him, and can doe nothing except he be present with them and in them, 1 Cor. 3. 5. yea and when they have done what they can, thorough Christ that strengthens them, it is onely the Lord Christ that doth make his Vine fruitful and yield her encrease, 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7. And 3. Because consequently the whole fruit of Christs Vineyard he reserves wholly to himselfe, not suffering any part of it to be alienated from him, or to be disposed of by others; for though Christ doth alwayes reward those whom he employes as keepers and labourers in his Vineyard, Matth. 20. 1, 2. both here and hereafter, Dan. 12. 3. *Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour,* 1 Cor. 3. 8. yet the revenue and fruit of his Vineyard he reserves wholly to himselfe; the faith, love, and obedience of his people, and the glory of all that is done for them, and by them, is all for Christ, and not for his Ministers. And this is that which he implies in the following words, wherein by an Apostrophe turning his speech to Solomon; *Thou, saith he, (O Solomon) must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred:* As if he should

have said. Thus it is with thy Vineyard, thy keepers goe away with a fift part of the profit; but it is not so with mine, all the profit of my Vineyard redounds wholly to my selfe. Some Expositors, I know doe take these last words as spoken to Christ, the true Solomon, *Thou (O Solomon) must have a thousand, &c.* implying, that though Christ was to have the maine profit of the Vineyard, yet his Ministers, his watch-men and labourers, were to receive a liberall compensation, and should eate of the fruit of the Vineyard too; according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 9. 7. *Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* But then I say, we must take this, as spoken by the Spouse, or some that stood by; whereas methinks they are clearly the words of Christ the Bridegroom, preferring his Vineyard and his care over it, before Solomons at Baal-hamon, and that in answer to what his Spouse had said, ver. 6. *Set me as a seale upon thine heart, &c.* So that the summe of that which he saith here to his Church, to assure her of his tender love to her, and care over her, is all one in effect, as if he had thus said, *Thou, my love, because thou hast me not alwayes in thine eye, and because I suffer thee to be sometimes tryed with sore afflictions, art ever and anon in a trembling and fainting condition, as doubting my love. But why dost thou not rest with confidence on me? That I may free thee of all thy feares, I will shew thee, how deare thou art to me, and how tenderly carefull I am, and alwayes will be, of thee. Thou seest what precious account Solomon makes of his Vineyard at Baal-hamon; yet being man, though a King, he is faine to let it out to farmers that must take care of it, and dresse it, and keep it in his absence; and so though he receives a great rent for it, yet others have a share with him in the profit of it. But now thou, that art my Vineyard, art continually in mine eye; and though I make use of men in planting and dressing this my Vineyard, and of the Ministry of Angels in defending and keeping it; yet I am alwayes all in all in that work, and it is I only that give the encrease, I only justifie, and sanctifie, and defend, and glorifie thee; and therefore it is fit thou shouldest wholly depend upon my love and provident care over thee; neither must thou depend upon any other, nor give the glory of thy welfare to any other. This I conceive is the full drift of these words.*

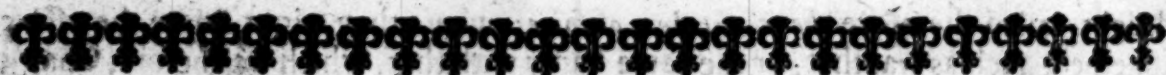
Verf. 13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, &c.*] It may be renderd according to the Original, *O thou inhabitresse of the gardens*, a title fit for a Country damosel, and whereby it is unquestionably cleare, that here the Bridegroom speaks to the Bride. Having in the foregoing verse laboured to assure her of his sincere love to her, and tender care over her, and being for a while to take his leave of her; he makes this request to her, *The companions hearken to thy voice, cause me to heare it*; wherein he desires that before the Bridemen and Bridemaides, the companions that stood by as witnesses of the contract, hearkening diligently to heare what should be concluded between them, she would openly make known her mind to him herein, that so the consummating of the marriage might be hastened; and accordingly we must understand the words as spoken by Christ to his Spouse the Church. He tearms his Church, *Thou that dwellest in the gardens*, either with respect to her being adorned with the manifold graces of Gods holy Spirit; or to her residing in those places, where particular Churches or Congregations were planted, as delightfull to Christ as so many Paradises or Edens; or to her having her conversation above in Gods heavenly Par-

dice,

dice, even whilst she lives here below; for which see the Notes, Chap. 4. 12, 15. & 6. 2, 11. And that which he desires of her, that he might heare her voice, is meant of the voice of her confessions, praises and prayers; see the Note, Chap. 2. 14. but especially of her preaching the Gospel to her companions; (though some I know would have it understood of her desire that he might heare the voice of her praises in heaven) *The companions harken to thy voice, cause me to heare it*; for by the Churches companions there may be meant, either, 1. The Angels, who doe indeed with great delight harken to the doctrine of the Gospel, Eph. 3. 10. & 1 Pet. 1. 20. Or 2^{ly}, The Elect, or the faithfull; such as are received into the fellowship of Christ and his Saints, and have obtained the like precious faith with them, 2 Pet. 1. 1. and were before called the friends of Christ; see the Note, Chap. 5. 1. and so this may be a motive to encourage her to preach the Gospel, because though the world will not, yet the Elect of God would attentively heare her: Or 3^{ly}, (as some thinke) it may be extended also to all men here below, at least such as are not dogs and swine, but will vouchsafe to heare; for because of our common creation and habitation here on earth, even these may be termed *the companions*. However observable it is, that with the same charge wherewith the Bridegroom doth here take his leave of his Bride, Christ did also take his leave of his Disciples, *Goe ye therefore and teach all Nations*, &c. Matth. 28. 19.

Verf. 14. *Make hast my Beloved, &c.*] It is in the Original, *flee, or flee away*; and be thou like to a Roe or to a young Hart upon the mountaines of spices: Now accordingly that which the Spouse here desires of her beloved, may be, either, 1. That he would flee, or, *make hast* away with her to some place of extraordinary pleasure and delight, called therefore *the mountaines of spices*, where they might solace themselves together; such as was that, or the same haply with that, which was before, Chap. 4. 6 called *the mountain of myrrhe and the hill of frankincense*; or, 2. that after he had dispatched his affaires in that place whither he was now going, he would make as much hast or speed in his return to her again as a Roe or a young Hart doth, when they run upon, or for succour flee unto the mountaines of spices; see the Notes before, Chap. 2. 7, 8, 9. & 17. And so likewise in regard of the spirituall sense here intended; either, 1. The words may be taken as spoken by the Church to Christ, with respect to his ascension into heaven; As if she had said, Though it would be most pleasing to me to enjoy thy bodily presence here below, yet since it is necessary that thou shouldest ascend up to thy father, that thou mayest there provide a place for me, and mine, and mayest from thence send the comforter to us, therefore flee as a Roe or a young Hart to those mountaines of spices; Or else, 2. With respect to his coming in to her help upon all occasions, in the severall Assemblies of his people; which may be here called the mountaines of spices. Because Christ had called upon her in the foregoing verse, to cause her voice to be heard in preaching the Gospel, and she knew that this would stirre up many enemies against her; therefore she requests that her Beloved would upon all occasions come in speedily to her encouragement, succour, and support; which agrees with that which was noted before, Chap. 2. 17. Or rather, 3^{ly}, with respect to the second coming of Christ, namely, that the Church here desires that Christ would hasten that his glorious appearance the second time for her full

and perfect redemption; and for the confirmation of her marriage with him, because then she knew that she should be also taken up with him from the valleys of the gardens to the mountaine of spices, as heaven may be well called for its unconceivable delight and sweetnesse, there to enjoy his glorious presence for ever without any interruption; see 1 Cor. 13. 52. & 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17. And thus as this divine Song began with a prayer, and as some understand it for his first coming, *Let him kisse me with the kisses of his mouth*; so it ends with a prayer for his second coming. And Solomon closeth up this Book with the same expressions in a manner which we finde in the close of St Johns Revelation, *Behold I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.*



F I N I S.



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